

The Three Musketeers

by Alexandre Dumas, 1844

WORK AND AUTHOR

The Three Musketeers:

1. Published in 1844.
2. A swashbuckling adventure novel, originally printed as a newspaper serial.
3. Historical fiction, which featured France's King Louis the Thirteenth and the famous Cardinal Richelieu.

Alexandre Dumas:

1. Born in France in 1802.
2. One of the most prolific writers of the world, attributed with writing hundreds of books, as well as plays, stories, and travel guides.
3. An adventurous, amorous man who was frequently in debt, lived in a grand manner, and had three children by three different women — none of whom he married.
4. Father of Alexandre Dumas fils, who wrote *Camille* and other French plays and books.

THEME AND CONTENTS

1. Set in France in 1625.
2. A young and inexperienced — but brave — young man comes to Paris to be one of the King's special guards, who are known as the musketeers.
3. Wartime adventures and court intrigues abound as the musketeers fight in honor of their king and queen — and against the infamous schemer, Cardinal Richelieu.

MAIN CHARACTERS

1. D'Artagnan, the newest musketeer and the main character.
2. Athos, the aristocratic musketeer.
3. Aramis, the musketeer who plans to enter the priesthood as soon as the queen provides France with an heir to the throne.
4. Porthos, a courtly musketeer who especially enjoys comfort and wealth.
5. De Tréville, the captain of the King's musketeers.
6. The Queen of France (Anne of Austria).
7. The King of France (Louis the Thirteenth).
8. Cardinal Richelieu, the powerful man behind the king.

STORY

1. D'Artagnan travels to Paris to become a musketeer.
2. He becomes friends with the three musketeers.
3. The four agree to rescue Constance, a servant of the queen who has been kidnapped by two of Richelieu's plotters.
4. The queen loves the Duke of Buckingham, but says she can't see him again and gives him 12 diamond studs as a token of her affection.

5. Richelieu, who knows of the gift, suggests the king have a ball, knowing the queen would be expected to wear the diamonds she gave to Buckingham. Richelieu wants the queen to fall out of favor with the king.
6. The musketeers go after the diamonds but are waylaid, and only D'Artagnan completes the mission.
7. D'Artagnan pursues the treacherous Milady, who turns on him.
8. Milady and Richelieu go after D'Artagnan.
9. Milady has Buckingham killed and poisons Constance.
10. Milady is caught and executed.
11. Richelieu decides that D'Artagnan is an exceptional man and makes him first lieutenant of the musketeers.

LASTING IMPACT

1. Good storytelling, fascinating history, rich and colorful characters, romance, and humor.
2. Made into many movies, some as entertaining as the book.
3. The greatest insight from the book may be what it says about the man who wrote it — a high-living romantic who had little regard for women but a tremendous attraction to adventure.