

THE OTHER THREE MUSKETEERS AND THE JEWEL OF MALTA

By Michael Druce

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CHARACTERS

(14 Men, 15 Women, Extras)

MALES

HERALD..... Town crier
PARIS..... Musketeer
D’JON..... Musketeer
CAPTAIN..... Captain of the Cardinal’s Guards
CARDINAL RICHELIEU..... The second most powerful man in France
LEVEQUE Richelieu’s henchman
COUNCILOR..... The Cardinal’s aide
TREVILLE Head of the King’s Musketeers
BORDEAUX Servant to Paris and D’Jon
COURT CRIER A subject of The Regent
TOWER GUARD..... Guard in Sauvignon
MALTESE GUARD 1..... Palace Guard
MALTESE GUARD 2 Palace Guard
MALTESE GUARD 3 Palace Guard

FEMALES

MADAME MANON..... A tavern owner
COUNTESS OF SAUVIGNON..... Mother of Christina
CONTESSA
CHRISTINA..... Daughter of the Count and Countess of Sauvignon
LISETTE..... Attendant to the Countess of Sauvignon

DUCHESS..... Of Malta
AIDE To the Duchess of Malta
CATHERINE MEDICI, REGENT Mother of King Louis XIII
GISELLE An imposter
MARIETTE An imposter
CADICE An imposter
FRANCESCA Daughter of the Spanish Ambassador
MARIE Daughter of the Spanish Ambassador
PORTIA Daughter of the Spanish Ambassador
PATRICE The Regent's lady in waiting
SERVANT GIRL At Musketeer Dorm

FLEXIBLE

MALE TO FEMALE Herald, Councilor to the Cardinal, Court Crier
FEMALE TO MALE Madame Manon, Patrice, Aide, Servant Girl,
Duchess of Malta

EXTRAS

(unlimited) Guards, ladies in waiting, servants, gala guests

DOUBLING

The roles of the three imposters can be doubled by the ambassador's daughters.

Guards and servants are easy to double.

STAGING

As the writer and director of the first production of *The Other Three Musketeers and the Jewel of Malta*, I wrote this play for my group of actors and our facilities. You, on the other hand, are working with a different group of actors in a different location. Thus I wouldn't expect your production to look like mine, and that is the way it should be. Much of the pleasure of being a writer of plays is seeing how other directors interpret and stage a work. If all the productions of my plays looked the same, I would be disappointed.

This show has a big cast and a large number of scenes; however, it is easy to stage. Big casts attract a lot of talent and often give inexperienced performers an opportunity to gain experience. If a smaller cast is desired, many roles can be doubled or tripled. As for the set, it may be as big and elaborate as budgets and space allow, or it can be simple, little more than a bare stage with a few props. A trunk becomes a table, chair, or throne. A jail cell can be as simple as a light weight wood frame carried on and off by the actors or extras. Steps and platforms can create more flexibility, but are certainly not necessary. The more inventive and clever you are, the more your audience will enjoy and appreciate this fast paced comedy.

In the original production, the stage was divided into three playing areas: Sauvignon (Right), Paris (Center), Malta (Left). Each setting suggested various places at each location. The Sauvignon location featured a clear plastic case housing the diamond in a cage with bars. A secret passage through a sliding door was placed inside the cage, but this can also be imaginary. The Bastille and the tower prison in Malta were the same set piece.

The fencing duels should be carefully choreographed, each longer and more spectacular than the previous one. Adding music to the duels adds action and intensity and also helps with the timing of the scenes. Transition music between scenes helps unify scenes and makes them smoother.

As one scene finishes, another should begin immediately with little or no break between. Remember, the pace is always swift, the action spectacular, and the comedy non-stop.

TIME - 1626

PLACES – Paris, Sauvignon, Malta

ACT I – SCENE

- 1-Paris: A street at night.
- 2-Paris: Cardinal Richelieu's Chambers
- 3-Sauvignon: The Palace
- 4-Paris: The Bastille
- 5- Sauvignon: The Palace
- 6- Sauvignon: The Palace
- 7-Paris: Cardinal Richelieu's Chambers
- 8-Sauvignon: The Palace
- 9-Paris: Cardinal Richelieu's Chambers
- 10-Malta: The Palace
- 11-Paris: The Bastille
- 12-Paris: Musketeers' dormitory
- 13-Paris: The Regent's palace

ACT II – SCENE

- 1-Paris: The Regent's Chambers
- 2-Paris: Musketeer Headquarters
- 3-Sauvignon: The Tower
- 4- Sauvignon: The Palace
- 5-Paris: Musketeer Headquarters
- 6-Sauvignon: The Tower
- 7-Sauvignon: The Palace
- 8-Paris: Cardinal Richelieu's Chambers
- 9-Malta: The Palace
- 10-Paris: The Regent's Palace
- 11-Malta: The Palace

PROPS

PARIS – Gold sovereigns

GUARDS and MUSKETEERS – Swords

HERALD - Scroll

LEVEQUE – Sword, Treaty, Diamond Necklace

BORDEAUX – Diamond, Dagger

SERVANT GIRL – Wine bottle

REGENT – Diamond necklace

MASQUERADE SCENE – Masks for EVERYONE

DUCHESS – Diamond

COUNCILOR – Cane

SAUVIGNON GUARD - Key

COSTUMES - 1626

THE THREE MUSKETEERS: Hats, tunics, white shirts, dark pants, boots, sashes to hold swords, women's dresses and wigs.

GUARDS, HERALD, COUNCILOR, COURT CRIER, and MONSIEUR TREVILLE: Hats, white or black shirts, dark pants, boots, sashes.

LEVEQUE: Black hat, black shirt, black pants, and black boots. Eye patch.

CARDINAL: Red Cardinal's outfit.

REGENT, COUNTESS, CHRISTINA, LISETTE, DUCHESS: Long, elegant gowns.

ALL OTHER WOMEN: Long dresses.

SERVANT GIRLS: Blouses, skirts, aprons.

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ACT I

SCENE ONE

AT RISE: Paris, 1626. A street. Evening. A HERALD enters and crosses to center stage, reading from a scroll.

HERALD: Attention, attention! By order of the Mayor of Paris, be it known by all citizens hereof, that dueling in the streets of our fair city is illegal and punishable by law. Hear ye, hear ye—

(D'JON and PARIS rush on. THEY are attempting to elude PURSUERS. THEY pause to listen to the HERALD.)

PARIS: What? Dueling illegal? Are you mad, Monsieur?

HERALD: I am just the messenger.

D'JON: When does the edict go into effect?

(A bell rings.)

HERALD: It is in effect now! Good day, gentlemen. *(Moving on.)*
Attention, attention!

(MADAME MANON enters with the CAPTAIN of the Cardinal's Guards and THREE of his men.)

MADAME MANON: That's them. That's the pair that wrecked my tavern, smashed my tables, and drank my wine.

CAPTAIN: You there, stop! Is it true what Madame Manon claims? You were dueling in her tavern?

PARIS: Our honor was put to the test.

MADAME MANON: Your honor has ruined my business.

D'JON: We were insulted.

CAPTAIN: As Captain of the guards and the power invested in me by his Eminence Cardinal Richelieu, I am placing you under arrest.

Dueling is against the law. You will repay this woman for damages.

MADAME MANON: One hundred francs.

PARIS: You can't arrest us. The edict wasn't in effect then. Ask the Herald.

(PARIS and D'JON cross to the HERALD.)

D'JON: When the bell rang, Monsieur, and we asked you when the edict went to effect, what did you say?

HERALD: I said the edict was in effect 'Now.'

PARIS: *(To the CAPTAIN.)* You see.

HERALD: But I didn't mean when the bell rang. I meant the edict was already in effect before and after the bell rang. At the present time, which was now--then. The ringing of the bell was just a coincidence.

CAPTAIN: The edict has been in effect since midday. In the name of the law, lay down your weapons.

PARIS: In the name of the citizens of Paris, we will not.

CAPTAIN: In the name of the cardinal, I order you to lay down your weapons.

D'JON: In the name of the king, we ignore you.

CAPTAIN: In the name of God, I command you.

(D'JON and PARIS do a double-take.)

D'JON: I'm afraid he's got us there.

PARIS: Good sir, surely you see we are the King's musketeers. We right wrongs, defend the innocent, and keep the streets safe for the meek.

D'JON: We are all for one and one for all.

CAPTAIN: That duty has now been assumed by the Cardinal's guards, and the King agrees. The reputations of the Musketeers have sunk pretty low in the court. Too much carousing and disturbing the peace.

MADAME MANON: I'll say. If you ask me, you're nothing but buffoons and morons.

PARIS: Madame, no one is asking you.

D'JON: Buffoons and morons?

CAPTAIN: Come along peacefully, or we'll take you by force.

PARIS: That hardly seems fair, two against four. *(To D'JON)* Does that seem fair to you, D'Jon?

D'JON: Not at all. They need at least two more men.

CAPTAIN: What?

PARIS: En gaurde!

(A duel begins with PARIS and D'JON holding their own. After besting the GUARDS, THEY hurry off with the CAPTAIN and his MEN close behind. MANDAME MANON and the HERALD exit as the duel begins.)

SCENE TWO

SCENE: *Paris. The Cardinal's Chambers. Center stage. There is a loud knock. THE CARDINAL is speaking to an unseen confidant. The confidant (LEVEQUE) is seated in a high backed chair turned away from the audience, or HE may be standing, disguised with a hood and cloak.*

CARDINAL: *(To the unseen PERSON.)* Hold that thought. *(To the PERSON outside the door.)* Enter.

COUNCILOR: *(An ELDERLY MAN with a cane enters left.)* The morning report, your Eminence.

CARDINAL: Read it. Give me the news.

COUNCILOR: On the palace lunch menu today—

CARDINAL: The palace lunch menu? I am not interested in the menu. Move on.

COUNCILOR: The street sweepers are on strike.

CARDINAL: Why?

COUNCILOR: Low morale. They say the job is dirty.

CARDINAL: Of course it's dirty. If we didn't have dirty streets, we wouldn't need street sweepers. What do they want?

COUNCILOR: They would like improved pay and benefits.

CARDINAL: What? They are street sweepers. They are lucky to be alive.

COUNCILOR: And for that they are most grateful. Nonetheless, they would like an audience.

CARDINAL: Have them meet at the river and then throw one of them in. That should improve morale. Is that all?

COUNCILOR: The King is planning a hunting trip.

CARDINAL: The King? Our King? Hunting? Oh, that is so manly. When?

COUNCILOR: Within the month. It coincides with the visit of the Spanish Ambassador.

CARDINAL: Hopefully he won't shoot the ambassador, or himself. *(Pausing to consider that thought.)* I'll have to remember to pray for that. Anything else?

COUNCILOR: Several more arrests for disturbing the peace. The perpetrators have been sent to The Bastille. Since your grace ordered the mayor to put in place the no dueling policy, arrests have declined substantially. The King's musketeers are behaving themselves.

CARDINAL: Thanks to me and my guards, we protect the streets instead of inciting chaos. Once more the people have clear proof that it is I the Cardinal, and not the King, who protects the people and brings order to our streets. You are dismissed.

COUNCILOR: Your grace. (*Exits.*)

CARDINAL: A perfect example of why my plan will succeed. We are building the trust of the people. And the King's hunting trip plays right into my plan. It will provide more opportunity for me to incite the Queen Mother against her son. But we must be careful. A lot can go wrong. Still, it is a bold plan, daring, outrageous, deliciously insidious. Much depends on chance. But, if it succeeds the way I intend, I—we—will gain the advantage of consolidating our influence with the nobles and further weaken that ridiculous boy who pretends to be King of France. Every day I walk into the royal chamber, I look upon those two thrones and think to myself, Richelieu, one day one of those chairs will be yours, and sitting by my side will be Anne of Austrias. How that part happens, I'm not sure yet. The devil is in the details. I'll think of some way to win over the queen. Then I shall be known as the Cardinal who became King. Let's get on with it. Remember, no one must be privy to our plans, and no one can be trusted.

(*BOTH exit left.*)

SCENE THREE

SCENE: Sauvignon. The Royal Palace. Stage right. The COUNTESS of Sauvignon enters, speaking with her daughter, CHRISTINA. A LADY IN WAITING follows them in and stands nearby.

CHRISTINA: Mother, this is no longer the fifteen hundreds. It's 1626. Young women have more options and opportunities now. Today things are different, not like when you were a girl. Arranged marriages are so old academy.

COUNTESS: We are not like ordinary people. Royalty have responsibilities. We don't get to marry anyone we please. We must think of the people of Sauvignon and what's good for the country.

CHRISTINA: I am thinking about the people. If I am not happy, the people won't be happy. How will the people feel if they see me looking sad all the time? They'll pity me and then they'll be sad.

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COUNTESS: Christina, let's not get carried away. I just meant there are national interests at stake.

CHRISTINA: Mother, please. I don't want to marry him. You know how these arranged marriages turn out. Look what happened to Juliet.

COUNTESS: That was a play by an English playwright with an overactive imagination. You haven't even met the Duke, give him a chance.

CHRISTINA: He'll probably have bad teeth and look horrible.

COUNTESS: You may be surprised, you may like him.

CHRISTINA: And if I don't?

COUNTESS: Well, too bad.

CHRISTINA: When will he be here?

COUNTESS: Three days.

CHRISTINA: Whatever happened to "some day my prince will come"?

COUNTESS: He's a duke, that's what happened.

LISETTE: *(Enters.)* Your guest, Madame.

COUNTESS: Show him in.

(LISETTE exits.)

CHRISTINA: What? He's here already? I thought you said three days.

COUNTESS: It's not him. It's another guest.

(LISETTE returns. LEVEQUE, pretending to be the Marquis de Ruze, enters behind LISETTE.)

LISETTE: The Marquis de Ruze from Paris.

LEVEQUE: It is an honor, your highness. *(Bows.)*

COUNTESS: On behalf of the citizens of Sauvignon, you are welcome.

This is my daughter, Christina of Sauvignon.

LEVEQUE: Mademoiselle. *(Bows.)*

(CHRISTINA curtsies. Clearly SHE is impressed.)

I bring greetings from the King of France, his royal majesty Louis XIII. On behalf of my King, I offer this communiqué. *(HE offers a scroll.)*

COUNTESS: *(Indicating that LISETTE should take the scroll.)*

Attendant.

LISETTE: *(Reading.)* It is a request soliciting a right of passage. The King asks permission for his troops to cross our territory in the event it becomes necessary for him to enter Germany.

COUNTESS: *(Taking the scroll.)* How does Sauvignon benefit from such a request?

LEVEQUE: The King would be most grateful. I am sure he would express his gratitude in any number of ways.

COUNTESS: I'll discuss it with my advisors. The count is on a diplomatic mission. It may take a day or so. In the meantime, you'll be our guest.

LEVEQUE: I am most honored.

COUNTESS: *(To LADY IN WAITING.)* Please show the Marquis to his quarters.

LEVEQUE: Your obedient servant.

(LEVEQUE is led out right by THE LADY IN WAITING.)

CHRISTINA: Now that is someone I could get interested in.

COUNTESS: Behave. *(To LISETTE.)* What do you think?

LISETTE: Interesting and unexpected.

COUNTESS: Are you speaking of the document, or our guest?

LISETTE: Both.

COUNTESS: I'm speaking of this. *(Waving the document.)* You think there's more here than meets the eye?

LISETTE: Of course there is. No King of France has ever asked our permission before. It's too bad the count is away.

COUNTESS: I am quite capable of making decisions during the Count's absence.

LISETTE: I have never believed otherwise.

COUNTESS: Convene the council in one hour.

LISETTE: Your highness. *(Exits.)*

COUNTESS: Until the duke arrives, I expect you to play the role of hostess to the Marquis.

CHRISTINA: If I must.

(BOTH exit.)

SCENE FOUR

SCENE: Paris. The Bastille. Stage left. Lights come up. PARIS and D'JON are shackled with no obvious way to escape.

D'JON: Is it me, or has something died in here?

PARIS: It's you, D'Jon. You smell awful. It must be from when you were thrown into the gutter.

D'JON: I wasn't thrown, I tripped.

PARIS: Tripped, thrown, what difference does it make?

D'JON: Paris, my friend, it makes a lot of difference. Had the Cardinal's guards thrown me into the gutter, they would have humiliated me. By tripping, I humiliate myself.

PARIS: You still stink.

D'JON: I may smell, but at least I have my dignity. That's more than the Cardinal's guards can claim. Four guards against two musketeers. We showed them, did we not? We defended the honor of the musketeers.

PARIS: Indeed we did, which is why we're in the Bastille for breaking the Cardinal's prohibition against dueling in public, and our adversaries still have their liberty.

D'JON: True, but they also have the scars to prove it.

PARIS: When we get out of here--

D'JON: If we get out of here.

PARIS: No more dueling. France is changing, D'Jon. Little by little, the Cardinal is the paring away the influence of the King's musketeers and replacing them with his own.

D'JON: Speaking of getting out of here, where is that idiot, Bordeaux, with our bribe?

PARIS: Yes, that's what I've been wondering. It's not easy getting out of the Bastille.

D'JON: For a man servant, we certainly don't get much service.

PARIS: Or manliness.

D'JON: I don't know why you pay him.

PARIS: I haven't been paying him. I thought you paid him.

D'JON: No wonder he's in a foul mood all the time. Now he probably won't show up at all.

PARIS: Not if he doesn't have any money.

D'JON: Now what do we do?

PARIS: We need a plan.

(As lights fade, the scene shifts to Sauvignon.)

SCENE FIVE

SCENE: Sauvignon. The Royal Palace. Stage right. LEVEQUE enters right, followed by CHRISTINA.

CHRISTINA: Must you go?

LEVEQUE: I must. At sunrise I'll be on my way. My king will be awaiting my report.

CHRISTINA: These past few days have been wonderful.

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LEVEQUE: For me as well, my lady.

CHRISTINA: Why do you call me lady? Call me Christina.

LEVEQUE: Very well, Christina.

CHRISTINA: Will I see you again?

LEVEQUE: I wish it could be so, but when one is in the service of the King.

CHRISTINA: Oh, this is ridiculous. Forgive me. Call me bold, reckless, anything you wish. I give my heart to you. Do you love me?

LEVEQUE: My Lady – Christina--I dared not hope to hear those words, much less declare my love to you. My heart has been on fire from the moment I set eyes on you. I have several days journey ahead of me, and I will wish you were with me every minute.

CHRISTINA: Then take me with you to Paris. There is nothing here for me except a marriage to a suitor I have never seen and could never love.

LEVEQUE: But I am nothing more than a humble Marquis, a simple cavalier. I have not the means to support a contessa, not in the lifestyle you are used to and deserve.

CHRISTINA: But don't you see, there's the solution. Because I am a contessa, I have means. I can get my hands on all the gold and jewels we would ever need. I could even get The Jewel of Malta.

LEVEQUE: The Jewel of Malta? The Potosi Diamond? That is one of the most sought after, most cherished jewels in all the world. A black diamond as rare as any gem the world has seen.

CHRISTINA: It can be ours, and we would never want for anything again.

LEVEQUE: It's tempting, but I couldn't. That would be asking too much. I couldn't have you take that risk. Your love and your life are too precious to me.

CHRISTINA: Do I really mean that much to you?

LEVEQUE: More than words can express.

CHRISTINA: Perhaps you're right, perhaps it is too dangerous. Who needs gold and jewels? Love will sustain us.

LEVEQUE: Well, if you think there's a way, and you love me as say you do.

CHRISTINA: I do. I do.

LEVEQUE: You're positive you can get your hands on the black diamond?

CHRISTINA: Yes, the fool who guards the royal treasure will do anything I ask.

LEVEQUE: Alright, I have a plan. We'll meet at midnight, outside the castle gate. I'll have a horse ready for you.

CHRISTINA: I will be there. Kiss me.

LEVEQUE: Soon. Then we'll have a lifetime of kisses. Remember, midnight.

CHRISTINA: I'll be counting the seconds. (*Exits.*)

LEVEQUE: You're not the only one. (*Exits.*)

(*Lights fade and then come on the same location. Later.*)

SCENE SIX

SCENE: Sauvignon. The Royal Palace. The COUNTESS has entered and waits impatiently. LISETTE enters, troubled.

COUNTESS: I had expected to see my daughter. Did I not send you to fetch my daughter? That idiot of a duke who is to become my son-in-law will be here any moment. Where is my daughter?

LISETTE: How shall I say this?

COUNTESS: How? I don't know how. Just say it.

LISETTE: The Contessa is gone.

COUNTESS: Gone? Where?

LISETTE: We think she left with that Marquis from Paris.

COUNTESS: You mean he abducted her?

LISETTE: No, we think she went willingly. She packed a bag.

COUNTESS: Find her. Bring her back.

LISETTE: There is something else.

COUNTESS: Tell me.

LISETTE: The Jewel of Malta is also gone.

COUNTESS: The Jewel of Malta?

LISETTE: Yes, the Jewel of Malta.

COUNTESS: (*A long pause while SHE thinks this out.*) Of course! Now I see. He gains entrance with a worthless treaty. But his real mission is to woo my daughter so he can steal The Jewel of Malta. Find her. Find him, and find that diamond before the count returns from his trip abroad.

LISETTE: Yes, your highness.

COUNTESS: One more thing--two more things. No one is to know about this, especially the count. As for the guard guarding the crown jewels—

LISETTE: His memorial portrait has already been commissioned.

COUNTESS: Excellent. Make sure his family is provided for.

(*BOTH exit.*)

SCENE SEVEN

SCENE: Paris. The Cardinal's Chambers. The CARDINAL has entered and awaits the arrival of LEVEQUE, who enters with the diamond.

LEVEQUE: Here it is it. *(HE gives the diamond to the CARDINAL.)*

CARDINAL: Brilliant, absolutely, brilliant.

LEVEQUE: Thank you. I'm rather proud of myself.

CARDINAL: I'm talking about the diamond. It's brilliant.

LEVEQUE: Of course.

CARDINAL: What stories this diamond could tell.

LEVEQUE: I know almost nothing of it.

CARDINAL: It was discovered by French expeditionary forces in Potosi Bolivia more than a hundred years ago. It was to be a gift to the queen. Then on the high seas on the journey home, a Maltese clipper intercepted the French ship. The crew was killed and the diamond stolen. It remained in Malta for almost seventy-years before disappearing under mysterious circumstances. Ten years ago it popped up in Sauvignon, where it has been ever since--until now. Now it is returned to its rightful owner.

LEVEQUE: Why have the Maltese never tried to get it back?

CARDINAL: Their forces were no match for Sauvignon. Numerous diplomatic efforts have always failed. Finally, they gave up. And now we have it.

LEVEQUE: The girl made it very easy for me.

CARDINAL: Aren't you charming? Gift wrap it and send it anonymously to the King's mother.

LEVEQUE: What? This is a priceless diamond. You despise the Regent.

CARDINAL: Precisely. I want her to think it is from a secret admirer. Her vanity is such she won't be able to resist wearing it.

LEVEQUE: I don't understand.

CARDINAL: Lately the King has been talking about improving relations with Sauvignon.

LEVEQUE: Won't this do just the opposite? Won't he be upset?

CARDINAL: Of course. He'll be enraged, but what will he do? Nothing, because it's his mother and because The Jewel of Malta is worth a fortune. It will derail any attempt to mend fences with Sauvignon, plus it's a poke in the eye to that two-bit island, Malta, which continues to be a pain in France's derriere.

LEVEQUE: Clever. Clever indeed.

CARDINAL: Keep the bees stirred up and the honey pot remains empty.
The more we are able to undermine the king, the easier it will be to take command.

(BOTH exit.)

SCENE EIGHT

SCENE: Sauvignon. The Royal Palace. LISETTE and The COUNTESS enter.

COUNTESS: Well? Don't keep me waiting. You have news? Tell me.

LISETTE: Yes, she's been found.

COUNTESS: Where?

LISETTE: In a grove about ten miles from here. She was tied to a tree, her horse stolen.

COUNTESS: Bring her to me.

(LISETTE exits and returns with CHRISTINA. SHE is crying.)

CHRISTINA: Oh, mother, I have been such a fool.

COUNTESS: You come by it naturally. I have never forgiven myself for thinking I was in love with your father.

CHRISTINA: He said he loved me, that he couldn't live without me.

COUNTESS: All men say that, especially when one of the world's most famous diamonds is involved.

CHRISTINA: He humiliated me. What are we going to do?

COUNTESS: Two things. First, you are not to tell anyone about the diamond, especially your father. He'll be back within the week. That should be enough time to have an imitation of the Potosi Diamond made while we find a way to retrieve the real one.

CHRISTINA: You said two things, what is the second thing?

COUNTESS: Go, make yourself presentable to the duke. He arrived yesterday, expecting to see you. We made up an excuse that you were ill, palpitations of the heart. You've made a miraculous recovery, healthy enough to marry.

CHRISTINA: What? You're going to force me to marry a man I don't even know?

COUNTESS: You were on your way to Paris with a man you certainly didn't know.

CHRISTINA: Oh, mother, how could you?

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COUNTESS: Stealing the crown jewels is an act of treason. The royal guard who gave you the diamond didn't get a choice. You do. Marry the duke, or it's a trip to the guillotine. *(Exits.)*

CHRISTINA: What kind of a choice is that? Oh, Lisette, what would you do?

LISETTE: The guillotine.

CHRISTINA: Oh, no. Is the Duke that bad?

LISETTE: We've already had to put down two dogs. They wouldn't quit barking whenever he walked past.

CHRISTINA: What am I going to do?

(BOTH exit.)

SCENE NINE

SCENE: Paris. The Cardinal's Chambers. The CARDINAL is reading. The COUNCILOR enters.

COUNCILOR: *(Clearing his throat.)* Monsieur Treville.

CARDINAL: *(To the COUNCILOR.)* You may go.

(The COUNCILOR bows, signals for TREVILLE to enter, and exits.)

TREVILLE: Good morning, your Eminence.

CARDINAL: Monsieur Treville.

TREVILLE: Your message sounded urgent.

CARDINAL: Not urgent, just routine. As you know, the King's mother will be hosting a gala for the daughters of the Ambassador of Spain.

TREVILLE: Yes, it is my understanding the ambassador will join the King on his hunting trip, and the young ladies will be guests of the Regent.

CARDINAL: Quite correct. For the purposes of security, I would like for you to make available three of your Musketeers. I would use my own guards, but this sort of trifle seems better suited to your men.

TREVILLE: *(Stung by the insult.)* I know just the three. They're on assignment with the King, but I'll have them sent for and returned to Paris at once.

CARDINAL: If it is the three I am thinking of, no. Someone a little less colorful.

TREVILLE: But they are my best guards.

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CARDINAL: And prone to create havoc. I don't want the evening turned into a circus. No, this will be a gentle, low-key affair. I need three men to serve as escorts for the Ambassador's daughters, and to keep an eye on the Regent. She will be wearing the Potosi Diamond.

TREVILLE: Musketeers not on assignment with the King are on furlough.

CARDINAL: If you can't oblige my request.

TREVILLE: Of course, I will find three musketeers. *(Exits.)*

(The CARDINAL exits.)

SCENE TEN

SCENE: Malta. The royal palace. An AIDE enters, followed a few seconds later by the DUCHESS OF MALTA.

DUCHESS: What is so important that it couldn't wait until later?

AIDE: Your highness, one of our emissaries has just returned from Marseilles.

DUCHESS: And why should that be of any interest to me?

AIDE: Because he had an interesting conversation with a spy who was recently in Paris.

DUCHESS: I trust this gets better.

AIDE: It seems that The Jewel of Malta is no longer in Sauvignon. It was stolen.

DUCHESS: I see. And where is it now?

AIDE: In Paris and soon be to hanging around the Regent's neck.

DUCHESS: Indeed? Any word from Sauvignon?

AIDE: The theft is being kept very quiet. It's a matter of national pride.

DUCHESS: Pride in a national treasure stolen from us.

AIDE: After all these years, this could be our first real opportunity to the get the diamond back.

DUCHESS: Yes, and without waging war. Let us think on this.

(BOTH exit.)

SCENE ELEVEN

SCENE: Paris. The Bastille. PARIS and D'JON are shackled. TREVILLE enters, clearly overwhelmed by the stench. A GUARD stands nearby.

TREVILLE: (To the GUARD.) Let me pass.

(The GUARD grants TREVILLE access.)

You're my musketeers?

PARIS: Monsieur Treville, what an honor. Forgive us if we don't bow.

TREVILLE: This place stinks.

PARIS: Yes, we know. It's an outrage. We have spoken to the proprietor.

D'JON: Nothing. He just ignores our pleas. And the food here is horrible.

TREVILLE: How many of you are there? I can hardly see.

D'JON: Yes, the light is terrible. I haven't been able to read a thing.

PARIS: There are two of us, Monsieur. How may we be of service to the King?

TREVILLE: You can't. I need three musketeers. Now I'll have to go back to the Cardinal and tell him I am unable to fulfill his request.

Any time we look weak or inefficient, it plays into the Cardinal's plan to reduce the influence of the musketeers. We're becoming glorified security guards, Musketeers for rent.

PARIS: (Seeing an opportunity.) But there are three of us.

TREVILLE: You said there are only two.

PARIS: Our third is at the barracks.

TREVILLE: I have just come from the barracks. There are no musketeers.

PARIS: I misspoke, I meant the infirmary. Our third is in the infirmary, nursing a slight wound.

D'JON: He was in a brawl with four of the Cardinal's men.

PARIS: His wound is nothing compared to the indignities they suffered.

D'JON: He'll be fully recovered in time for any duties you might assign.

TREVILLE: (Now interested.) Are you sure? Is he reliable, educated?

PARIS: Very. What he doesn't know is not worth knowing.

TREVILLE: He is a gentleman and a wit?

PARIS: Beyond compare.

TREVILLE: He knows his way around a sword and a lady?

PARIS: Finesse, absolute finesse.

TREVILLE: Very well. Tomorrow night the Regent is hosting a masquerade for the three daughters of the Spanish ambassador.

PARIS: Of course, and you'll want us to guard the ambassador.

TREVILLE: No, the ambassador will be joining the king on his hunting trip. I need escorts for the three daughters and three sets of eyes for the Regent. She'll be wearing The Jewel of Malta.

D'JON: You expect someone to attempt to steal the black diamond?

TREVILLE: No, I don't expect that to happen, but it is one of the most famous treasures of the world. It was given to her by a secret admirer, thus it is a source of contention between the Regent and the king, as well as France, Sauvignon, and Malta. Need I say more?

PARIS: We are your obedient servants.

TREVILLE: Very well, I'll have you released. Be sure you take a bath before tomorrow evening. Good day gentlemen. *(Exits.)*

D'JON: Who will be our third?

PARIS: We'll think of someone.

(Lights fade quickly.)

SCENE TWELVE

SCENE: *Paris. The Musketeers' Apartment. BORDEAUX, singing or humming, brings on a small table and chair. HE sits and props up his feet.*

BORDEAUX: Now this is the life. I could get used to this. Master of my own house. No more sweeping up and picking up after others. Yep, this is a bit of alright, alright.

(A SERVANT GIRL enters and brings BORDEAUX a bottle of wine.)

Thanks love.

(The GIRL curtsies and exits.)

Not a care in the world. Good food, drink, a roof over me head. Not bad for a peasant. Too bad for them that's in the Bastille.

(PARIS and D'JON enter angrily.)

PARIS: Why didn't you bail us out?

BORDEAUX: What? *(HE falls out of his chair.)* Oh, you're back.

D'JON: No thanks to you. Why didn't you pay our fine?

BORDEAUX: With what, my good looks?

PARIS: What do we pay you for? *(A beat.)* Never mind. You surely could have come to our aid.

BORDEAUX: You're out now, obviously you didn't need my help.

PARIS: Only by a stroke of good fortune. If it weren't for Monsieur Treville, we would still be there.

D'JON: Perhaps forever, rotting away.

PARIS: So now you're in our debt.

BORDEAUX: No, you're in my debt. You owe me for services rendered.

D'JON: And those services include liberating us from the Bastille, which you didn't perform, so you are in our debt.

BORDEAUX: I quit.

PARIS: You can't quit.

BORDEAUX: I can and I will.

D'JON: You can't and you mustn't.

BORDEAUX: Why not? Just give me one good reason why.

PARIS: *(As much as it pains him to say it.)* We need you.

D'JON: We promised Monsieur Treville that three musketeers would be available to guard the three daughters of the Spanish ambassador and to watch over the Regent the night of her gala. We need a third musketeer. We can't let him down.

BORDEAUX: Cleaning up after two of you is challenge enough, much less bringing a third into the mix.

PARIS: We're not talking about someone else, we're talking about you. We need you to be our third musketeer.

BORDEAUX: What? Are you out of your minds? I'm a peasant.

D'JON: We know.

BORDEAUX: I'm practically illiterate.

PARIS: There are worse things to be.

BORDEAUX: I have the manners of a pig.

D'JON: Pigs are smart. They can be trained.

BORDEAUX: No. Absolutely not. I won't do it.

PARIS: We'll pay you.

BORDEAUX: With what?

D'JON: We'll sell something.

BORDEAUX: A man of dignity can't be bought.

D'JON: A man of dignity? You yourself said you were a peasant. How much dignity could a man like you have?

BORDEAUX: I want the money in advance.

PARIS: Done.

SCENE THIRTEEN

SCENE: *Paris. The palace of the Regent. The room is filled with GUESTS. EVERYONE is wearing masks. Music plays. PARIS and D’JON establish a presence. The CARDINAL stands near the REGENT. BORDEAUX enters and eyes the REGENT, who is wearing the Potosi Diamond around her neck. TREVILLE and LEVEQUE are also present.*

BORDEAUX: You see the size of that rock around the regent’s neck? If we could get our hands on that—

D’JON: We wouldn’t have any hands.

PARIS: We’re here to keep an eye on the diamond, not steal it. Now get to work.

BORDEAUX: Where are those wenches, anyway?

D’JON: He’s hopeless.

(*The MUSKETEERS blend in with the CROWD.*)

CARDINAL: May I say, your majesty, that diamond around your neck looks exquisite.

REGENT: I would like to believe it is my own natural beauty that gives it its elegance. But then I suppose things like that don’t concern you, do they?

CARDINAL: I would never presume to take issue with your majesty.

REGENT: Always the diplomat. (*Changing subjects.*) How much longer are we to be kept waiting?

CARDINAL: I am assured the ambassador’s daughters will be down any moment.

REGENT: They must certainly be pampered. They’ve locked themselves in the guest quarters since breakfast. But what can one expect from young ladies these days, especially Spaniards? Since when does it take an entire afternoon to get ready for a masque?

CARDINAL: It does seem self-indulgent.

(*A COURT CRIER enters.*)

Our prayers have been answered.

COURT CRIER: Ladies and gentlemen, honored guests, your majesty, on behalf of his royal majesty of Spain, King Phillip IV, may I present

the daughters of Ambassador Diego de Acuna: Francesca, Maria, and Portia.

(THE THREE YOUNG WOMEN enter in costume and mask. THEY cross center and curtsy before the REGENT.)

REGENT: Our honored guests are welcome. Let the festivities begin.

(THE THREE YOUNG WOMEN are joined by D’JON, PARIS, and BORDEAUX, who bow and parade the THREE WOMEN around the room. Music plays. EXTRAS become ATTENDEES. The atmosphere should be festive and elegant. PATRICE, a lady in waiting, rushes in and approaches the REGENT.)

PATRICE: Your majesty, forgive me, I—I—I

CARDINAL: *(Roaring.)* What is the meaning of this? On your knees!

(EVERYONE suddenly drops to their knees.)

Not you, her!

(EVERYONE except PATRICE stands.)

Guards!

REGENT: *(Before the GUARDS respond to the CARDINAL’s order.)* No, let her speak.

PATRICE: Forgive me, your majesty. I have been bound and gagged and only now gotten free. The ambassador’s daughters, they’re gone.

CARDINAL: No, you are mistaken. Look around you. They are here.

PATRICE: Forgive me, your Eminence. The ambassador’s daughters were kidnapped hours ago. These women are imposters.

CARDINAL: Guards!

(EVERYONE is taken surprise. Immediately THE IMPOSTERS draw the swords of the MUSKETEERS guarding them. The swordless MUSKETEERS obtain extra swords from other GUARDS and spring into action. The THREE IMPOSTERS fight valiantly. THEY are equal to the MUSKETEERS in fencing skill. The IMPOSTERS fight until THEY are surrounded by several of RICHELIEU’s GUARDS and the MUSKETEERS.)

CARDINAL: Drop your weapons, you are surrounded.

(THE THREE IMPOSTERS drop their weapons.)

REGENT: (*To the IMPOSTERS.*) Is it true what this woman says?

MARIETTE: Yes, the ambassador's daughters have been gone since noon.

LEVEQUE: It must be some sort of practical joke.

CARDINAL: No one would be so bold or stupid to pull a stunt like this.

What is it you want?

CADICE: What rightfully belongs to us, the Potosi Diamond.

CARDINAL: Execute them.

GISELLE: If you do, the Spanish Ambassador will never see his daughters alive.

REGENT: Guards, stand down.

(*RICHELIEU's GUARDS sheathe their weapons.*)

CARDINAL: You think her majesty is going to hand over the diamond and let you leave?

GISELLE: The ambassador's daughters have several hours head start. You will never catch them.

MARIETTE: And if we are not back within three days, the young women will be executed.

REGENT: Then we'll declare war on your worthless little country.

CADICE: And the king of Spain will declare war on France for not intervening over something as trivial as a diamond.

CARDINAL: You're bluffing.

GISELLE: Then we accept God's will.

(*The REGENT and the CARDINAL whisper.*)

REGENT: Very well. (*The REGENT removes the necklace and gives it to CADICE.*)

CADICE: Don't bother having us followed. If you do, the same fate awaits the ambassador's daughters.

REGENT: Let them go.

GISELLE: You won't have us followed?

REGENT: I give you my word.

CADICE / GISELLE / MARIETTE: Your majesty. (*THEY curtsy and exit.*)

CARDINAL: Guards, have them followed!

REGENT: Stand down! I gave my word. Are you a person of your word, Cardinal Richelieu?

CARDINAL: No.

REGENT: (*Quietly.*) I gave my word that we wouldn't follow them. I never said we wouldn't come after them.

END OF ACT I

ACT II

SCENE ONE

SCENE: Paris. The Regent's Chambers. The REGENT enters furiously, followed by the CARDINAL and LEVEQUE.

REGENT: I have never been so humiliated in all my life. Sauvignon, that nothing country, that pimple on the behind of France. I won't stand for it, I tell you. I want that diamond back.

CARDINAL: Of course, but what about the ambassador's daughters?

REGENT: Rescue them, retrieve the diamond, and then have them killed.

CARDINAL: Is it wise to provoke Spain?

REGENT: We'll blame it on Sauvignon and then Spain can do our dirty work for us. *(Exits.)*

CARDINAL: *(To LEVEQUE.)* I like it, but this could be risky. Whoever goes to Sauvignon and then dispatches the ambassador's daughters might pose a threat to us. No telling what they might find out in Sauvignon.

LEVEQUE: Which is why need men who are expendable. We'll have them executed as well, right after they hand over the diamond.

CARDINAL: Quite right, and I know just the men.

(BOTH exit.)

SCENE TWO

SCENE: *Paris. Musketeer Headquarters. TREVILLE enters followed by THE MUSKETEERS.*

TREVILLE: This is a mission of the utmost importance.

BORDEAUX: So, if I understand what you're saying, the three of us are going to ride right into Sauvignon, enter the palace, locate the diamond, steal the diamond, and on the way out rescue the ambassador's three daughters?

TREVILLE: Yes.

BORDEAUX: I'm out!

PARIS: He is not.

BORDEAUX: I am! It's a suicide mission.

TREVILLE: This is a direct order. If you refuse to obey it, *(To PARIS and D'JON,)* I will have you two returned to the Bastille where I found you, and *(To BORDEAUX)* you—

BORDEAUX: I know, and I'll join them.

TREVILLE: No. You don't think I know you're a peasant? No, the Bastille is too good for you. I'll simply have your head cut off. Any questions? None? Good. Best of luck, gentlemen. *(Exits.)*

SCENE THREE

SCENE: *Sauvignon. The Tower. A TOWER GUARD doggedly paces back and forth. PARIS, D'JON, and BORDEAUX enter and sneak up behind him, matching his pace step for step. The GUARD turns suddenly.*

TOWER GUARD: Aye, who are you fellows?

BORDEAUX: Never you mind.

TOWER GUARD: It's my job to mind. I'm the tower guard.

PARIS: In that case, we're liberators. Take us to the women, now.

TOWER GUARD: What women?

D'JON: You know very well what women, the daughters of the Spanish ambassador. They're being held captive. If you don't tell us, we'll cut out your tongue. Then you'll talk.

TOWER GUARD: Not without a tongue, I won't.

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D'JON: Then we'll gouge out your eyes.

TOWER GUARD: Then I wouldn't be able to show you where you want to go.

D'JON: Alright, we'll cut off your ears.

TOWER GUARD: How will I hear what you're saying?

D'JON: We'll write a note.

TOWER GUARD: I can't read.

PARIS: Let's not do anything. *(Reaching into a pocket.)* Here's a gold sovereign. Will that work?

TOWER GUARD: Quite nicely, thank you. But these young women you speak of, they are not here.

PARIS: Where are they?

TOWER GUARD: That's what I am trying to tell you. I don't know.

PARIS: Who would know?

TOWER GUARD: At least, I don't think they are here. I'm a guard. I know things, I hear things. If there were three young women being held captive, I would know. I would have heard.

PARIS: Alright, for the moment, forget about them. The Potosi Diamond, where is it?

TOWER GUARD: I won't tell you. I can't.

D'JON: In that case we'll have to kill you.

PARIS: That's not going to work. Here. *(Producing another coin.)* Here's another sovereign.

TOWER GUARD: *(Pointing to an enclosed cage.)* It's in there.

PARIS: Show us.

(The GUARD leads them to the cage.)

TOWER GUARD: There, under the glass.

(A shroud covers the glass case in which the diamond is kept. BORDEAUX lifts off the shroud. THEY ALL stare, impressed for a moment.)

PARIS: Impressive.

BORDEAUX: How does it open?

TOWER GUARD: It doesn't, at least not conventionally.

BORDEAUX: *(To D'JON)* Give me your blade.

(D'JON hands him a big knife.)

I'll smash the glass

TOWER GUARD: I wouldn't do that if I were you.

PARIS: Why not?

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TOWER GUARD: The whole thing is rigged up with booby traps. See those holes in the wall? You break that glass or move the case, and a hundred arrows will come shooting out. You'll look like a slice of Swiss Cheese.

D'JON: There must be some way to disarm it?

TOWER GUARD: There's a key.

BORDEAUX: Then hand it over.

TOWER GUARD: I can't.

PARIS: I'm out of sovereigns.

TOWER GUARD: No, I mean I can't get to the key you need. I have a key for the cage, but there's another key that disarms the bobby traps.

D'JON: Then we'll get it.

TOWER GUARD: You can't do that. The count has it. He sleeps with it under his pillow. During the day he wears it around his neck.

BORDEAUX: I think you're lying. I think you could get that key if you wanted to.

TOWER GUARD: Think about it. Do you know how much a fellow like me makes in a year? I can barely feed my family. If I could get my hands on that rock, don't you think I would have taken it by now?

PARIS: That makes sense. Alright, gives us the key to the cage. We'll find a way to get to the diamond.

(The GUARD hands over the cage key.)

PARIS: Thank you.

TOWER GUARD: Haven't you forgotten something?

PARIS: I told you, I'm out of sovereigns.

TOWER GUARD: No, tie me up. You've got my key. It can't look like I cooperated with you, otherwise it'll be off with my head.

PARIS: Good thought. Do you have a rope?

TOWER GUARD: No.

PARIS: *(To BORDEAUX.)* Do you have a rope?

BORDEAUX: I don't have a rope. *(To D'JON)* What about you?

D'JON: Not me.

BORDEAUX: Just take him outside and knock him out.

TOWER GUARD: Be gentle, well, as gentle as you can be with a thump on the head.

(D'JON pulls the GUARD outside. PARIS uses the key to unlock the cage. HE and BORDEAUX enter and study the glass case.)

PARIS: What do you think?

BORDEAUX: How much I hate Swiss cheese.

PARIS: What about underneath? Can you get to it that way?

BORDEAUX: That's what I'm thinking. I bet I can cut through the bottom.

PARIS: Do it.

(BORDEAUX crawls under the table.)

D'JON: *(Enters.)* Sweet dreams. He's sleeping like a baby.

PARIS: *(To BORDEAUX)* Don't touch anything that looks like a booby trap.

BORDEAUX: Are you kidding? There's so many gears, springs, and levers under here, it's like trying to undo a lady's corset.

(There is a NOISE from outside.)

PARIS: Shush, someone is coming.

(PARIS puts the shroud over the glass case. THEY make a feeble attempt to hide. CHRISTINA enters and then sees PARIS and D'JON.)

CHRISTINA: Oh! Who are you?

PARIS: We're the cleaners.

CHRISTINA: What?

D'JON: The jewelry cleaners. Time for the annual crown jewels spring cleaning.

CHRISTINA: Tell me who you really are, or I'll scream.

BORDEAUX: *(From under the table.)* If you do, we'll kill you.

PARIS: No we won't. We don't do that sort of thing. My name is Paris. This is D'Jon. Bordeaux is the one under the table. Now, who are you?

CHRISTINA: Contessa Christina.

D'JON: The Count's daughter?

CHRISTINA: Yes.

D'JON: Jackpot!

CHRISTINA: Why are you really here?

PARIS: Well, it's complicated, really.

CHRISTINA: I bet you've come to steal the diamond.

(To prove her assertion, SHE removes the shroud. BORDEAUX's hand is in the case, gripping the diamond. CHRISTINA gasps.)

CHRISTINA: You're nothing but common thieves.

D'JON: We're not common thieves, but yes, we have come for the Potosi Diamond.

CHRISTINA: To steal it.

BORDEAUX: (*Crawling out with the diamond.*) To return it to its last owner, the mother of the King of France.

CHRISTINA: You're from Paris? Do you know the Marquis de Ruze?

D'JON: Never heard of him.

CHRISTINA: He's a dirty rat and I want to find him. Take me with you.

PARIS: We can't do that.

CHRISTINA: You don't have a choice. You'll never get out of here alive, not without me.

D'JON: We'll sneak out just like we snuck in.

CHRISTINA: That guard with the bump on his head, the one lying on the floor outside the door, if he doesn't report in five minutes, five more guards will show up. I can show you a secret way out.

PARIS: And what exactly is a Contessa doing in the tower this late at night?

CHRISTINA: I come here every evening to read to the guard, to teach him to read. He's illiterate.

D'JON: Well, aren't you special?

CHRISTINA: It's selfish really. It's just an excuse to avoid spending time with my fiance'. Take me with you, please.

PARIS: We don't have a choice. Very well, show us the way.

CHRISTINA: Through here.

(*CHRISTINA leads THE MUSKETEERS through the secret exit.*)

SCENE FOUR

SCENE: Sauvignon: The royal palace. The COUNTESS paces. LISETTE enters.

LISSETTE: She's been found.

COUNTESS: Where this time?

LISSETTE: In a wood about five miles from here, tied to a tree.

COUNTESS: Very well, send her in.

(*LISSETTE exits and returns with CHRISTINA.*)

CHRISTINA: Oh, mother, I've been betrayed once again.

COUNTESS: No one can say you aren't persistent.

CHRISTINA: They were so dashing. I could have loved any of them. (*A beat.*) Well, two of them.

COUNTESS: I'm sure your husband to-be will appreciate that.

CHRISTINA: Oh, mother, this world is filled with wonderful men, and look what am I stuck with.

COUNTESS: Don't forget, the men you keep meeting want the Potosi Diamond. Twice now you've been tied to a tree. That's something to think about. Now run along.

(CHRISTINA exits.)

COUNTESS: Have you spoken to the royal jeweler?

LISETTE: Yes, he's been awakened and escorted to his shop. He should have the replica finished before the count rises.

COUNTESS: What about the guard with the bump on his head?

LISETTE: The bump has been removed, along with head. His family has been provided for.

COUNTESS: Good.

(Exits with LISETTE.)

SCENE FIVE

SCENE: Paris. Musketeer Headquarters. D'JON, PARIS, BORDEAUX enter.

PARIS: A job well done, gentlemen.

D'JON: No doubt Monsieur Treville has summoned us to congratulate us.

PARIS: Of course, why else?

BORDEAUX: We'll probably get promotions.

D'JON: You're not even a guard. You're barely a servant.

(TREVILLE enters angrily.)

PARIS: Good day, Monsieur Treville.

TREVILLE: Good day, my foot. It's a fake, you morons, a fake.

BORDEAUX: Your foot is fake?

TREVILLE: The diamond, you idiot.

PARIS: The diamond is fake?

TREVILLE: Yes, the diamond you brought back from Sauvignon is a fake. The royal jeweler accidentally dropped it and it broke into a hundred pieces. It was glass. Lucky for you, the regent doesn't know.

D'JON: That's impossible, the diamond was under guard.

TREVILLE: Very clever. I see how it is. You break into the tower at Sauvignon, steal the Potosi Diamond for yourselves, and then give the Regent a fake. Did you honestly think you could get away with that?

D'JON: No, we broke into the tower and stole—

(Together D'JON and PARIS realize what has happened.)

D'JON and PARIS: A fake.

PARIS: A fake that cost me two gold sovereigns. We were tricked.

BORDEAUX: I'm glad we hit that guard on the head.

TREVILLE: If you don't get that diamond back, it'll be your heads. You've got to go back.

PARIS: Where?

TREVILLE: To Sauvignon, of course. Find the real diamond and find the ambassador's daughters.

PARIS: We are your obedient servants.

TEVILLE: Oh, shut up.

(TREVILLE storms out followed by the MUSKETEERS.)

SCENE SIX

SCENE: Sauvignon. The Tower. The MUSKETEERS engage in an elaborate pantomime of sneaking into the tower. Suddenly CHRISTINA enters the tower and surprises the MUSKETEERS. BORDEAUX sees the princess and screams.

CHRISTINA: You again. My saviors.

BORDEAUX: Good grief, you half scared me to death. What are you doing here?

CHRISTINA: You came back for me!

PARIS: I'm sorry, Contessa, we came back for the diamond, the real diamond.

D'JON: We've got a bone to pick with you. Why didn't you tell us the diamond we took was fake?

CHRISTINA: If I had, you wouldn't have taken me with you. Not that it did me much good anyway.

BORDEAUX: Serves you right.

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CHRISTINA: What kind of men are you, leaving a defenseless young woman tied to a tree?

BORDEAUX: Be glad we didn't slit your throat.

PARIS: Oh, shut up. We don't do things like that. We're the good guys.

CHRISTINA: Then prove it, take me with you. Please, liberate me from this horrid marriage I am about to be thrust into.

D'JON: How bad could he be?

CHRISTINA: He's horrible. Why do you think I'm hiding in the tower?

PARIS: We need that diamond.

CHRISTINA: Am I not the jewel of the Sauvignon?

D'JON: Yes, you're very nice, and under different circumstances I might attempt to court you, but if we don't get that diamond, we lose our heads.

PARIS: Please, Contessa, it's a matter of life or death. Won't you help us?

CHRISTINA: If I have to marry that horrible man, I might as well be dead. There's nothing I can do to help you.

BORDEAUX: I guess it's the old chopping block then.

CHRISTINA: No, I mean I can't give you the diamond.

D'JON: It's right there. *(Pointing to the case.)* We'll get just like we did last time.

CHRISTINA: It's not real. It's a replica.

PARIS: Another fake? How many of those things are there?

BORDEAUX: Where's the real diamond?

CHRISTINA: The Marquis de Ruze took the real one.

BORDEAUX: Who is the Marquis de Ruze?

PARIS: The Marquis de Ruze. That's the name you mentioned the last time we were here.

CHRISTINA: Yes, he pretended to be an emissary from the King. He offered a worthless treaty. He made love to me, swore he'd take me with him to Paris, and then stole the real diamond.

D'JON: Can you describe this Maquis de Ruze?

CHRISTINA: Tall, swarthy, good looking.

BORDEAUX: That could be any us.

D'JON: Any number of nobles in Paris match that description. Surely there is something else you can tell us.

CHRISTINA: Well, he—never mind, you wouldn't be able to see that. Oh, I know, he wears an eye patch.

BORDEAUX: My mother!

PARIS and D'JON: LeVeque!

PARIS: Yes, of course, LeVeque. Now I see it. If LeVeque steals the diamond--

D'JON: Then how does it get from him to the Regent? Is he the Regent's secret admirer?

BORDEAUX: And she's so much older than he.

D'JON: But LeVeque takes orders from the Cardinal.

PARIS: Does that mean the Cardinal ordered LeVeque to steal the diamond? If so, why give it to the Regent anonymously?

D'JON: Does that also mean the Cardinal arranged for the ambassador's daughters to be kidnapped in an attempt to steal back the diamond?

CHRISTINA: If this is what goes on in Paris, I must go there right away. So much romance and intrigue.

D'JON: We still haven't answered the question of why.

(ALL thinking aloud.)

PARIS: A worthless treaty and the theft of the diamond further erodes the relationship between Sauvignon and the King.

D'JON: The relationship between the young King and his mother is already tense. By wearing the Potosi Diamond in public, the King is hardly in any position to negotiate with Sauvignon.

BORDEAUX: And the kidnapping of the ambassador's daughters further weakens France's relationship with Spain.

CHRISTINA: Why?

PARIS: To embarrass the king by making him appear weak and not in control. While Sauvignon and Spain rattle their sabers, only one man in France can bring harmony, while creating chaos.

PARIS / D'JON / BORDEAUX: The Cardinal!

PARIS: Exactly. He has the diamond and the three young women. Once more, gentlemen, into the breach.

CHRISTINA: But what about me? Please, take me with you.

(The MUSKETEERS exit. Before we can see whether or not CHRISTINA leaves with the MUSKETEERS, the lights fade out.)

SCENE SEVEN

SCENE: *Sauvignon. The royal palace. The COUNTESS enters followed a moment later by LISETTE.*

LISETTE: Once again she's been found.

COUNTESS: In a wood tied to a tree?

LISETTE: No, this time they locked her in the tower. Last time they were here, she showed them the secret passage out. There was no point in taking her with them this time.

COUNTESS: Very well, send her in.

CHRISTINA: *(Running in.)* Oh, mother! *(Sobbing.)*

(The COUNTESS puts her arm around CHRISTINA, comforting her. THEY exit, followed by LISETTE.)

SCENE EIGHT

SCENE: Paris. The Cardinal's Chambers. The CARDINAL and LEVEQUE are conversing quietly. COUNCILOR enters.

COUNCILOR: Three of the King's musketeers to see you.

CARDINAL: Send them in. *(To LEVEQUE.)* You better step outside.

(As LEVEQUE steps outside, the MUSKETEERS enter.)

CARDINAL: *(Not expecting to see these THREE)* Oh, good Lord!

PARIS: Your Eminence, in the name of the King, you are under arrest.

We have come for the diamond.

D'JON: The real Potosi Diamond.

CARDINAL: Idiots. How dare you barge in here! Do you know who you are speaking to?

PARIS: We do, which is why we are all the more shocked. We charge you with sending Monsieur LeVeque to Sauvignon, disguised as an emissary of the King, stealing the Potosi Diamond, sending it anonymously to the Regent, kidnapping the ambassador's daughters and then stealing back the diamond from the Regent.

CARDINAL: Gentlemen, before dragging me off to the Bastille, will you allow me a few moments of prayer?

(The MUSKETEERS don't take the hint.)

If you wouldn't mind waiting outside.

PARIS: Of course, we are Musketeers and gentlemen.

(The MUSKETEERS step out. LEVEQUE returns.)

LEVEQUE: Shall I have them executed?

CARDINAL: Ordinarily I would say yes, but these fools might actually blunder in to finding the real diamond.

LEVEQUE: I wouldn't be so sure.

(From the other side of the door, BORDEAUX listens to the CARDINAL.)

D’JON: What are you doing?

BORDEAUX: Shush, the door is open.

PARIS: You’re eavesdropping on the Cardinal’s prayers?

BORDEAUX: Quiet, I can’t hear what they are saying.

PARIS: They? You mean there’s someone else in there with him?

BORDEAUX: If not, God is French.

(The MUSKETEERS listen as the CARDINAL continues speaking with LEVEQUE.)

CARDINAL: Let’s think this through. These fools think we have the diamond. Since we don’t, who does? Who could have pulled off such a theft?

LEVEQUE: Obviously a spy of some kind.

CARDINAL: Yes, but spying for whom? Obviously not Sauvignon. Not for the King. He’s too stupid. His mother, the regent? The English? Italians? Heugenots? Spanish? *(Throwing up his hands.)* This doesn’t make sense.

(HE and LEVEQUE exit. Outside the chambers.)

PARIS: *(Suddenly an idea occurs to him.)* Of course. It makes perfect sense.

D’JON: You know?

PARIS: Of course, who else?

D’JON: Should we tell the Cardinal?

PARIS: No, we’ve just accused the second most powerful man in France of theft. No, gentlemen, we’re on our way to Malta.

(ALL THREE exit.)

SCENE NINE

SCENE: Malta. A tower near the palace. On one side of the stage THREE GUARDS march in and then stand at attention, guarding the tower where the YOUNG WOMEN are being held. On the other side of the stage are BORDEAUX and D’JON awaiting the arrival of PARIS.

BORDEAUX: What a horrid journey. I don’t know what’s worse, days of riding on horseback or days of sailing across the straight.

D'JON: You're not a very good musketeer.

BORDEAUX: I'm a peasant. I'm used to lying around and not doing very much, but making it look like I'm very busy.

D'JON: Then we've been paying you for nothing.

BORDEAUX: No, you've not been paying me anything for nothing.

D'JON: But if we had been paying you, it would have been for nothing.

BORDEAUX: Then you're getting your money's worth.

D'JON: Never mind. He's here.

(PARIS enters.)

Well, what did you find out?

PARIS: As we suspected, all three of the ambassador's daughters are here.

D'JON: Did you see them?

PARIS: No, I overheard the guards talking.

D'JON: But you know where they are?

PARIS: They are being held in a tower.

BORDEAUX: I hate towers.

PARIS: The problem is how we get past the guards.

D'JON: Can we scale the walls?

PARIS: The walls are too high. We could never find a rope long enough. No, we'll have to make a frontal assault.

BORDEAUX: And how will we do that? Will we just walk in, ask the for key? What?

PARIS: This will require something bold, something inventive, something they'll never see coming.

(A long pause as D'JON and BORDEAUX await the answer.)

D'JON: *(Finally.)* And what is that something?

PARIS: I have no idea.

(The MUSKETEERS exit. On the other side of the stage, The MALTESE GUARDS engage in an animated conversation about their PRISONERS.)

MALTESE GUARD 1: You see the way she gave me the eye? I think she fancies me.

MALTESE GUARD 2: You're dreaming. It was me she was giving the eye to.

MALTESE GUARD 3: If she was blind.

MALTESE GUARD 1: Never mind, I'll take the short one.

MALTESE GUARD 2: There's two short ones. Which one?

MALTESE GUARD 3: You can have them both, I'll take the redhead.

(Suddenly we hear the sound of burlesque music playing. From the side of the stage opposite the GUARDS, D'JON, BORDEAUX, and PARIS enter dressed as women. THEY are wearing dresses and wigs. THEY strut across the stage toward the GUARDS, giggle, tease, and beckon the GUARDS to follow as THEY exit. The THREE GUARDS rush off stage. Off stage we hear clubbing sounds and a brawl. A few moments later, the MUSKETEERS re-enter, still wearing their dresses.)

D'JON: Disgusting! One of them pinched me.

PARIS: How do you think I feel? I had to fish this key out of someone's trousers.

BORDEAUX: I got a marriage proposal.

D'JON: Alright, here we are. Ready?

(The MUSKETEERS throw open the doors to the enclosure where the GIRLS are kept. Or this may be a screen or some other device behind which the GIRLS are hidden. There is a commotion as the GIRLS are unsure what is happening. The GIRLS laugh at the sight of their liberators.)

FRANCESCA: What is the meaning of this?

PARIS: Forgive us, ladies we are here to rescue you.

MARIE: Rescue us? Were you sent by our father? Who are you?

D'JON: Allow us to introduce ourselves. I am D'Jon, this is Paris, and he is Bordeaux.

PARIS: We are the King's musketeers.

PORTIA: What? Three old hags? Is this what France is coming to? I expected something much more romantic.

PARIS: I wish I could explain, Mademoiselle, but there isn't time. We must hurry.

(The THREE GUARDS rush on.)

MALTESE GUARD 3: Halt! Stop where you are.

(The DUCHESS and her AIDE enter.)

Your Excellency, the interlopers have been apprehended.

D'JON: Musketeers, draw your weapons.

(In a pantomime of awkwardness, THEY attempt to draw their swords from under their dresses.)

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PARIS: (*Ignoring the futility of drawing weapons.*) In the name of the

King of France, I demand you release these prisoners immediately.

DUCHESS: If we don't what will you do? Hit us with your garters?

BORDEAUX: Let us go or we will execute the prisoners.

PARIS: No we won't, we don't do that sort of thing.

DUCHESS: The tower is surrounded. Escape is impossible.

BORDEAUX: (*With bravado.*) Not for musketeers—

DUCHESS: In dresses?

AIDE: Gentlemen, seriously, put down your skirts.

DUCHESS: So, you've come to rescue the ambassador's daughters, have you?

PARIS: And to return the Potosi Diamond to Paris.

DUCHESS: You mean this. (*Producing the diamond.*) Here we call it the Jewel of Malta. For seventy years it was our national treasure until usurped by those heathens to the north, and more recently by the mother of the King of France.

PARIS: Incorrectly, we believed it was Sauvignon who orchestrated the theft.

DUCHESS: That's what we wanted you to believe. Nothing would have delighted me more than to see France declare war on Sauvignon.

D'JON: Our compliments, quite clever.

(*The MUSKETEERS curtsy.*)

DUCHESS: We think so. We're rather proud of ourselves.

PARIS: Now that we've got that all cleared up, I don't suppose you're going to let us return to Paris with the ambassador's daughters and the diamond?

DUCHESS: On the contrary. Take the diamond, leave the girls. (*SHE tosses the diamond to PARIS.*)

PARIS: I don't understand.

DUCHESS: The ambassador's daughters will remain our prisoners, until the diamond is returned. Here, you can have your trinket, it's quite worthless. It's a fake.

BORDEAUX: What? Another fake?

D'JON: That's not possible.

DUCHESS: Well crafted, but a fake nonetheless.

PARIS: We were all in attendance the night the Regent took the diamond from her neck and gave it to the three imposters.

DUCHESS: And they swore with their dying breaths it was the same one given to them by the Regent. It seems there is a snake in the palace.

PARIS: Why didn't we see it before? It's so obvious.

ALL: It is?

D'JON: Of course it is. You know what that means?

PORTIA: You're leaving us?

D'JON: We must return to Paris.

FRANCESCA: What do you expect from men in dresses?

PARIS: We'll need fresh horses and a ship.

BORDEAUX: What, more riding? My butt is killing me.

(*ALL exit.*)

SCENE ELEVEN

SCENE: Paris. The Regent's Palace. LEVEQUE is flanked by two guards. TREVILLE, the CARDINAL, and the REGENT are also present. Additional GUARDS and MEMBERS of the COURT are also in attendance. The MUSKETEERS barge in.

CARDINAL: What is going on? What is the commotion?

PARIS: We are here to see the regent.

CARDINAL: I beg your pardon, your majesty, these men were not invited here.

PARIS: Your majesty, our deepest apologies, but we come on a mission of grave importance. It concerns the Potosi Diamond.

CARDINAL: Monsieur Treville, have these men arrested immediately.

TREVILLE: Guards!

REGENT: Countermand that order. I wish to hear what these gentlemen have to say.

PARIS: Your majesty, when last we met, we were assigned by Monsieur Treville to protect the ambassador's daughters and to guard the Potosi Diamond.

REGENT: Yes, I recall, it didn't go well. By my count, we are three women and one diamond short.

D'JON: Our apologies, your Majesty, but we couldn't have known that we were mere pawns in a plot to discredit the King.

REGENT: A plot to discredit the King?

BORDEAUX: Actually, three plots.

REGENTS: Three plots, really? Pawns, you say.

CARDINAL: More like morons. Your majesty, these men have nothing to say that we do not already know.

REGENT: Then perhaps your Grace can finish the story.

CARDINAL: As you know, the diamond was in Sauvignon for ten years—

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REGENT: Yes, yes, we know all that. What we don't know is who sent it to me and why, and then who stole it, along with kidnapping the ambassador's daughters. (To PARIS.) You can explain that?

PARIS: The three imposters who assumed the identities of the ambassador's daughters and stole the diamond were from Malta.

REGENT and CARDINAL: Malta?

D'JON: We have just returned from there.

CARDINAL: They had the diamond? The Regent's diamond?

BORDEAUX: Yes, but it was a fake.

REGENT: Are you saying the diamond I wore was a fake?

PARIS: Yes, I am afraid so.

CARDINAL: (An odd glance at LEVEQUE.) So, you have returned with nothing.

REGENT: You said there were three plots.

PARIS: Yes, that was the third.

D'JON: The first involved stealing the diamond from Sauvignon. The person who stole the diamond is in this very room right now. We have it on good authority.

CARDINAL: On good authority? How?

BORDEAUX: We threatened to kill them unless they told.

PARIS: But we don't do that sort of thing.

CARDINAL: Well, I do. Guards, execute them immediately.

REGENT: Wait! This a serious charge. I demand to know the name.

D'JON: The second plot involved giving you a fake.

REGENT: The name!

PARIS: Monsieur LeVeque. He was acting on the Cardinal's orders.

CARDINAL: (To LEVEQUE.) You gave her majesty a fake? You lied to me! Give me the real diamond now.

LEVEQUE: Not a chance.

CARDINAL: (To TREVILLE.) Don't just stand there, do something.

TREVILLE: (To the MUSKETEERS.) Guards!

(The GUARDS snap to attention as TREVILLE turns to LEVEQUE.)

Now, Monsieur LeVeque, hand over the diamond.

LEVEQUE: Over my dead body.

BORDEAUX: We can do that. Engarde!

(All the SWORDSMEN draw their weapons and take sides. LEVEQUE and his MEN take on the THREE MUSKETEERS. This final duel should be the longest and most dramatic of the three dueling scenes.

LEVEQUE is clearly the superior swordsman, but the MUSKETEERS finally defeat him and bring him to his knees. PARIS approaches the defeated LEVEQUE.)

PARIS: The diamond, hand it over.

LEVEQUE: I don't have it.

CARDINAL: He's lying. Look around his neck.

(PARIS pulls open LEVEQUE's shirt and pulls the necklace with the diamond from around his neck.)

PARIS: Here it is.

CARDINAL: *(To TREVILLE.)* Have him taken to the Bastille.

TREVILLE: At once. *(To LEVEQUE.)* Come along, Monsieur Traitor.

(TREVILLE's guards escort LEVEQUE and his MEN off. TREVILLE remains on stage.)

CARDINAL: Your majesty, I—

REGENT: We will talk later.

CARDINAL: Of course.

(HE steps back as the REGENT goes to the MUSKETEERS.)

PARIS: *(Bowing and offering the necklace.)* Your majesty.

REGENT: If you would be so kind.

(The REGENT dips in order for PARIS to hang the diamond around her neck.)

BORDEAUX: Beautiful, absolutely stunning.

REGENT: Exquisite. But honestly, I can't tell any difference between this and the fake. Gentlemen, France owes you debt of gratitude.

Monsieur Treville, see that these men are handsomely rewarded.

Good day, gentlemen.

(As the REGENT exits, the MUSKETEERS, TREVILLE, and the CARDINAL bow.)

CARDINAL: *(To the MUSKETEERS.)* In case you think our business is finished, it is not. *(Exits.)*

D'JON: There's thanks for you.

PARIS: I guess he hasn't gotten over the fact that we accused him of being a thief.

BORDEAUX: Now, about that reward.

TREVILLE: Musketeers serve for the honor and glory of France. We don't do it for the money. Good day, gentlemen. *(Exits.)*

D'JON: Honor and glory. At least France has gotten the diamond back. We can take some satisfaction in that.

BORDEAUX: Her majesty was right, that diamond she's wearing now looks exactly like the fake. You'd never know she has the real one.
PARIS: She doesn't. (*Pulling the real diamond necklace out of his pocket.*) We do.

(BORDEAUX and D'JON exchange a glance.)

D'JON: That can mean only one thing.

PARIS: Back to Malta.

BORDEAUX: What? More riding? (*Rubbing his backside.*) Oh, no.

PARIS: Yes, my friend, but just think what awaits us in Malta, a hero's welcome and the ambassador's lovely daughters. (*Exit.*)

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