

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH. FIELD. DAY

Establishing shot of country church.

AGNES hums as she walks along the country path, 10:00:04 making her way past a herd of sheep as she kisses the head of the BABY in her arms.

D'ARTAGNAN (O.S.)
So why do you think the Cardinal is
so interested ...

EXT. COUNTRY PATH. DAY

Aramis and D'Artagnan ride through the peaceful countryside.

D'ARTAGNAN
... in this baby?

ARAMIS
All I know is it's our job to
collect the infant and his mother
and take them back to Paris. That's
it.

D'ARTAGNAN
You're not curious?

ARAMIS
Not in the least.

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH. FIELD. DAY

AGNES continues to hum to the BABY in her arms as she kneels down by a freshly dug grave marked with a wooden cross instead of a headstone.
She rocks the BABY and kisses it.

EXT. COUNTRY PATH. DAY

D'ARTAGNAN
And this priest, Duval? What does
he have to do with it all?

ARAMIS
Probably paid to look after them,
but one thing you need to learn,
d'Artagnan. Don't get involved.

D'Artagnan smiles.

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Just up ahead lies the Church of the village of Cely.

INT. VILLAGE CHURCH. DAY

Through the window, D'ARTAGNAN and ARAMIS can be seen approaching.

MICHEL hurries down the stairs, clutching a pile of paperwork that he quickly sifts through, discarding the unnecessary documents.

The CURATE nervously looks over at him.

While FATHER DUVAL stays hidden beneath the slatted wooden stairs to a gallery at the back of the church.

MICHEL approaches the CURATE whilst his fellow KIDNAPPERS continue to search the church.

MICHEL

Where are they? The Bernard woman
and her child?

Terrified, the CURATE lifts a shaking finger and points to the open door at the back of the church.

CURATE

Outside.

MICHEL nods to the other KIDNAPPER who hurries out, then he turns back to the CURATE and whispers into his ear.

MICHEL

Forgive me, for I have sinned.

CURATE

What is your offence?

MICHEL

Murder.

He thrusts his dagger into the CURATE's side.

FATHER DUVAL's eyes widen as he watches from his hiding place under the stairs.

MICHEL lowers the dead CURATE to the ground, pulls out his dagger and hurries out.

DUVAL remains under the stairs - petrified.

EXT. COUNTRY CHURCH. FIELD. DAY

AGNES lies on a shawl by the grave, playing with her BABY lying next to her.

INT. VILLAGE CHURCH. DAY

DUVAL remains under the stairs - petrified.

D'ARTAGNAN (O.S.)
Father Duval?

DUVAL looks up at the sound of his name.

The CURATE lies dead in a pool of blood on the church floor; papers strewn all around him.

D'ARTAGNAN rushes in.

D'ARTAGNAN
Father Duval?

DUVAL doesn't move.

D'ARTAGNAN runs over to the CURATE's body.

D'ARTAGNAN (cont'd)
Aramis!

ARAMIS dashes in to find D'ARTAGNAN examining the dead body.

D'ARTAGNAN (cont'd)
I think we've found him.

DUVAL shrinks back in his hiding place. Then from the back gardens he hears the sound of AGNES' screams.

EXT. VILLAGE CHURCH. FIELD. DAY

MICHEL picks up the crying BABY and places it in a basket as the other KIDNAPPER holds a struggling, screaming and sobbing AGNES.

AGNES
Put me down! Put me down! No!

INT. VILLAGE CHURCH. DAY

D'ARTAGNAN and ARAMIS rush out.

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CONTINUED:

AGNES (O.S.)

Help me!

EXT. VILLAGE CHURCH. FIELD. DAY

MICHEL straps the BABY in the basket to his back and starts to walk off, whilst the other KIDNAPPER continues to keep AGNES back, holding a knife to her throat.

ARAMIS and D'ARTAGNAN rush out of the church.

AGNES struggles.

AGNES

Help me! No!!

MICHEL turns back to his accomplice.

MICHEL

Finish her!

ARAMIS and D'Artagnan run towards them. ARAMIS leaps over the small church wall, firing his pistol and managing to hit the KIDNAPPER who drops dead to the ground, freeing AGNES.

But MICHEL continues to flee with the BABY.

He speeds to the waiting horses being held by another KIDNAPPER, who raises his pistol and fires at ARAMIS and D'ARTAGNAN, knocking D'ARTAGNAN's pistol from his hand and forcing to dive for cover as MICHEL and the other KIDNAPPER gallop away.

AGNES tries desperately to run after them but they are already disappearing. ARAMIS holds AGNES back, keeping her out of harm's way as she tries to run after them.

AGNES

No!! Henry! No! Henry! Henry!

Distraught, she sinks to her knees in tears. D'ARTAGNAN looks at ARAMIS, both confused.

INT. COUNTRY CHURCH. DAY

DUVAL steps out from under the stairs, clutching a large, leather bound book to his chest.

He starts to leave, stopping briefly to look down at the dead CURATE, crosses himself, then runs out.

CONTINUED:

TITLES

EXT. VILLAGE CHURCH. FIELD. DAY

D'ARTAGNAN is already on his horse and champing at the bit to head off in pursuit of the kidnappers. ARAMIS talks to him urgently.

ARAMIS

Follow them as closely as you can.
My guess is they're headed for
Paris. I'll try and find out what's
going on.

D'ARTAGNAN

This was no ordinary kidnapping,
was it?

ARAMIS shakes his head.

D'ARTAGNAN (cont'd)

Meet me at Bonacieux's house.

ARAMIS nods as D'ARTAGNAN rides away at speed.

ARAMIS turns to find AGNES standing just behind him, holding the dead KIDNAPPER'S dagger in her hand and pointing it at his throat.

She looks wild and desperate.

AGNES

I swear I'll kill you. Who are you?

ARAMIS

My name is Aramis of the King's
Musketeers. I have been sent to
escort you and your son to the
palace.

AGNES

Why?

ARAMIS

I was hoping you might tell me.

AGNES keeps the knife at ARAMIS' throat.

ARAMIS (cont'd)

How can I put this discreetly?
Perhaps you went to a ball
somewhere?

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS (cont'd)

Had a chance encounter with a charming and persuasive young man? One thing leads to another and nine months later little Henry comes along.

AGNES

What kind of woman do you think I am?

ARAMIS

I really have no idea.

AGNES

I am faithful to my husband Philippe Bernard!

She lunges at him. Effortlessly, he disarms her.

ARAMIS

If this Philippe is truly the baby's father, where is he now?

She points to the grave. ARAMIS' face falls.

ARAMIS (cont'd)

I'm sorry. That was tactless.

AGNES

Just leave me alone.

She starts to head towards the church.

AGNES (cont'd)

Father Duval!

ARAMIS

Don't go in there.

AGNES looks back at him and sees his saddened look.

ARAMIS (cont'd)

Don't go in there.

EXT. WOODS. DAY

The thunder of hooves, the baying of hounds, the sound of a hunting horn. King LOUIS leads a group of men on horseback - including CAPTAIN TREVILLE, ATHOS and PORTHOS - through trees at high speed.

EXT. ROYAL CAMP. DAY

The HUNTERS emerge from the trees into a field, hounds accompanying them home. LOUIS, weary but exuberant, is in his element.

A feast is laid out.

LOUIS
The thrill of the chase, Captain.
It is close to divine.

They arrive back at the Royal Camp. Small tents surround one main tent complete with awning and resplendent in gold trim. The KING'S GUARDS stand sentry outside the main tent. Porthos and Athos tie up their horses. ATHOS spots something in the distance.

He looks through his spy glass and sees a large group of RIDERS on the horizon, heading towards the Royal Camp.

ATHOS
Captain!!

TREVILLE and PORTHOS turn to take a look.

TREVILLE looks through his spy glass and sees that the RIDING PARTY have stopped, while two RIDERS make their way towards the HUNTING PARTY.

TREVILLE looks surprised.

TREVILLE
It can't be ...

He turns away, shouting urgently.

TREVILLE (cont'd)
Guards! Protect the King!

The KING'S GUARDS spring into action.

TREVILLE (cont'd)
Quickly!

An air of panic settles over the camp as the COURTIERS become aware of the sinister party thundering towards them.

The two RIDERS get closer.

TREVILLE (cont'd)
Out the way, out the way, out the way!

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CONTINUED:

The COURTIERS rush into tents whilst the GUARDS form a Human Shield in front of the KING's tent.

TREVILLE (cont'd)
On your guard ...

ATHOS and PORTHOS stand ahead of the group, as the RIDERS approach.

INT. KING'S TENT. DAY

The CARDINAL waits with the KING and QUEEN.

EXT. ROYAL CAMP. DAY

The two RIDERS approach, they are MARIE and VINCENT. They look down at the GUARDS, with the MUSKETEERS at their lead.

TREVILLE
Hold the line ...

MARIE
I demand to see the King.

INT. KING'S TENT. DAY

LOUIS looks up, astonished at the voice.

EXT. ROYAL CAMP. DAY

MARIE lifts her veil and waits.

The KING steps out from his tent.

MARIE walks towards him.

MARIE
My beloved son.

LOUIS
I ordered you, never to come back!

MARIE
Where else should I turn when I am
in grave danger?

He pushes his way through the armed guards.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS

You are banished for life on pain of execution! You tried to steal my throne! Now I'm obliged to cut off your head and place it on a spike for all Paris to ogle.

ANNE stands just outside of the tent.

ANNE

Come inside, Sire. Leave this to the Cardinal and Captain Treville.

MARIE throws herself to her knees and grasps LOUIS's hand.

MARIE

Please, I beg of you. On my knees. In the name of the love you once bore me.

LOUIS

I did love you. And you betrayed me.

He is close to tears. The CARDINAL steps over.

CARDINAL

Your Majesty, the Queen is right. You must withdraw.

LOUIS looks down at MARIE's outstretched arm, tears roll down his cheeks as she looks up at him with pleading eyes.

Then he turns back and heads towards his tent.

PORTHOS and ATHOS help her to her feet. VINCENT is by her side.

MARIE

Abandon me now and I'll die. Someone is trying to kill me! Please!

INT. ROYAL CAMP. MAIN TENT. DAY

LOUIS in a frenzy of indecision, over emotional and confused.

LOUIS

How can she just appear like this? Why does she insist on provoking me?

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CONTINUED:

The CARDINAL stands by his side. TREVILLE and THE QUEEN are with them.

CARDINAL

I suggest Your Majesty demonstrates his magnanimity by sparing her life.

LOUIS

How can I? She was warned. If she ever showed her face in Paris again I would cut off her head.

CARDINAL

Decapitating one's mother is rarely popular with the people, Sire. It always looks a touch ungrateful.

ANNE

The threat she faces must be very real if she's prepared to risk her life by coming here.

LOUIS

But we will find these assassins Cardinal? I can't have people running around trying to kill my mother. Not unless I tell them to.

EXT. ROYAL CAMP. DAY

Everyone stands down.

The CARDINAL emerges and the GUARDS part so he can speak with MARIE. His manner is formal and cold.

CARDINAL

The King is occupied with pressing state business. He cannot see you.

VINCENT

Her gracious Majesty has survived one attack only by God's grace. We are too few to withstand another attempt.

CARDINAL

His Majesty's decision is final.

MARIE sighs.

EXT. COUNTRYSIDE. DAY

MICHEL and the other KIDNAPPER ride together, MICHEL still has the baby basket strapped to his back, the BABY cries from within.

Not far behind them is D'ARTAGNAN.

EXT. COUNTRY ROAD. DAY

AGNES on horseback. ARAMIS on foot leading the horse.

AGNES
Why would they take my baby?

ARAMIS
How long have you lived in the village? Something in your past might provide us with a clue?

AGNES
I've lived there ever since I fled my father's temper. Father Duval found me a place.

ARAMIS
What of your husband?

AGNES
He was a simple man, kind and decent. We met and fell in love.

She pauses nervously as PEASANT MAN and WOMAN approach from the opposite direction.

PEASANT WOMAN
Look, it's her!

AGNES looks apprehensive and tries to hide her face with her head scarf.

As they see her the WOMAN crosses herself and looks away, while the PEASANT MAN gives her a vicious look and points.

PEASANT MAN
Get away from us! The devil and his consort don't belong amongst decent people!

He spits on the ground and hurries off with the two PEASANT WOMEN.

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CONTINUED:

ARAMIS frowns in disbelief.

ARAMIS
What was all that about?

AGNES
Ignorance and superstition.

EXT. PARIS STREET. DAY

MICHEL and the KIDNAPPER ride through a busy street where the locals are drying large sheets in different colours and hanging them out to dry.

D'ARTAGNAN follows at a safe distance.

He watches as the men stop outside a ram shackled old building, dismount and go inside, with the BABY.

They close the door behind them.

EXT. WOODS. TREE LINED PATH. DAY

TREVILLE, ATHOS and PORTHOS escort MARIE, VINCENT and a small band of MARIE'S MEN through the woods.

MARIE
The Cardinal has a personal grudge against me. Captain, please, you are a reasonable man. You're escorting me home to my death.

TREVILLE
You forget I was there when you tried to seize power, Your Majesty. With respect, don't expect sympathy from me.

At the front, PORTHOS stops abruptly as he hears something, then sees a man running up ahead behind the trees.

PORTHOS
Ambush!!

MEN hidden amongst the trees start to fire down on them. TREVILLE, ATHOS and PORTHOS surround MARIE ready to take any bullet for her.

ATHOS
Are you hurt your Majesty?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIE

No!

VINCENT and his men spring into action, determined and furious. They see the two SHOOTERS up ahead, armed to the teeth with muskets and pistols. They throw their muskets to one side and fire pistols with both hands.

The FIRST SHOOTER is about to fire again at MARIE. VINCENT aims his pistol at him and kills him. The SECOND SHOOTER runs but VINCENT grapples him to the ground and raises his sword. The SECOND SHOOTER looks startled about to speak.

ATHOS

No! We need him for questioning.

But VINCENT slices his throat without mercy.

PORTHOS pushes VINCENT aside, but it is too late.

PORTHOS

No!

VINCENT

No one who seeks to harm my Queen warrants the privilege of questions.

ATHOS glares down at him from his horse.

TREVILLE joins them.

INT. LOUVRE. CLOISTERED ENTRANCE. DAY

The dishevelled MARIE and VINCENT tumble back into the palace with TREVILLE following them. LOUIS with ANNE and the stone-faced CARDINAL are there to greet them. Marie is tear-stained and hysterical with emotion.

VINCENT

Your Majesty ...

LOUIS is unsure how to greet her. He looks anguished. LOUIS steps forward.

LOUIS

Are you harmed?

MARIE

Only a little shaken.

LOUIS looks at VINCENT.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS
And you killed these renegades?

VINCENT
I did, Your Majesty.

LOUIS turns to TREVILLE.

LOUIS
Captain?

TREVILLE
I have Musketeers searching for the
assailants, Your Majesty. They will
be brought to justice -

LOUIS
I nearly lost my mother!

MARIE
God has seen to it that I shall not
go to the grave without my son's
love. He has sent me this chance to
atone for my sins. I'm so sorry, I
beg your forgiveness with all of my
heart.

The KING looks at her, then turns to the CARDINAL who looks
on concerned.

The KING then turns and runs up the stairs, in a petulant
rage.

ANN calmly steps forward, to follow him.

MARIE watches with interest.

EXT. LOUVRE. KNOT GARDENS. DAY

The CARDINAL and TREVILLE walk together.

CARDINAL
These attempts on Marie de Medici's
life? Why bother?

TREVILLE
She's made many enemies over the
years. Perhaps it's revenge, or
some long standing grudge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARDINAL
I've received intelligence.
Rumours, only. Regarding certain
families. The Duke of Vendôme. The
Duke of Epernon. And the Duke of
Rohan.

TREVILLE
What kind of rumours?

CARDINAL
That they are raising militias.

TREVILLE
Oh! And when exactly were you
thinking of telling me?

CARDINAL
When I knew that they were more
than rumours.

TREVILLE
They are all former allies of hers.

CARDINAL
This is Marie de Medici. There's
always something more to it.

TREVILLE looks rueful.

TREVILLE
I remember the days of her
attempted coup all too well. The
chaos, the bloodshed, brother
against brother. I never want to
see those times again.

CARDINAL
On that we are agreed. Any news on
that child I sent for?

TREVILLE
Aramis and d'Artagnan aren't back
yet.

CARDINAL
Let me know when they return.

EXT. WOODS. TREE LINED PATH. DAY

ATHOS and PORTHOS examine the scene of the attempted
assassination as they talk.

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CONTINUED:

ATHOS

If you were Marie's personal guard wouldn't you want to ask questions, find out who's behind this? Why kill them when he didn't have to?

PORTHOS

Vincent was out of control.

ATHOS

A good soldier is never out of control. And he's one of the best.

PORTHOS examines the angle of where the shots came from. He looks around with a frown at the array of weapons used by the TWO SHOOTERS lying on the ground.

PORTHOS

They had the weaponry of a small army - yet not one shot found its mark? Wouldn't you expect to see at least some damage to the trees? Or little pieces of splintered bark? It's just nothing.

ATHOS looks on the ground.

ATHOS

I don't see any used wadding.

PORTHOS

And no spent musket balls.

They look at one another.

EXT. MUSKETEERS GARRISON. ENTRANCE ARCHWAY. DAY

TREVILLE watches the MUSKETEERS at sword practise, he turns to see PORTHOS and ATHOS arrive.

They walk together.

PORTHOS

Captain. There were eight shots. No damage and not a single injury to anyone.

ATHOS

The gun shots were nothing more than a firework display.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TREVILLE

You're certain?

ATHOS

Either that or they were the worst assassins ever.

TREVILLE

The last time I went up against Marie de Medici she threw me in prison. I'd rather not go back. If this ambush was staged I need to know why.

ATHOS

Vincent could have captured the gunmen. They would have talked sooner or later.

PORTHOS

He wanted to make sure they didn't.

INT. LOUVRE. KING'S QUARTERS. DAY

LOUIS stands staring out of the window.

He hears a door opening and quickly hurries to his chair, a glass of wine in his hand and makes himself comfortable.

ANN enters and stands behind him.

MARIE enters and bows.

MARIE

I've made many mistakes in my life. I regret nothing ... except our misunderstanding.

LOUIS

That is a strange word for treason.

MARIE is tearful.

MARIE

I was only trying to protect you.

LOUIS looks tearful, ANN places a reassuring hand on his shoulder.

ANNE

Was it not you he needed protection from?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIE

I felt guilty for burdening you before your years. You were so young when your father died.

LOUIS is tearful.

MARIE (cont'd)

I had a vision that I could carry your burden whilst you learned and grew into a great leader. I was trying to be your mother and your father. I failed at both and I paid for it.

She sobs.

LOUIS

You didn't fail completely.

She looks up at him, with relief.

MARIE

Oh, Anne.

ANNE sits by her side and MARIE takes her hand.

MARIE (cont'd)

Promise me something. When you become a mother, you will learn from my mis-judgments.

She looks at LOUIS with tears in her eyes.

LOUIS softens visibly as he looks at her and grins.

EXT. NARROW COUNTRY LANE. DAY

FATHER DUVAL makes his way slowly towards Paris. He clutches the precious book of parish records in his arms.

INT. BONACIEUX HOUSE. FRONT ROOM. EVENING

CONSTANCE watches AGNES cling to her baby's blanket, staring vacantly as she sits in a chair.

CONSTANCE

I can't pretend to imagine what you're going through.

ARAMIS enters.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONSTANCE (cont'd)

Anything?

ARAMIS shakes his head. CONSTANCE turns and leaves.

CONSTANCE (cont'd)

I'll go and join D'Artagnan. Try to make her eat something.

ARAMIS nods and takes a bowl from the table. He offers it to AGNES but she just shakes her head.

ARAMIS

I don't want to have to fight you again.

AGNES

Being apart from him, it's like a wound that won't heal.

ARAMIS

He's your flesh and blood.

She smiles gratefully and looks at him.

AGNES

Do you have a family?

ARAMIS

Not unless you count the Musketeers.

AGNES

No wife?

ARAMIS shrugs.

AGNES (cont'd)

Have you ever felt it? Love, I mean real, true love; that need that leaves you incapable of existing without the other person?

ARAMIS

I was sixteen. We were going to marry but it didn't work out. She changed her mind. I was heart-broken.

AGNES

Sixteen? And you haven't loved since?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS

If I answer, will you tell me why those people on the road ran from you?

AGNES

It's nobody's business.

ARAMIS

If you don't trust me, how can I help you?

AGNES

There's only one man I've ever trusted.

INT. LOUVRE. CORRIDOR. NIGHT

MARIE exits the King's Quarters and walks down the Corridor, the CARDINAL walks up to her.

CARDINAL

Making yourself comfortable?

MARIE

I wanted to ask you a favour.

CARDINAL

From me?

MARIE

Speak to the King on my behalf.

CARDINAL

You seem to be doing that perfectly well on your own.

MARIE

I'm not sure he believes I've abandoned all my ambitions for power.

CARDINAL

It was a mother's love that drove you to it. All you desire is the restoration of your son's affection so you can ease into gentle old age, a happy woman.

MARIE gazes at him steadily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIE

I always liked you, Armand, even when you opposed me. We should be allies, you and I.

She looks him in the eye, then turns and walks off. He watches her leave.

INT. LOUVRE. MARIE'S BEDROOM. NIGHT

MARIE enters her bedroom, only to be jumped from behind. A man grabs her from behind and hushes her as he presses her up against the bed post.

She glares back at him as he cuts the collar from her dress then leans in - it is VINCENT - and he starts to kiss her neck then her lips.

MARIE doesn't respond.

MARIE

You presume too much.

She stares at him imperiously.

INT. BONACIEUX HOUSE. FRONT ROOM. NIGHT

ARAMIS listens in respectful silence as AGNES talks, her emotions only just in check, a tear in her eye.

AGNES

My husband, Philippe was like a helpless child when I first met him. He'd been locked away so long he never learned to fend for himself. He didn't look like other men. He was malformed from birth. Touched by the devil, they said. I was sent to be his nurse. I was petrified, I believed everything I'd heard. He had the kindest heart I've ever known. He was shy and confused. Frightened. But full of innocent love and goodness.

ARAMIS

What of his family?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AGNES

Well they abandoned him at birth.
His mother came to visit once - in
secret because she was ashamed.

She pauses, smiling slightly at the memory.

AGNES (cont'd)

I was lonely and he was kind. I
soon learned to see the beauty of
his soul and I fell in love with
him.

She smiles up at ARAMIS who smiles back.

AGNES (cont'd)

We married in secret. Father Duval
had kept Philippe out of sight for
most of his life and when Henry was
born, everything changed. Philippe
felt alive. He refused to hide any
longer. We walked through the
village together as a family.

ARAMIS

That must have been a fine moment.

AGNES looks sad.

AGNES

They beat him until his bones
shattered. Burned him while he
still breathed life.

ARAMIS looks disgusted.

ARAMIS

You saw this? You were there?

AGNES

They made me watch. He's still with
me. In here.

She touches her heart. And then smiles.

AGNES (cont'd)

And in Henry.

ARAMIS strokes her face.

ARAMIS

I promise you, on my honour, the
safe return of your child.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

AGNES looks at him with sad eyes.

EXT. PARIS STREET. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. NIGHT

CONSTANCE joins D'ARTAGNAN as he stakes out the Kidnapper house.

CONSTANCE
What are we looking for again?

D'ARTAGNAN
A way in. A way out. Which room the baby's in. Anything that helps really.

CONSTANCE
I can fight.

D'ARTAGNAN
You're not going in there.

CONSTANCE
Because you don't trust me?

D'ARTAGNAN
Because I couldn't forgive myself if you were harmed.

She looks at him, then looks down.

CONSTANCE
Did you see the look on Agnes's face when she spoke about Henry? That bond; to value something over your own life. I want to know love that strong.

They notice a WOMAN approach the KIDNAPPER'S house and knock on the door.

D'ARTAGNAN (O.S.)
You'll have children of your own soon enough.

CONSTANCE (O.S.)
I suppose. If it's meant to be.

A GUARD holding a pistol opens the door. ANOTHER WOMAN comes out while the first WOMAN talks to the GUARD.

D'ARTAGNAN
Who are they?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONSTANCE

Wet nurses. How do you think the baby's been feeding?

D'Artagnan turns and looks at CONSTANCE.

CONSTANCE sees the way he's looking at her.

CONSTANCE (cont'd)

What?

He grins at her and nods.

CONSTANCE (cont'd)

Oh, no. No.

D'ARTAGNAN

Yes.

CONSTANCE

I can't.

D'ARTAGNAN

Why not?

CONSTANCE

How can I be a wet nurse if I haven't got any milk?

D'ARTAGNAN

Improvise.

He smiles back up at her.

EXT. PARIS STREET. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

ARAMIS and D'ARTAGNAN, CONSTANCE and AGNES walk down the street towards the Kidnapper house. AGNES still clutching her baby's blanket.

ARAMIS looks at CONSTANCE.

ARAMIS

We need to know which room the baby's in and how many men there are.

AGNES

He likes music. If he cries, sing him a lullaby.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONSTANCE
Will humming do? My singing might
frighten him.

AGNES
And give him this. Tell him I love
him.

AGNES gives her the blanket.

CONSTANCE smiles at AGNES as D'ARTAGNAN hurries her down the
street.

CONSTANCE
I thought you weren't going to let
me in there?

D'ARTAGNAN
I wasn't, but that was before I had
a brilliant plan. But be careful.

CONSTANCE
Thanks for the tip. I'll bear it in
mind. Any other useful advice?

D'ARTAGNAN steps back out of sight and CONSTANCE marches
over to the house.

INT/EXT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

A knock at the door, the spy hole is opened to reveal
CONSTANCE on the other side.

MICHEL opens the door and steps out pointing a pistol at
CONSTANCE's head.

D'ARTAGNAN, ARAMIS and AGNES watch from a safe distance.

MICHEL glares at CONSTANCE.

MICHEL
Who are you then?

CONSTANCE
The wet nurse.

MICHEL looks her up and down.

MICHEL
Come in.

He leads her inside.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

D'ARTAGNAN, ARAMIS and AGNES continue to watch.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

CONSTANCE and MICHEL climb the stairs.

MICHEL
What happened to the other girl?

CONSTANCE
She's sick.

MICHEL
Good. You've got a nicer backside.

He smacks her bottom and laughs. She's about to react, but controls the urge to thump him.

They walk past a group of KIDNAPPERS sat playing cards.

CONSTANCE follows MICHEL along a corridor, she glances out over the balcony at the street below.

MICHEL suddenly whips his arm around her waist and pulls her close, then grins at her.

She manages to stay calm and smile back.

CONSTANCE
Oh! She told me you were quite the charmer.

She squeezes his cheek in a playful way and pats him on the shoulder.

CONSTANCE (cont'd)
Now hands off. I've got work to do.

She smiles sweetly and goes off up the stairs. MICHEL watches appreciatively.

A KIDNAPPER stands outside a room and points to CONSTANCE to step inside.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY

CONSTANCE enters to find the WET NURSE holding HENRY.

The WET NURSE looks at CONSTANCE questionably.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CONSTANCE

I'm new.

The WET NURSE nods, CONSTANCE puts her cape down and the WET NURSE hands HENRY over to her.

WET NURSE

This is baby Henry. He's just been fed and changed.

CONSTANCE

Hello ...

CONSTANCE takes the baby and waits for the WET NURSE to leave, then whispers into his tiny ear.

CONSTANCE (cont'd)

I've brought you a message from somebody who loves you very much.

She carries him over to the window then waves the baby blanket.

EXT. PARIS STREET. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

ARAMIS, D'ARTAGNAN and AGNES see the baby blanket being waved out of the window.

ARAMIS

That means nine men.

EXT. LOUVRE. DAY

FATHER DUVAL makes his way along the street then looks up at the great building.

He joins the queue of people waiting to get inside.

RED GUARD

Go through.

FATHER DUVAL manages to get to the front. The queue of supplicants is manned by TWO RED GUARDS.

RED GUARD (cont'd)

What do you want?

FATHER DUVAL

I'm here to see The Cardinal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

RED GUARD
Is he expecting you?

FATHER DUVAL
I have information of vital
importance for His Eminence.

INT. LOUVRE. MARIE'S BEDROOM. DAY

VINCENT lies asleep in MARIE's bed, MARIE is already up and dressed.

She picks up her cape and noisily shuts the trunk lid, waking VINCENT who turns to her with sleepy eyes.

VINCENT
What are you doing?

MARIE
I'm going to see him.

VINCENT
What do you mean? You can't. You'll ruin everything. The plan is to get the baby tonight.

MARIE
I think you forget who you're talking to!

VINCENT is chastened.

VINCENT
Your Majesty forgive me but -

MARIE
You can either help me or you can be gone by the time I return. Frankly I don't care which.

She holds a cape out to him, he climbs out of bed.

INT. LOUVRE. CORRIDOR. DAY

VINCENT and MARIE, dressed down in modest clothing with the hoods of their capes are up, hurry quietly down the stairs.

PORTHOS steps out from his hiding place and watches them.

EXT. PARIS STREETS. DAY

VINCENT and MARIE hurry through the streets.

ATHOS and PORTHOS follow.

ATHOS
A little early in the day for a
stroll.

EXT. STREET. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

VINCENT and MARIE make their way towards the house.

ARAMIS watches from his hiding place with AGNES and
D'ARTAGNAN.

ARAMIS
What in God's name is she doing
here?

AGNES looks over to see what has caught their attention.

AGNES
I know that woman.

VINCENT knocks on the front door.

ATHOS and PORTHOS watch from a distance as the front door is
opened and VINCENT and MARIE step inside.

Then something catches PORTHOS's eye. He sees the others
watching from their hiding place.

He nudges ATHOS.

PORTHOS
This can't be a coincidence.

They move off.

INT. LOUVRE. CHAPEL VAULT. DAY

The CARDINAL pulls out a letter.

CARDINAL
You sent me this?

He reads from the letter to DUVAL stood in front of him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARDINAL (cont'd)
 "There is a child here of great significance. He urgently needs your protection. I beg your help with all possible speed". Who is this child?

FATHER DUVAL
 I can explain everything.

EXT. STREET. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

PORTHOS and ATHOS have joined ARAMIS, D'ARTAGNAN and AGNES

ARAMIS
 Was that who I think it was?

PORTHOS nods.

PORTHOS
 Marie de Medici. We've followed her here from the Palace.

AGNES
 Don't be ridiculous. That's just Philippe's mother.

ATHOS and PORTHOS stare at her.

ARAMIS
 Are you certain that's the woman who came to visit your husband?

AGNES
 Yes!

They all look surprised.

D'ARTAGNAN
 Constance is in there on her own.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY

CONSTANCE holds HENRY laughing and playing with him.

She looks up to see MARIE and VINCENT enter and her smile drops.

FATHER DUVAL (V.O.)
 Marie ...

INT. LOUVRE. CHAPEL VAULT. DAY

The CARDINAL listens to FATHER DUVAL's story.

FATHER DUVAL
 ... Her Majesty fell ill on her
 journey to Fontainebleau. And I was
 afraid she would lose the child.

CARDINAL
 And the court officials?

FATHER DUVAL
 Rushing to make it in time for the
 birth. But when the child was born,
 it was deformed. Marie was
 distraught. Why had France been
 cursed? And then our prayers were
 answered. The midwife announced,
 that there was another. The
 deformed child Philippe, had a
 younger twin - Louis.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY

MARIE holds HENRY.

MARIE
 My special boy!

She studies his face.

MARIE (cont'd)
 You are, perfect! Yes, you are.

CONSTANCE busies herself in a corner, listening. MARIE takes no notice of her as she stares at the child. VINCENT waits outside the room.

MARIE (cont'd)
 You have your grandfather's eyes.
 You will be brave and wise, the
 strongest and the most handsome.

CONSTANCE listens as she folds the linen.

MARIE (cont'd)
 The most celebrated and the most
 beloved. We are going to do great
 and marvellous things together.
 They'll see that we know best.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She holds him up in triumph and grins.

MARIE (cont'd)
Won't they see?

INT. LOUVRE. CHAPEL VAULT. DAY

The CARDINAL holds the book of records as DUVAL removes the leather covering.

The CARDINAL looks through the vital parish records calmly.

FATHER DUVAL
The court officials arrived ...

The CARDINAL stares at the page which records Philippe's marriage to Agnes. His real name is listed in the register along with her maiden name. Philippe de Bourbon clearly shown alongside his marriage to Agnes Rocher, spinster of this Parish.

FATHER DUVAL (cont'd)
... in time to see Louis born, ignorant of what had gone before. I spirited Philippe away. Marie charged me with his care. I protected him.

CARDINAL
There can be no doubt of the validity of the marriage?

FATHER DUVAL
Oh, none at all. I performed the ceremony myself.

CARDINAL
So their child is legitimate. And you haven't mentioned his birth to another living soul?

FATHER DUVAL
Only you. And the baby's Grandmother, of course.

The CARDINAL's mind working overtime.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

HENRY starts to cry, MARIE holds him at arm's length and turns to CONSTANCE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MARIE

Feed him.

CONSTANCE takes HENRY, hesitating as MARIE watches her.

CONSTANCE

He's such a beautiful child.

MARIE doesn't respond.

HENRY continues to cry, VINCENT waits in the doorway.

CONSTANCE smiles at MARIE.

CONSTANCE (cont'd)

He's your grandson?

MARIE

Yes, not that it's any business of yours.

CONSTANCE looks uncomfortable and starts to fumble with her bodice. Mercifully MARIE loses interest, nods to VINCENT then exits and they both hurry off.

CONSTANCE sighs in relief.

EXT. STREET. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

The MUSKETEERS and AGNES wait in the shadows, watching, as MARIE departs, escorted by VINCENT.

ARAMIS

They haven't taken him.

They look at each other nod.

INT. CARDINAL'S CARRIAGE. DAY

The CARDINAL sits and waits, a RED GUARD opens the door and TREVILLE climbs in.

CARDINAL

Where is the child? The infant boy!
Do you have him?!

TREVILLE

What exactly have you neglected to tell me about this child?

EXT. LOUVRE. CARDINAL'S CARRIAGE. DAY

The carriage pulls away.

INT/EXT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. DAY

A knock at the door.

D'ARTAGNAN, PORTHOS, ARAMIS and ATHOS hide by the door.

The KIDNAPPER opens the door and immediately PORTHOS knocks him unconscious, then they run inside.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. HALL. DAY

The group of KIDNAPPERS are still sat around playing cards, ATHOS calmly walks up to one, looks at his cards then turns to the others.

ATHOS

He folds.

As PORTHOS, D'ARTAGNAN and ATHOS lay into the KIDNAPPERS, ARAMIS heads towards the baby's room, fighting off any ensuing opponents on route.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY

ARAMIS enters to find CONSTANCE cradling a sleeping HENRY, the side of her bodice is still unbuttoned. ARAMIS looks slightly embarrassed as CONSTANCE looks surprised.

CONSTANCE

Don't Musketeers ever knock?

ARAMIS

My apologies. We're a little pushed for time.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. HALL. DAY

ATHOS and PORTHOS fight off the KIDNAPPERS, while D'ARTAGNAN manages to kick another out of the open window.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY

CONSTANCE has her back to ARAMIS as she tries to quickly tie her bodice back up.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS glances out of the doorway then back at CONSTANCE.

ARAMIS
Constance!

CONSTANCE
Take him!

He hurries over, laying his sword on the bed to take HENRY from her, whilst CONSTANCE turns away and continues to do up her bodice.

ARAMIS
Hello. So you're the one who all
this fuss is about?

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. HALL. DAY

PORTHOS, ATHOS and D'ARTAGNAN continue to fend off the KIDNAPPERS.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY

HENRY promptly cries. ARAMIS looks discomfited.

ARAMIS
He's crying.

CONSTANCE
Sing. He likes that.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. HALL. DAY

PORTHOS, ATHOS and D'ARTAGNAN continue to fend off the KIDNAPPERS.

INT. KIDNAPPER HOUSE. BEDROOM. DAY

ARAMIS paces as he rocks HENRY in his arms whilst singing to him. HENRY lapses into gurgles. ARAMIS looks pleased with himself.

ARAMIS
It's a gift.

CONSTANCE smiles but is quickly all business.

CONSTANCE
There was a woman here.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS

I know.

CONSTANCE

But it was -

ARAMIS

I know.

CONSTANCE

She said the baby was her -

ARAMIS

Grandson. I know.

CONSTANCE gazes at him.

CONSTANCE

Is there anything you don't know?

ARAMIS

Believing it is the hard part.

MICHEL storms in.

MICHEL

The baby. Now!

CONSTANCE automatically picks up ARAMIS' sword from the bed and points it at MICHEL.

MICHEL swings but CONSTANCE manages to keep his blade away. MICHEL slashes his blade at CONSTANCE but she parries. She swings at him with the sword, catching him off guard, but he fights back.

CONSTANCE keeps in control and swings again, knocking the sword from MICHEL's hand, then swinging round and crying out as she punches him hard in the face, sending him flying backwards and unconscious against the wall.

CONSTANCE looks shaken but in control.

ARAMIS

Good work, where did you learn to do that?

CONSTANCE

What are you waiting for?

They hurry out.

INT. MUSKETEERS GARRISON. ARAMIS'S ROOM. DAY

AGNES holds HENRY and sings to him.

ARAMIS watches her from the doorway and smiles.

He steps inside, places his musket on the side then walks over and sits next to her.

AGNES looks at him and smiles then place HENRY 10:32:21 by his side.

AGNES
There. My Henry of royal blood.

ARAMIS smiles down at HENRY looking up at him.

AGNES (cont'd)
Oh, Philippe ...

ARAMIS
You really loved Philippe.

She looks at him and nods.

ARAMIS (cont'd)
Even though ...

AGNES
You learn to see past appearances,
into people's inner most desires.
His were true and honest. We saved
each other from a life in the
shadows.

ARAMIS can only admire something so foreign to him.

ARAMIS
You know death is typically a
release from the vows of marriage.

AGNES
My husband is gone. That's just my
ill fortune. But I will remain
faithful to him.

ARAMIS
A life alone? You deserve better.

AGNES
I'm not alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She smiles down at HENRY, then looks up. She detects a sadness in him.

AGNES (cont'd)

Are you?

ARAMIS says nothing.

EXT. CARDINAL'S CARRIAGE. DAY

The carriage on the move.

TREVILLE (V.O.)

Are you certain?

CARDINAL (V.O.)

Philippe's son should wear the crown instead of King Louis. Marie will present the infant to the Royal Council ...

INT. CARDINAL'S CARRIAGE. DAY

CARDINAL

... with records proving his claim.

TREVILLE

She's been gathering support to topple the King in the name of her grandson.

CARDINAL

Bring me that child.

EXT. MUSKETEERS GARRISON. CLOISTERS & COURTYARD. DAY

ARAMIS, ATHOS, PORTHOS, D'ARTAGNAN and TREVILLE.

ARAMIS

So what do we do now?

TREVILLE

The boy goes to the Cardinal.

D'ARTAGNAN

And what then?

TREVILLE

Is the child ready?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ATHOS

Hasn't the woman suffered enough?

PORTHOS

Absolutely. She's been with Aramis for two days.

ARAMIS follows TREVILLE up the stairs to his office.

ARAMIS

You know what will happen. The boy will disappear. He'll be murdered and Agnes too, probably.

TREVILLE

I'm sorry. My hands are tied. You have to take him to the Cardinal. I'd go with you myself, but I'm busy. Damn paperwork. It'll take me the rest of the afternoon... at least.

He walks off into his office.

ARAMIS looks thoughtful then smiles to himself.

EXT. KIDNAPPERS HOUSE. DAY

VINCENT approaches the house and sees the door open.

INT. KIDNAPPERS HOUSE. DAY

He runs inside and sees A DEAD KIDNAPPER on the floor by the front door.

VINCENT runs up the stairs.

EXT. KIDNAPPERS HOUSE. DAY

VINCENT (O.S.)

Where's the child?

VINCENT runs out and looks around, then hurries off.

EXT. MUSKETEERS GARRISON. COURTYARD. DAY

ATHOS stands talking with PORTHOS and D'ARTAGNAN.

He turns and walks up to the window of ARAMIS' room.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ATHOS
Aramis?

EXT. MUSKETEERS GARRISON. ARAMIS' ROOM. DAY

All is quiet. ATHOS heads to the Garrison.

ATHOS
Aramis? Aramis?

ATHOS looks in through the open window. He sighs and turns back to the others.

ATHOS (cont'd)
He's gone.

EXT. MUSKETEERS GARRISON. COURTYARD. DAY

He walks back over to the other two.

PORTHOS
Right, what are we going to do?

ATHOS
Find him before he gets himself
killed.

They walk off together.

EXT. CROSSROADS/BRIDGE SPANNING RIVER. DAY

The rapids run fast and deep.

The four-way crossroads is a hubbub of activity with TRADERS and CUSTOMERS.

Beyond the crossroads a bridge extends across the river. ARAMIS walks over to a FIXER and holds out some coins.

ARAMIS
The rest when my friends are on
their way to Spain.

AGNES stands close by, HENRY is wrapped in her arms.

The FIXER looks at ARAMIS reluctantly, then takes the money and points to the other side of the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

FIXER

Meet the transport over there.
Don't delay or they won't wait for
you.

ARAMIS walks over to the waiting AGNES and HENRY.

ARAMIS

You leave in an hour.

AGNES

I've already told you, I'm not
leaving. I'm going home!

ARAMIS sighs and puts his arm around her shoulder as he
walks her through the market.

ARAMIS

What do you think will happen if
you go back to the village?

AGNES

Well, I will carry on with my life
bothering no one, raising my son.

ARAMIS

Wake up!

She's taken aback by the sharpness of his tone.

ARAMIS (cont'd)

Do you think Marie de Medici will
stop? You think the Cardinal will
allow this threat to continue?

AGNES

What if I went to the palace? Henry
is of the royal line, the King's
nephew. They might welcome him.
Perhaps we could live there, in the
grounds. Henry would have
schooling, privileges ...

ARAMIS

You'd be dead within a week.

Her flow is abruptly stopped.

ARAMIS (cont'd)

Poison in your food, a knife
twisted in your ribs in a long,
empty corridor. You are an
expedient nuisance nothing more.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The harshness of his words hits home.

ARAMIS (cont'd)
 At best Henry would be brought up
 the child of another, his life
 endlessly manipulated by those who
 go to any lengths for power - at
 best. At worst ...

He doesn't have to say. Tears spring to her eyes. She looks
 to HENRY.

ARAMIS (cont'd)
 You can never go home, Agnes. If
 you want a life with your son, you
 leave, forever. Now. And never look
 back.

She looks up at ARAMIS and sobs as she holds HENRY close.

ARAMIS puts his arm around her protectively.

INT. LOUVRE. KING'S QUARTERS. ANTECHAMBER. DAY

LOUIS is readying for a hunt. MARIE is with him. She helps
 arrange his hunting clothes.

MARIE
 There.

She looks at him. A smile of pride.

MARIE (cont'd)
 You look just like him.

LOUIS
 My father?

MARIE
 He would be so very proud of you.

LOUIS allows himself a smile.

LOUIS
 I'm glad you came, Mother. Perhaps,
 we might be friends after all.

MARIE
 What more could I want?

The CARDINAL enters. He sees their closeness.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

LOUIS

Well, I must be leaving. Time to make a kill.

CARDINAL

Hunting is out of the question, Your Majesty. Until those plotting to kill your mother are found, you must stay in the palace.

MARIE

A man has his needs. He's the King. He must do as he pleases.

LOUIS looks delighted at this.

LOUIS

Mother knows best, Cardinal.

CARDINAL

One must think of France. And how she would suffer if something were to happen to her ruler.

He stares at LOUIS. LOUIS turns to MARIE who smiles back at him.

MARIE

I am sure the Cardinal only has your best interests at heart.

LOUIS looks outraged and petulant.

LOUIS

Being King can be so boring!

He strops off, slamming the door to his quarters.

LOUIS (O.S.)

It's so unfair!!!

The CARDINAL and MARIE are left alone together.

CARDINAL

Bravo. I'm not unable to savour a stratagem of elegant construction.

MARIE

Are you feeling quite well?

He smiles at her, but his words are lethal.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CARDINAL

Come now. Let's not pretend we don't know what big teeth you have - Grandmother.

MARIE smiles.

EXT. CROSSROADS/BRIDGE SPANNING RIVER. DAY

ATHOS, D'ARTAGNAN and PORTHOS arrive, re- tracing ARAMIS's steps.

PORTHOS

This is the place to come if you're looking for quick passage out of the country. Let's split up, shall we?

They each walk amongst the different stalls, looking around carefully.

D'ARTAGNAN sees ARAMIS looking out over a pile of barrels and calls quietly to the others.

D'ARTAGNAN

Porthos.

They all walk around to find AGNES with HENRY and ARAMIS watching over them.

D'ARTAGNAN (cont'd)

Good afternoon.

AGNES rushes to ARAMIS' side.

ATHOS

Excuse us, Madame.

AGNES

I won't come back.

ARAMIS

I'm not handing them over to the Cardinal.

D'ARTAGNAN

Aramis, that baby is the heir to the throne.

PORTHOS

They could charge you with treason.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS
I made her a promise.

ATHOS
Then we'd better help you.

ARAMIS relaxes and nods his thanks.

PORTHOS
You didn't really think we were
gonna take the baby, did ya?

ARAMIS grins.

ATHOS
If you'd told us what you were
doing we might have been able to
plan this properly.

ARAMIS
Yes, sorry.

ATHOS
No, no, let's keep it suicidal.

D'ARTAGNAN steps back and talks quietly to ARAMIS.

D'ARTAGNAN
Don't get involved. That's what you
said? How's that working out for
you?

ARAMIS smiles, taking it on the chin.

PORTHOS keeps an eye out then sees a group of men on
horseback heading their way.

PORTHOS
Things just got complicated.
Vincent.

They watch as VINCENT and his MEN ride into the market.

VINCENT
Out of the way! Get out of the way!

VINCENT and his men stop in the middle of the market place,
VINCENT looks around and sees something up ahead.

VINCENT (cont'd)
The bridge.

He and his men hurry towards the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS has a thought and nods to himself.

INT. LOUVRE. KING'S QUARTERS. ANTECHAMBER. DAY

MARIE is utterly calm and confident in the face of the CARDINAL's revelation.

MARIE

It's too late to do anything. Just in case you thought there was still a chance.

CARDINAL

Poor Louis. My heart bleeds for him.

MARIE

You have one? Come on, we both know this is for the greater good. He is a weak man and a bad King. He'll be so much happier living out his days in peaceful seclusion.

CARDINAL

The few days that remain to him, you mean.

MARIE

You think I would kill my own son?

CARDINAL

I think that you would strangle him with your bare hands to get to the throne. To have had such power and see it prised from your grasp. It must be unbearable.

MARIE

This is about keeping the royal power supreme in France, that which my husband's blood was shed to protect.

CARDINAL

And I take it, that supreme power is embodied in you?

MARIE

You know I could use a man of your talents. Once you'd taken an oath of allegiance, naturally.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

She helps herself to some cake on the table.

He sits down opposite her.

CARDINAL

Are you making me a proposition?

MARIE

You have less than one hour until my armies are given the word to march on Paris to acclaim their new king. I'd consider your options carefully.

She holds out the plate of cake and smiles at him.

MARIE (cont'd)

Cake?

EXT. CROSSROADS/BRIDGE SPANNING RIVER. DAY

ARAMIS hurries over to AGNES.

ARAMIS

I want you to head across the bridge and wait for me there. Leave Henry here with me.

AGNES

Aramis?

ARAMIS

If you walk out there together they'll be on to you in seconds. I will get Henry across the bridge.

She watches as he picks HENRY up.

ARAMIS (cont'd)

I swore no harm would come to him.

He pulls her hood over her head.

ARAMIS (cont'd)

Now go. Go.

She does what she's told. The MUSKETEERS watch as AGNES manages to slip unnoticed past VINCENT and his MEN and she hurries over the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCENT hands the FIXER a large purse of coins, the FIXER nods and points to where the MUSKETEERS are hiding. ARAMIS sighs.

ARAMIS (cont'd)
Next time I bribe someone, remind me to bring more money.

VINCENT turns to his men.

VINCENT
Two of you over the bridge, another two fan out this side.

His men take their position.

D'ARTAGNAN
So? How should we do this?

ATHOS briefly pulls the stopper of one of the barrels and tastes the liquid inside.

ATHOS
These barrels contain brandy. A rather good Armagnac, I believe.

ARAMIS
Athos, now is not the time.

PORTHOS gives him a knowing look.

ARAMIS (cont'd)
Oh. I see.

He holds onto HENRY whilst the others carry the barrels away.

PORTHOS
What a waste!

PORTHOS throws a barrel of brandy through the air like a shot put and it lands in the fire used for the pig roast. D'ARTAGNAN hands him another and that one is thrown into the fire place too.

Then they stand back and wait as VINCENT rides towards them.

The barrels heat up in the fire place.

VINCENT gets closer, as D'ARTAGNAN and PORTHOS stand and wait.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Suddenly the barrels explode, causing everyone to scream and run around and VINCENT's horses panic.

AGNES watches from the other side of the river as thick smoke billows up around the Market place.

Suddenly emerging through the smoke like a demon, ARAMIS on horseback, HENRY wrapped up in his arm. He kicks the horse into a gallop and heads for the bridge. He's through the crossroads and halfway across the bridge when a group of VINCENT's men run out towards him on foot.

Behind him another group race towards him, with VINCENT at their helm.

VINCENT
Hand over the child.

ARAMIS
Or what?

VINCENT
I seize him by force.

The MEN rush at ARAMIS and pull him from his horse, as he goes down he loses grip of the bundle in his arms and it goes flying over the side of the bridge and splashes into the rapids below and then churned up by the river's rushing weir.

Desperate ARAMIS stares down for any sign of life but there is none.

AGNES watches in horror, then runs over screaming and yelling, joining ARAMIS by the side of the bridge.

Even VINCENT looks on in horror.

ARAMIS holds AGNES back as she tries to climb over the bridge.

AGNES
Henry! Henry!!

ARAMIS
No, no! Agnes ...

He holds her close and she sobs hysterically.

VINCENT looks uncertain. ARAMIS stares at him.

ARAMIS (cont'd)
What more do you want?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VINCENT lingers another second, then turns and rides off with his men leaving ARAMIS clutching a sobbing AGNES to his chest.

TO BLACK

INT. LOUVRE. STAIRCASE. DAY

The CARDINAL stands at the bottom of the stair as MARIE walks down, resplendent.

The CARDINAL regards her amiably and bows. She grins at him smugly.

CARDINAL

I'm intrigued. Will you stride into court brandishing the child like a trophy? Proclaiming him the rightful heir.

MARIE

More or less. Then I shall present Father Duval, who witnessed the birth of my first born. He's here in the Palace. I have my spies too, Cardinal. The support of key figures in the regions, a lack of confidence in Louis and of course the fact that there is no heir will bring the council and the nobility over to my side.

CARDINAL

You've rehearsed this.

MARIE

My enemies will be offered a very simple choice - accept I'm taking power, or death, or prison when we storm the palace.

CARDINAL

And is the King included amongst your enemies?

MARIE

You mean the pretender, Louis? I hope he will surrender his false claim with grace and humility. But if not ...

She smiles and shrugs.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The CARDINAL stares back at her.

MARIE (cont'd)
Make your choice now, Cardinal. I'd
hate to end our relationship on a
sour note.

CARDINAL
Captain Treville.

TREVILLE calmly steps forward, walks up to MARIE and bows.

TREVILLE
May I be the first to offer my
condolences, Your Majesty.

MARIE
What are you talking about?

CARDINAL
Such a tragedy.

MARIE looks at the CARDINAL with confusion.

CARDINAL (cont'd)
There'll be no coup. No Regency. No
power. Just a sad, deluded, old
woman. With nothing.

She glares up at him.

CARDINAL (cont'd)
Your grandson Henry, isn't it? He
perished.

MARIE stares at him, trying to read him.

MARIE
You're lying.

The CARDINAL gestures to the RED GUARDS and VINCENT is
escorted in, in hand cuffs.

MARIE looks surprised, VINCENT looks back at her and shakes
his head.

Then by the CARDINAL's gesture, the RED GUARDS spin VINCENT
around and take him away.

Keeping her composure, MARIE walks out along the long
corridor.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

THE CARDINAL and TREVILLE watch, they hear the sound of her sobbing.

With her back to the men, MARIE loses all her strength.

EXT. LOUVRE. GARDENS. DAY

TREVILLE, ARAMIS, D'ARTAGNAN, ATHOS and PORTHOS ride down an avenue of trees leading to the Louvre gardens. They turn their horses towards the palace.

TREVILLE steps out onto the balcony and watches as they arrive.

EXT. LOUVRE. COLONNADE. DAY

TREVILLE and the MUSKETEERS stand opposite the CARDINAL.

CARDINAL

Happily the plot to kill Marie de Medici has been foiled. It appears the chief culprit was her trusted lieutenant, Vincent. He will be dealt with accordingly.

He looks at the them.

CARDINAL (cont'd)

Unless any of you think that the King or France would benefit from the execution of his own mother?

They all keep quiet.

The CARDINAL walks away.

TREVILLE turns to his men.

TREVILLE

Good. Then that is all His Majesty ever needs to know.

INT. LOUVRE. CARDINAL'S CHAPEL. DAY

The CARDINAL burns DUVAL's letters. And then Duval's Parish records. We see a brief glimpse of Philippe de Bourbon's name before the page is consumed in the flames.

INT. LOUVRE. CHAPEL VAULT. DAY

FATHER DUVAL sits alone, he leaps to his feet as TWO RED GUARDS enter and walk towards him.

INT. LOUVRE. CARDINAL'S CHAPEL. DAY

The CARDINAL rips the pages from DUVAL's Parish records and burns them.

INT. LOUVRE. CHAPEL VAULT. DAY

DUVAL looks at the two RED GUARDS.

FATHER DUVAL
What's going on?

One of them pulls out his dagger and they rush towards DUVAL.

INT. LOUVRE. CARDINAL'S CHAPEL. DAY

The CARDINAL briefly glimpses at Philippe de Bourbon's name before the page is consumed in the flames.

INT. LOUVRE. CHAPEL VAULT. DAY

DUVAL watches as the two RED GUARDS march towards him, both with their daggers drawn.

He closes his eyes to pray, as they stab him.

EXT. HILLTOP. DAY

AGNES waits alone on a hilltop.

She turns at the sound of hooves galloping closer and sees ARAMIS on horseback making his way over to her.

He climbs down off his horse.

AGNES
What more could you want from me.
Why drag me here now?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS

I know you've endured hell. I'm sorry you had to suffer so terrible a blow. I should apologise. I should have told you the truth. But if you hadn't been convincing as a grieving mother they would have seen right through it. This was the only way I could see you and Henry having any kind of life together.

AGNES

What life?

He grins at her as D'ARTAGNAN, ATHOS, PORTHOS and CONSTANCE draw closer on horseback.

CONSTANCE seems to have a small bundle wrapped in her arms.

AGNES looks at them, unsure of what she is seeing.

AGNES (cont'd)

Henry?

ARAMIS walks up to CONSTANCE who hands him the gurgling bundle.

AGNES (cont'd)

Henry?

ARAMIS smiles at AGNES as he brings her, her baby. She is overcome with happiness as he hands the baby over to her.

AGNES (cont'd)

Henry! Henry! Henry!

D'ARTAGNAN looks on and turns to CONSTANCE.

D'ARTAGNAN

You didn't want to give him back, did you?

CONSTANCE

Was it that obvious?

PORTHOS

It's not every day you get to save the King's life.

ATHOS

He'll never be King. But, he'll be happier than the man who is.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

ARAMIS smiles at AGNES.

ARAMIS

You didn't really think I'd take
something so precious into battle?

AGNES tears streaming down her face looks up at him.

AGNES

You kept him safe. Delivered him to
me as you promised you would.

ARAMIS hands her a purse.

ARAMIS

Take this. Make a new life
together, a long way from France.
Philippe wouldn't want you to be
alone forever, Agnes.

AGNES

I have my son. I would ask you to
come with us.

She looks at the others watching them.

AGNES (cont'd)

But you already have a family.

He nods.

AGNES kisses ARAMIS on the cheek.

AGNES (cont'd)

Thank you.

Then she turns and walks away with HENRY. ARAMIS watches for
as long as he can before turning back.

D'ARTAGNAN

I think you're losing your touch.

ARAMIS smiles at them, climbs on his horse and they all ride
off together.

TO BLACK