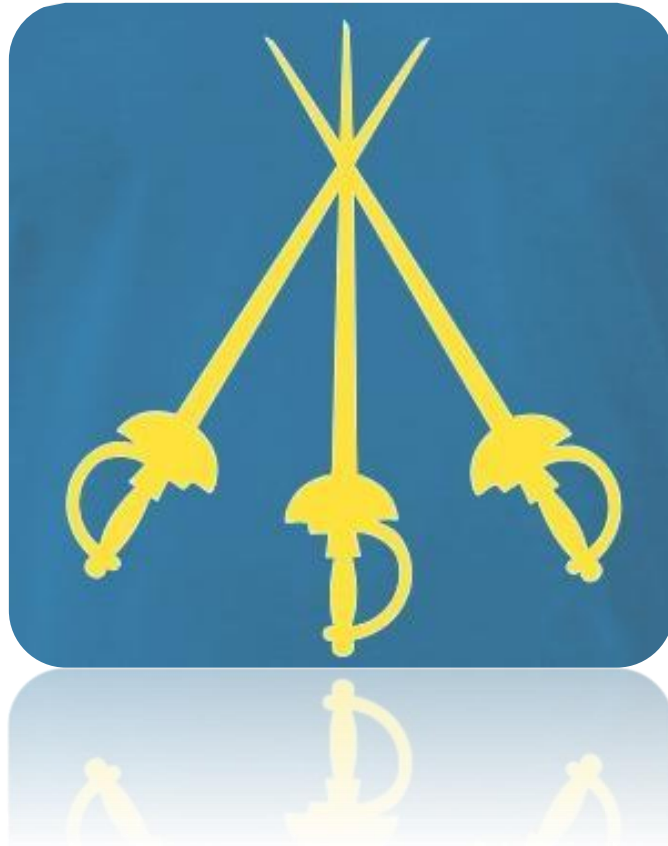


The Three Musketeers *The Panto!*



By Vicky Orman
(This one's for you, Chris)

Character List

D'artagnan – Principal Boy (Younger looking than the other musketeers) (FEMALE)

D'artagnan wants to follow in his father's footsteps and become one of the legendary Musketeers. He is talented, and a little too sure of himself until things go wrong when he gets to Paris. He is going to have to prove himself as he becomes embroiled in a plot to take over France, and go up against the Three Musketeers to win the heart of Connie. Only his quick wits and quicker swords and the motto of the musketeers will save him now.

Lady Constantina – Principal Girl (a Match for D'artagnan) (FEMALE)

Lady Constantina is Lady in Waiting to Queen Anne. She bravely acts as a go between for the Queen and the Musketeers, despite the Cardinal's best efforts get rid of all of them. Apparently all of the musketeers fall in love with her because she is after all a Principal Girl, but it is D'artagnan who wins her heart.

The Three Musketeers

General notes – All the musketeers are excellent swordsmen, loyal to the King and Queen, honourable to a fault and...basically, Principal Boy's who are a little bit past their prime. Well, a lot past it. The more past it the better! If you've ever thought 'I am too old to be Principal boy', then this is the part for you! They will be wearing the cavalier style moustaches to distinguish them from D'artagnan the young whippersnapper and will be more tongue in cheek. They will have to sing and have some special swordfighting moves.

Athos (Principal Boy 2) (FEMALE)

One of the legendary three musketeers, Athos is technically the default leader. He is the heart throb of the group and has a special charm with the ladies (it must be the fishnets!)

Porthos (Principal Boy 3) (FEMALE)

Porthos is the strong and mighty musketeer, upbeat and more than a little food obsessed. Rarely seen without some form of food in his hand or mouth. Probably the most comedic of them all.

Aramis (Principal Boy 4) (FEMALE)

Aramis is a genius inventor and the intelligent one of the group – he appears calm and logical, but he has anger management issues and when he loses his temper appears to swear in French a lot (he has subtitles though!)

Nursie Merci – Dame (MALE)

Nursie Merci is attached to the musketeers and is responsible for patching them up, which she does with brisk efficiency, and little sympathy. She is their substitute mum in many ways and it is generally thought that she is the one that really runs the musketeers as the Captain is a little bit too fond of Prosecco and no one has seen him since that offer in Sainsburys. She has a deep and abiding crush on the Cardinal, not knowing he has been replaced by his evil twin.

Zoot Alors the Jester – Link man (MALE/FEMALE)

Zoot is the Jester and minstrel to the Royal Court. He is the musketeers' number one

fan and jokingly thinks he could be a musketeer and also gets everyone involved in helping them. He becomes friends with D'artagnan as they both commiserate on losing out on the recruitment drive and also knows Lady Constantina as they work in the palace together. Zoot has to use the puppet frame unaided so be aware of that!

Cardinal Richelieu (Both of them) – VILLAIN (MALE)

The evil Cardinal Richelieu has managed to take his identical twin captive and replace him while no-one notices. He had been exiled after being captured by D'artagnan's father and so holds a grudge and vows revenge (frequently and melodramatically). Power hungry, he is now suddenly in the process of trying to overthrow King Louis and Queen Anne. Queen Anne has been frustrating his plans so he is trying to frame her, and get rid of the Musketeers. He is very charismatic and more than a little fake TV evangelist in his approach but he manages to convince the king of pretty much anything. He glides around (evilly) using heeleys looking menacing,(and occasionally over shooting his goal.)

Roquefort – Comedy Duo 1 (MALE/FEMALE)

Roquefort is a fine swordsman but a bit challenged in the thinking department. However, he is definitely an excellent flunky, and Captain of the Cardinal's guard and prone to being a big bully.

Camembert – Comedy Duo 2 (MALE/FEMALE)

Camembert stinks in all possible ways. He is rubbish at pretty much everything aside from the fact he can conceal himself as a pile of rubbish and no one would tell! He is however, slightly more intelligent than Roquefort. But then so are rocks.

King Louis XIII – (same sort of age as Queen Anne- can be any age- MALE)

King Louis is easily swayed by the Cardinal, who tells him lies about the Queen and how the Musketeers are trying to overthrow him. He sees the truth in the end but in general he is a bit of a numpty! He has to preside over the court and disband the musketeers as his big moment.

Queen Anne – (Match to King- FEMALE)

Queen Anne is the sensible one of the two, even if she does let her diamonds get stolen. She has been stopping the Cardinal's plans for sometime so as Cardinal Richelieu says "She's got to go!". She is the one who give D'artagnan a chance to prove himself and does a little bit of matchmaking with him and Lady Constantina.

Milady – Cameo (FEMALE)

Milady de Winter is the Cardinal's courier and appears a couple of times. She has a bit of history with Athos. Small but plot crucial role suitable for someone who might want to be in chorus as well.

Dogtanian – (MALE/FEMALE – probably a junior)

Dogtanian is one of the Muskehounds and has a little bit more acting to do than the others, but no lines. He is as close as we will get to the panto animal in this one so needs to have character!

Chorus – Townsfolk, would be musketeers, Spookies, UV Ninjas, Lords and Ladies, Guards

Juniors – Dogtanian, Muskehounds. Townsfolk

*In voice over as part of the Turn off all mobile phones
“This Pantomime is set in France – If you would like to see it in French please boo, if you would like it in English please cheer. (SFX Cheer just in case!) To turn on Google Panto Translate function, please cheer now! (Cheer)
Please note, Google Translate works as long as you cheer the good guys and boo the bad guys! Now welcome to Paris, Capital of France in the swashbuckling 17th Century where plots, sword fighting and romance are afoot...”*

Act 1 Scene 1 – Paris -Outside the Musketeer headquarters

Song 1 – The Boys are Back in Town

**Chorus and Juniors over excited at the thought of seeing or being a Musketeer
Big sign saying “Musketeer Try-Outs Today! Deadline 1pm”**

TOWN 1: This is it! This year I’m sure I’ll become a Musketeer!

TOWN 2: Don’t be ridiculous - If they asked you to pull your stomach in you’d have to ask ‘Which one?’

TOWN 3. Everyone in France wants to be a musketeer, they only take the Crème de la Crème.. like me!

TOWN 4: Cream? You look more like the cheese to me!

TOWN 5: I’m here to see the legendary Three Musketeers. The finest swordsmen in the whole world!

TOWN 6: Protectors of their Royal Majesties..

ALL: Queen Anne and King Louis XIII (**Say X eye,eye, eye – hand over heart gesture**)

(Interrupted by a commotion offstage)

TOWNS 7:(offstage) You can’t go in there.

TOWNS 8: (offstage) You’re not a musketeer.

TOWNS 8: Sounds like someone is trying to sneak into Musketeer headquarters again. Only one person is that stupid.

ALL: Zoot Alors!

(ZOOT runs on, looking like he is desperate for a place to hide)

ZOOT: Oooo help! Quick, hide me! She’s after me!

(Townfolk all distance self from him – Zoot turns to the audience)

ZOOT: (To audience) You’ll help hide me won’t you? I am Zoot, ..no, not Groot,

Zoot Alors, Jester and Minstrel to the royal court, I put the lute in absolute nonsense but I really want to be a musketeer! I'm their biggest fan! I've been revising for the entrance exam like crazy. So far, I can remember front door, back door, archway and drawbridge.. I'm bound to get in!

TOWNS 9: Stick to the lute Zoot. They'll ask you things like the motto of the Musketeers!

ZOOT: Oo quick, I think I need help remembering that. Will you all help me? Magnifique! So when anyone shouts out "One for all..." you can shout back and "all for one!" Can you do that? Let's try it! Amazing. They are bound to let me in this time!

TOWNS 10: But you can't use a sword Zoot!

ZOOT: I can't use a lute either, but that's never stopped me singing

ALL: We know!

ZOOT: Ooo I'm cut to the quick **(to audience)**. Every year I sneak in, but the leader of the Musketeers throws me out

TOWNS 10: Captain de Treville? But no-one's seen him since they had that offer on prosecco in Sainsbury's!

ZOOT: Well, we do like an extended lunch break in France. No, I mean the REAL leader of the musketeers..

TOWNS 11: You don't mean...

ALL: Nursie Merci!?

ZOOT: Yep. I'm doomed aren't I?

(All give a synchronised Gallic shrug)

NURSIE: ZOOT ALORS! Where are you!? **(Enters rampaging through audience and everyone on stage tries to find a hiding place shouting things like 'Sacre Bleu'. ZOOT hides behind a rather pathetic twig. Surprisingly this seems to work)** Zoot! I know it was you.. Oh Bonjour everyone – I'm Nursie Merci - well that's what they call me when I'm patching them up.. Mercy! Mercy! Which is 'Thank you in French you know. Sometimes they are so polite they'll say it four or five times before I stop. I look after the Musketeers, keep them in tip top shape, wipe their bottoms and make them the most legendary fighters in the world! I even have to pick up after them – going into one of their rooms is like visiting Ikea. I pop in just to take a look and come out with 6 cups, 2 plates, 3 bowls a tea towel and some cutlery! Anyway, I was just looking for Zoot Alors who keeps sneaking in. Is he here? I bet he's hiding the little scallywag. I know how to find him... 'Oh look, It's the three musketeers!'

ZOOT: Where?! **(drops twig)** I must get their autographs!

NURSIE: There you are! **(grabs by ear)** What did I say about sneaking in?

ZOOT: But Nursie, I'm their biggest fan!

NURSIE: I bet you don't even know the musketeer motto

ZOOT: I do – listen! One for all...**(And all for one!)**

NURSIE: I'm impressed, it's only taken you ten years to get that far!

ZOOT: I'm a quick learner

NURSIE: Zoot, being a musketeer is not easy - you have to train really hard and do lots of exercise!

ZOOT: Ooo no! I've been hiding from exercise...I'm in the Fitness Protection Program!

NURSIE: Do you even know what their main weapon is? It's not 'surprise' by the way. Different country.

ZOOT: (uses twig to demonstrate) The sword! Ouch, I think I've got a splinter!

NURSIE: Have you been scratching your head again? No, their main weapon is a Musket **(Shows one)** Mind you, I can never get them to remember that either, as they are all obsessed with their swords. Men eh? Now make yourself useful. The Three Musketeers are coming out to see the new recruits...

(Great excitement from everyone. Zoot look ready to wet himself as everyone crowds around)

NURSIE: Back, Back I say, back behind the barricades! **(Brief bit of Les Mis underscore as the chorus split down the middle producing placards)** Not those barricades. Okay, hit it Zoot!

ZOOT: (Does surprisingly good fanfare on plastic bugle) Introducing the heroic, the legendary Three Musketeers! **(Full rock star intro)** Yes it's the heart throb Athos, voted France's most dashing bachelor for the tenth year in a row, Porthos the strong and mighty, with courage as big as his stomach and Aramis the genius inventor **(They come up in silhouette at the back)** Ladies and gentlemen, I don't give you one, I don't give you two, I don't even give you four, I give you the Three Musketeers!!! **(Crowd goes wild, throwing underwear, screaming, swooning, Can-can dancers – they make a choreographed entrance in unison to the front, bow in turn as Zoot shouts..)**

ZOOT: Athos, Porthos and Aramis!
(Then synchronised thigh slap, draw swords)

ATHOS: One for all **(and all for one)**

NURSIE: STOP! (**abrupt halt – SFX, zip needle off record**) No autographs.. you lot are like a slimming world club in an all you can eat buffet. And you three, you've stirred them all up.. they'll be impossible to direct. Now, let's see how my wonderful boys are doing, Athos are you still having problems with people swooning when you look at them?

ATHOS: Yes Nursie, I've still got 'it'. (**to lady in chorus, smouldering look, Joey from Friends style**) How you doin'?' (**Half the chorus swoon**)

ZOOT: They say you're so hot you might be the leading cause of global warming!

NURSIE: If you were a dinosaur, you'd be a Gorgeousaurus!

ATHOS: I guess it's just my burden to bear.

NURSIE: And you Porthos, how's the diet going?

PORTHOS: Well I had eggs for breakfast this morning...

ZOOT: Boiled or fried?

PORTHOS: Cadburys

ZOOT: One or two?

PORTHOS: Oh, one egg is un oeuf

NURSIE: Oh dear. And what do the scales say when you weigh yourself?

ZOOT: ...One at a time please!

NURSIE: Zoot! And you Aramis, how are your inventions going?

ARAMIS: My glow in the dark sunglasses are just about finished

NURSIE: To go with the solar powered torch?

ZOOT: And the dehydrated water?

ARAMIS: Yes, and the inflatable dartboard. That one always goes down with a bang!

ZOOT: Ooo! Oo! Aramis, they say you are so smart you can answer any question. So which side of a chicken has the most feathers on it?

ARAMIS: The outside of course!

NURSIE: Now, why are you here? You're meant to be off duty!

ATHOS: (**shows letter**) Simple Nursie, we had a letter from our old friend

PORTHOS: and drinking buddy!

ARAMIS:... the old captain of the Musketeers

ATHOS: It said his son D'artagnan desperately wants to be a musketeer

PORTHOS: And if he's half as good as his father

ARAMIS: He's sure to be selected

NURSIE: (looks at list on wall) Where's he travelling from?

ATHOS: That place in France where all the elephants go on holiday

ZOOT: What, Tuscany?

NURSIE: Ah yes, well I can't see him signed up

ZOOT: Are any of you out there called D'artagnan? **(No)** I don't think he's here. Take me instead! Pleeeeeeeeeeease!

MUSKETEERS: Awww. **(ignoring Zoot's plea's)**

NURSIE: No, it's sadder than that...**(Awww)** Sorry, it's a panto reflex. Right, well if you're not going to be useful you can go off duty. You know the rules, you have to use your holiday up before the end of the year.

ATHOS: ...but Nursie we must be vigilant at all times. Every sense alert to the threat of danger to the King and Queen, every muscle and sinew poised... ready for action.

PORTHOS: Except when we're asleep.

ATHOS: (Slightly annoyed) Well, yes obviously not when we're asleep.

PORTHOS: Dead to the world when we're asleep. Nothing can wake us. Heaven help the King and Queen when it's our nap time.

ATHOS: Yes, anyway, apart from when we're asleep, we must be vigilant at all times. You know Cardinal Richelieu...

ARAMIS: Shh! Lower your voice Athos

ATHOS: Okay **(lower pitch voice)** Cardinal Richelieu is plotting against the King and Queen

PORTHOS: (eating a cake) Sounds urgent.**(Takes large bite from cake)** As soon as I've finished this jumbo French fancy, I'll be right with you.

BOTH: Shh! **(all to cluster furtively SR and look, in unison, left - right- left as**

CAMEMBERT sneaks on in a barrel SL)

PORTHOS: What is it Aramis?

ARAMIS: They say Cardinal Richelieu has spies everywhere!
(Camembert pokes head up to say...)

CAM: Oh no he doesn't! **(Oh yes he does)**

ZOOT: Wait who said that?

NURSIE: You can't mean the Cardinal has turned bad? Never! He's advised the King for years and I've had the biggest crush on him forever! Oo, he's just like that heart throb Poldark but with his dashing red robes, his sexy beard, the way he glides around gracefully...

ZOOT: ...and sneaks up on people **(Everyone checks behind them. Zoot inspects the barrel. There is a farting noise from it and they recoil.)** Ugh! It must be beans. **(he turns away - Camembert hastily stick label facing audience with Beans on it)** That's okay then.

ATHOS: I'm telling you Nursie, Cardinal Richelieu has changed!

ARAMIS: We spend all our time stopping dangerous "accidents" from happening to their Majesties when he's around.

NURSIE: Well with all that hard work you need a break. Take off your musketeer uniforms, you are off duty and go have lunch.

PORTHOS: Now you are talking! Let's go! I'm so hungry I could eat un cheval.
(They take off their tabards - exit followed by some admirers)

NURSIE: Zoot, remember the deadline for applications is 1 o'clock. King Louis collects them so there are no exceptions.

ZOOT: Absolument Nursie! I'll keep an eye out **(exits SR)**

NURSIE: Now, all of you wannabe musketeers, who's first for the medical? **(Snaps on rubber gloves – Chorus flee except one chorus member who is dragged off looking terrified by Nursie into Headquarters.)**

TOWNS 10: **(As they are dragged off by Nursie)** Mercy, mercy!

NURSIE: Oh good, we're on first name terms already! **(Both exit)**

(The barrel tiptoes to the middle of the stage and Camembert steps out)

CAM: Phew, nearly choked in there. The coast is clear! Captain Roquefort!
(ROQUEFORT Enters SL furtively)

ROQ: Hello...is it brie you're looking for?

CAM: Tis I, Camembert, master of espionage and oaty crackers

ROQ: I can tell that from the stink, unless it's this lot out there. Save your booing and hissing for the cardinal! He's the real villain around here! Get on the wrong side of him is a feta worse than death!

CAM: You cheddar believe it! I've been spying on the Musketeers and I have big news!

ROQ: What is it?

CAM: Listen very Caerphilly, I shall say this only once!

ROQ: No, look I can't do any more cheese puns, they're not very mature

CAM: (shrugs) Eh, Graters gonna grate. Roquefort, they've noticed the Cardinal's not acting right!

ROQ: Ooo don't tell him that, he's very sensitive about his acting.

CAM: The big fat one said she really fancied him **(They both consider and gag)** and then they talked about how he glides up behind people when they least expect it **(Cardinal glides on behind them, in full robes and with a thurible wafting a bit of incense)**

ROQ: I know, it's so creepy. It really freaks me out he's....he's right behind me isn't he? **(Cardinal slaps both their heads)**

CARD: (To audience) You know, once every now and then someone marvellous comes along – and here I am! You may now commence booing and hissing – I am the main event! **(to his flunkies)** Ah, Camembert and Roquefort, two of the finest idiots in all France

CAM: Oo thank you your Eminence! I like your dress but did you know your handbag is on fire?

CARD: I have to keep up appearances you imbeciles – you are surpassed in stench only by this bunch of unwashed English idiots! Where did this lot come from?

CAM: From the looks of the bloke in the third row, the bottom of the barrel boss.

CARD: They look crusty enough for it..Oh booing and hissing? Is that all you can do? Don't you know who I am, Cardinal Richelieu, advisor to the King? I could have you all excommunicated you know!

ROQ: (both cross legs) Ooo sounds painful boss!

CARD: Quiet idiot or you'll be first!

CAM: Don't worry Roquefort, he can't really do it, he's not a REAL Cardinal

CARD: What? Fermez la bouche Camembert or I'll have you deep fried!

ROQ: Yeah shut your cakehole Camembert, no-one's meant to know he's an imposter taking the place of his identical twin brother.

(SFX DUM, DUM DA)

CARD: Silence! No one must know that *important plot point!*

CAM: Ooooh...what about them? **(indicates audience)**

CARD: Who would listen to a bunch of repulsive English people like them? Anyway what've you found out?

ROQ: The Musketeers suspect you are plotting against the King and Queen! What are we going to do your Cardboard-inalness?

CARD: Considering we've tried to get rid of Queen Anne 7 times this week, they are a bit slow on the uptake. You two are useless! Can't even overthrow a monarchy

CAM: But boss! Her lady in waiting, Lady Constantina, keeps thwarting our cunning plans.

ROQ: And she keeps following me too!

CARD: Pah, she is just a girl and the Musketeers are a bunch of has-beens, what are they going to do, strike me down with their zimmer-frames?

CAM: Oh! They came to see if someone called D'artagnan was going to join up.

CARD: (OTT reaction) D'artagnan? Oh..**(as if swearing)** ..Croque monsieur! I know that name! **(spotlight on him, lights down)** Captain D'artagnan, my old nemesis, responsible for my exile, I shall see your son destroyed! He will never become a musketeer. He is doomed I tell you! Mwahahahah! **(CAMEMBERT AND ROQUEFORT have peered curiously into the edges of the spotlight – Lights back up)**

ROQ: You all right boss?

CARD: Yes, yes, I'm going to get King Louis to sign this law that will give me lots of gold..I want you two to make sure this D'artagnan never becomes a musketeer!

ROQ & CAM: Oui oui boss!

CARD: Stop oui, oui-ing everywhere too .Disgusting... and you lot, if you say one word to anyone, I'll have all of your Christmas presents confiscated and your Christmas dinner replaced with snails in garlic! **(Exits SL)**

ROQ: Stealth mode Camembert . Use the Febreeze (**hands it to him**)

CAM: (**sprays self**) Better than a bath. We'll be ready. (**Exits to hide**)

ZOOT and CONNIE enter SR

ZOOT: One for all (**and all for one**)

CONNIE: (To audience) Gosh you're right Zoot, there are a lot of musketeer recruits here.

ZOOT: But no sign of Captain Roquefort and his stinky friend, Connie...I mean Lady Constantina

CONNIE: We've been friends forever Zoot, you can call me Connie. I was sure they were up to something. Will you help me look?

ZOOT: I promised Athos, Porthos and Aramis that I would watch out for a young lad called D'artagnan. He's running out of time though – it's nearly one o'clock!

CONNIE: I hope for his sake he makes it.

D'ARTAGNAN runs on SR and comes to a halt looking around.

DART: So this is Paris - I've made it just in time! My father told me I should have no trouble becoming a musketeer and I want to make him proud and be the best one ever or my name's not D'artagnan! (**thigh slap**) Excuse me, is this the Musketeer Headquarters?

CONNIE: (Turns – struck by each other)...Hello

ZOOT: Yes it is

DART: Gosh you said that without moving your lips!

ZOOT: No it was me!

DAR: (Ignoring) I am D'artagnan (**Every time the name is said, Camembert and Roquefort pop their head out of somewhere random on set**) soon to be one of the King's own Musketeers...I hope!

CONNIE: I am Connie

ZOOT: Lady Constantina to you

DART: A beautiful name for a beautiful lady. You have beautiful.. hair

CONNIE: Thank you. I grew it myself.

ZOOT: You ever noticed when you are in the same room as a couple it's like you cease to exist?

CONNIE: D'artagnan, are you good with a sword?

ZOOT: I say, steady on you've only just met!

DART: My father, D'artagnan senior, trained me until I could best him, and he once led the Musketeers so I hope I am good enough.

CONNIE: Oh I'm sure you will be D'artagnan – and I would be glad to show you around Paris, city of romance and love

ZOOT: I feel like she is trying to say something but I'm not sure what

DART: My lady Constantina, I thought my dream was to come to Paris and follow in the footsteps of my father. Now I see it contains far greater treasure!

SONG 2 - Love from me to you (Duet)

CONNIE: The queen will be waiting for me – until later D'artagnan **(exits SR)**

DART: Ah, I think I'm in love!

ZOOT: With a Lady no less. 'Ere I've been waiting for you. You better hurry up if you want to get your application in, you only have a few minutes!

DART: Don't worry, I've got my letter of recommendation here, and my sword.
(brandishes both. CAM and ROQ sneak in from either side and snatch both from him)

ROQ: You mean THIS sword?

CAM: and this recommendation?

DART: Give them back! I need them to get into the Musketeers?

ROQ: A pipsqueak like you? You're having a laugh!
(DART goes to snatch at them and the run away)

CAM: Can't catch us! And as for your letter of recommendation, we're going to convert it to a PDF, and upload it onto MySpace..so that neither you or anyone else, will ever see it again.**(Both laugh and run off as DART chases off after them)**

ZOOT: I feel I should do something useful. I know! Chase music! **(Starts playing Athos enters escorting a random chorus lady Cam runs across, swerves around them and DART knocks into them. Lady falls over)**

DART: Sorry!

ATHOS: How dare you sir! To strike down a lady so.

DART: I am sorry. I did not *know* you were a lady.

ATHOS: Not me, you idiot. **(points to the fallen lady)** Her! **(blows kiss to the lady who swoons again)** – I challenge you to a duel in her honour **(slaps D'artagnan's face with gloves)**

DART: ..A duel...but **(CAM peeks back in and blows raspberries at him)** Okay fine!

ATHOS: Two o'clock at the fountain!

DART: **(Leaving after CAM)** I'll be there!

ZOOT: The thick plottens... I mean, the plot thickens! **(ATHOS Leaves as PORTHOS enters with a lady, and holding onto a pastry/croissant. ROQ runs across again swerving and DART knocks the pastry out of PORTHOS hand and knocks over the lady.)**

PORTHOS: How dare you sir! **(Pushes lady to one side to rescue pastry)** To strike down a fine pastry in it's prime! I challenge you to a duel in its honour! **(slaps face with gloves)**

DART: Ow! Fine, fine! Five past two at the fountain. **(ROQ taunting him from wings, runs off after him, PORTHOS exits)**

ZOOT: He really does have worse luck than <topical reference>! **(Both CAM and ROQ run on chased by DART as Aramis enters tinkering with an invention. DART accidentally knocks it from his hand, and Aramis' expression is one of OTT horror)**

ZOOT: Oh dear! I recognise that look. I think we need subtitles!

ARAMIS (Explosive French with violent actions eg strangling/stabbing etc as ZOOT holds up understated comments like "Oh dear. I am a little put out) I challenge you to a duel! (slaps face with gloves)

ZOOT: Oh no...not another one.

DART: Everyone is so touchy in Paris. Uh, my calendar is choc-full

ZOOT: Must be an advent calendar!

ARAMIS: Then you are without honour!

DART: Fine, Ten past two at the fountain **(Aramis leaves. SFX, clock building up to chime)** Give me back my things! I need them! **(Clock strikes one)**

CAM & ROQ drop sword

CAM: Oh dear, you can't be a musketeer now can you?

ROQ: What a shame **(rips up letter – both laugh)**

DART: No! **(drops to knees to try and get the pieces)**

ZOOT: You're bigger bullies than Miss Trunchbull out on a date with Voldemort!

ROQ: (Draws sword on ZOOT, now quivering) I've always wanted to retune that lute...with my razor-sharp blade!

ZOOT: Everyone's a critic **(Closes eyes waiting for inevitable, but DART intervenes and very rapidly fights them off showing he is good at swordfighting. CAM and ROQ run off SL)**

DART: Are you alright?

ZOOT: I thought I was a goner! That was very brave of you. You deserve to be a musketeer.

DART: What am I going to do? I've messed up my only chance

ZOOT: I'll beg the King and Queen to make an exception!

DART: You're right Zoot! I must never give up!

(NURSIE enters from Musketeer Headquarters, shooping chorus)

NURSIE: Go on all of you, you were all rubbish. Not a single one was up to standard. What will King Louis XIII say?
(Fanfare)

ZOOT: Introducing King Louis, king of all France, King of the swingers, Jungle VIP who's reached the top and has to stop, XIII... and Queen Anne, rulers, protractors and set squares of France **(KING LOUIS, QUEEN ANNE, CONNIE enter. All bow to them)**

KING: Why are we here again Anne dearest?

QUEEN: To inspect the new recruits for the musketeers dear

KING: Ah yes. Nursie Merci, is it a fine crop this year?

NURSIE: Er well your madge

QUEEN: Let's see them

NURSIE: Truth is your XIII-ness, no-one was up to standards.

ZOOT: Oh! Oh! But there was one, D'artagnan arrived but vile and nefarious forces stopped him from getting his application in by the deadline.

(CARDINAL glides in SL with ROQ & CAM)

CARD: Did I hear someone talking about me? Was it you horrible lot?

ROQ: No boss the jester was jest trying to persuade the king to let D'artagnan join the musketeers

CARD: Oh really, we'll see about that! **(glides to the king who jumps)**

KING: Oo Cardinal I do wish you wouldn't do that.

CARD: Ah your majesty, you're kind to consider obvious riff-raff for such a prestigious position but it wouldn't really be fair would it?

KING: A point well made Cardinal Richelieu

NURSIE: (Sidling up) I'm sure he has many well made points. Rwoowr!

CARD: Madam. Your eyes remind me of the stars

NURSIE: ooooo really your Cardboardinal boxness?

CARD: Yes because I like to see them from far, far away. At the very least this young upstart needs a letter of recommendation

DART: I had one your majesty... but it was destroyed

CARD: Oh how *convenient*. Well, sad to say your dreams are no more. Ta ta D'artagnan.

(DART looks at king who shakes head and he turns to leave)

CONNIE: Wait! My queen surely there is something we can do?

QUEEN: Hmm Louis dear, I seem to remember that if someone performs a great service to the crown or France, you can appoint them directly to the Musketeers

KING: Why of course! Very well D'artagnan if you perform a great service to France, I shall make you a musketeer!

DART: I shall not let you down your majesty **(bows low)**

KING: Oh Cardinal Richelieu, here is that paper you wanted me to sign **(starts to sign it for him but Queen intercepts)**

QUEEN: Louis dearest, this is a law closing down the orphanage and giving all the money to the Cardinal!

(Everyone boos the Cardinal)

ZOOT: oo that's lower than the fluff in an earthworm's belly button!

CARD: Oh er... well..

KING: Explain yourself Cardinal Richelieu!

CARD: Explain myself? Of course I can! My fellow...what do you call people who live in Paris?

ROQ: Uh... Paris-ites?

CARD: My fellow Paras-ites...

SONG 3

CARD: Time to get out of here before they realise. I'll be back!

ROQ: Oh that's good

CARD: What?

CAM: Well it'd be a short panto if you weren't!

CARD: Shut it you idiot! And you lot out there too **(exit SL)**

QUEEN: **(seeing CONNIE and DART together)** Lady Constantina, why don't you show young D'artagnan around Paris? Louis dear, we should go visit the orphans.

KING: Of course dear.**(They exit)**

CONNIE: Oh D'artagnan you're going to love Paris! Follow me!

DART : Anywhere you go **(Both exit SR)**

NURSIE: Aw young love eh? I remember what it was like to be 18, the excitement of new experiences..

ZOOT: ...the thrill of getting chased by dinosaurs!

NURSIE: Oi! Connie is as lovely as they come, made of sugar and spice and all things nice. Me, I'm made of sarcasm and wine and all things fine!

(Three musketeers enter from different entrances and convene)

ATHOS: Nursie, did I see the Cardinal here with the King?

NURSIE: Oh yes, it was a bit strange. He got King Louis to sign a law that would take money from orphans!

ALL: Sacre Bleu!

NURSIE: For all I fancy the cassock off of him, that's not a very nice thing to do!

PORTHOS: He's sneakier than a midnight fridge raider! Speaking of which, for lunch I want a quickie

ARAMIS: Porthos, we've been over this. It's pronounced 'quiche' .

ATHOS: We will look into it. We better have lunch, I have a duel at 2

PORTHOS: I have one at 2.05

ARAMIS: And I at 2:10

ATHOS: Then, we shall support each other.

NURSIE: That's my boys. One for all

ALL: And All for one!

(All exit)

ACT 1 SCENE 2

In the Palace (midstage cloth)– CAM and ROQ are mopping the floor

ROQ: Oo the boss is really unhappy this time. He called us idiots five times earlier!

CAM: Yeah, I said, so what if I don't know what Armageddon means. It's not the end of the world!

ROQ: Exactly! He's so cold blooded if a mosquito bit him it'd get pneumonia.

CAM: Yeah I thought he'd rupture something. I've been polishing the floor so he can see his reflection in it.

ROQ: Oh that'll cheer him up...He enjoys looking at himself in the mirror, he thinks he's the best looking bloke in France

CAM: Now that's what I call a vivid imagination. Oo he's coming **(Stands to attention)**

CARD: (Glides on starting to speak) Enjoy whaa....(tries to stop, overshoots, crashes off in SR wing. CAM and ROQ look terrified, hide mops. CARDINAL enters trying to maintain dignity...with difficulty

CARD: Oh you thought that was funny did you? I've written down all your names and I'm going to do something hideous to you all, right after I find out who polished this floor and consign them to a fate worse than death! Roquefort! Camembert! Who did this?

CAM & ROQ: Errrr.... D'artagnan!

CARD: (Spotlight) D'artagnan... so the son plots to continue the legacy of his father as my nemesis, sabotaging me into breaking panto tradition by having to enter from the right side of the stage! **(CAM and ROQ peer into the spotlight. Light ups)**

CAM: Things went a bit dim then

ROQ: I'm surprised you noticed

CARD: (Still trying not to fall over) I've had enough of people thwarting my plans. Queen Anne and her musketeers need to go. Every time I persuade the king to do something she interferes. Camembert, Roquefort help me pace dramatically! **(They get into position and pace. ROQ turns suddenly, spinning the CARDINAL out of control)**

ROQ: I've got it!

CAM: Make the most of it, he's going to kill you!

CARD: Roquefort you idiot!! **(advances on him)**

ROQ: Help!

CAM: Uh..Boss, I have an idea.. we, we can discredit the Queen and make it look like she collaborating with the English!

ROQ: Oh! Oh! Then you could really get away with murder

CARD: Well, well, wonders will never cease, you've had a good idea. You might be marginally more intelligent than Roquefort.

CAM: Thanks Boss!

CARD: But then so are rocks. Anyway, I could get rid of the real cardinal, my identical twin.

ROQ: Where is he now boss?

CARD: Where else would you hide a priest but in the priest hole **(Goes to random bit of set and opens it, revealing tied up mock cardinal in nightshirt wearing an iron mask) (Pointing to cardinal in iron mask)** And you can wipe that smirk off your face.

CAM: Don't you think the iron mask is a bit much your worshipfulness?

CARD: Oh it's just a nod to the intelligent members of the audience. Of which there are few. How to do it... hmm... I've got it! We will steal Queen Anne's diamonds and fake a note saying the queen is a traitor and send them to England!

ROQ: But how will the King find out this plot?

CARD: I will tell him to throw a ball!

CAM: But he doesn't have a dog or nuthin

CARD: Camembert, I don't know what makes you so stupid, but it really, really works.

ROQ: But the king doesn't have balls anymore

CAM: Not since he got married.

CARD: Apparently not. Anyway he'll figure it out when Queen Anne can't wear her diamonds to the ball.

CAM: But the three musketeers...

CARD: I'll get them disbanded. You said they were having duels. I'll get the king to declare duelling illegal! Simple.

ROQ: They could fight their way out of it!

CAM: Ooo Boss Boss! We could use our secret weapons.

CARD: I'm going to regret this but what secret weapons?

ROQ: They have the musketeers, and we have...

BOTH: The muskehounds! **(whistles)**
(Junior chorus rush on as puppy musketeers barking. CARDINAL looks horrified)

CARD: They are not hounds, they are puppies! What they going to do, lick them to death?

ROQ: They're highly trained - especially this one.

CAM: I'm calling him Dogtanian – Give him commands, he obeys a clever master perfectly.

CARD: **(Dog ignores everything)** Sit, **(ignores)** play dead **(ignores)**. I see.. obeys a clever master eh? uh, okay Dogtanian ignore me! Good boy, breathe. Perfect control. Show me what else they can do!

SONG 4- Muskehounds- Hound dog song

CARD: It is a cunning plan – if a musketeer attacked a puppy their reputation would be forever ruined! Our plan is clear!

CAM: It is?

ROQ: I'm more confused than a chameleon in a bagful of skittles!

CARD: You're such an idiot Camembert, if you had a pet zebra, you'd call it Spot... here, here is a copy of the plan. **DO NOT LOSE IT.** This is a copy of the "fake news" to frame the Queen. Now get out of here and take these disgustingly cute muskehounds with you. One of them has widdled on my foot!

CAM & ROQ: Yes boss! **(both exit SL)**

KING enters SR

CARD: Your majesty, thank goodness you're here. As a man of God I find the thought of violence shocking, and I can't help but notice people are constantly slapping each other around the face with gloves and duelling is up!

KING: Up where? **(looks up – CARD goes to throttle him)**

CARD: I've heard that all the fashionable monarchs have banned duelling

KING: Welllll....

CARD: And of course the English love it. This lot out here, that all they do all the time. That and using fidget spinners. Oh yes you do!

KING: What?! I must ban it immediately!

CARD: **(Whips out scroll)** If you would just sign here, here, initial here...thank you.

KING: Now I just have to see my Queen. Anne is very dear to me you know

CARD: She's certainly cost me a fortune. Ah... I don't know how to say this **(mock sadness)**

KING: What? What is it?

CARD:.. I've hoped and prayed it is not so but I have heard a terrible rumour that the Queen is a traitor and has sent her diamonds to England to show her support for their government, **(aside)** such as it is....

KING: Oh no she hasn't!

CARD: Oh yes she has!

KING: No! I don't believe it!

CARD: You know, some people say you struggle to keep a sun tan, because you are in your wife's shadow all the time. I for one don't believe a word of it. For instance a man who was King would never let the queen forbid him to throw a Ball. A man who was King could ask his wife to wear the diamonds he had so generously

given her. A man who was King could do anything...

KING: I could throw a Ball and ask her to wear the diamonds this very night! That would prove it one way or the other. I'm brilliant!

CARD: Indeed your majesty

KING: I shall do that right now! **(Exits)**

CARD: Toodles. Mwahahahaha! Ah you'd have to go a long way to find a bigger fool – almost as far as the third row from the looks of it. And don't you lot get any ideas about telling anyone otherwise it'll be the guillotine for you, and I don't mean that slidy one that you can only put about two sheets of paper in either! Mwahahaha **(exits SL)**

ACT 1 SCENE 3 – Queen Anne's chambers

(CAM & ROQ sneak out from the secret passage, searching in a hurry)

CAM: You found the diamonds yet?

ROQ: Just far too many M & S big pants. Let's look at the instructions again..blah, blah, take diamonds from queen's dresser and bring to Cardinal Richie-poo.

CAM: Found them!

ROQ: Someone's coming, run! **(they run for the secret exit and drop one of the letters)**

ZOOT & CONNIE enter SR

ZOOT: One for all **(and all for one)**

CONNIE: Oh Zoot, D'artagnan is so amazing. I showed him all around Paris and we had a wonderful time.

ZOOT: At the moment he has less prospects than *<topical reference>*.

CONNIE: (sighs) D'artagnan has to perform a great service for France...what are the odds of that happening?

ZOOT: Well this is panto so... pretty high.

CONNIE: I really hope so because..I think I'm in love Zoot. I think about D'artagnan all the time and I've only just met him! He's the...sun to my moon, the macaroni to my cheese... the...

ZOOT: The Ken to your Barbie? Let's fetch the Queen's bag and you can find him and tell him.

CONNIE: (Finds empty diamond box) Oh no! the Queens diamonds are missing

ZOOT: Wait a minute, I can smell something stinking and cheesy in here – **(to audience)** have the Cardinal's men been here?

CONNIE: And look! **(picks up letter)** Oh no they are trying to frame the Queen! We must tell her immediately! Come on! **(both exit)**

SCENE 4

Front cloth - Palace Gardens. CAM and ROQ tiptoe on from SL. CARD following looking furtive to mission impossible music)

CARD: Shut it you noisy lot! I'm trying to have a secret meeting here

(Hooded female figure enters from SR)

MILADY: Psst! Red cow flies at night

CARD: Shepherds delight

MILADY: Red cow sinks in the morning.

CARD: Shepherds warning.

MILADY: The moon is waxing slowly.

CARD: But only on Thursdays.

MILADY: It is I, Milady de Winter, superspy -Is that you Cardinal Richelieu?

CARD: What was the point of a secret password if you ask that? Milady de Winter, this is your mission if you choose to accept it. Take this package to England and make sure the Queens diamonds are seen in the hands of the English.

MILADY: For the usual fee

CARD: Highway robbery – half now half on your return **(hands money bag – Milady exits)**

ROQ: I'm a big fan of Milady

CAM: You're certainly full of hot air.

CARD: Everything is going perfectly! Now to sort out the Three musketeers! **(All exit SR)**

Enter QUEEN SR, and CONNIE, NURSIE, ZOOT run on after her)

ZOOT: One for all **(all for one)**

NURSIE: Yoo hoo! Your Queeniness!

QUEEN: What is it Nursie?

CONNIE: We've discovered a plot to frame you my Queen. Your diamonds are stolen!

KING enters SL. All hush and look furtive.

KING: Ah, there you are Anne. I want to talk about balls

QUEEN: Not in front of the help dear

KING: I don't think there are enough of them

NURSIE: Speak for yourself

KING: I've decided to throw a ball right now, and I think it would be nice if you wore the diamonds I gave you.

(Nursie, Connie and Zoot making frantic delay him gestures)

QUEEN: Oh Louis, not now. The antechamber needs decorating.

KING: Antechamber? What's that?

ZOOT: Where you keep all your Aunties!

QUEEN: We don't want to be the laughing stock of Europe – we'll just have to delay the ball while it is decorated

CARDINAL: (Glides in) Camembert and Roquefort are expert decorators and can have it done in a trice.

ZOOT: Oh..oh Nursie and I will help as well to make it go...faster

NURSIE: Gotcha, yes!

KING: Splendid I'll get the invitations sent out **(King and CARD leave SL looking smug)**

QUEEN: Oh dear! We must try and get the diamonds back! Zoot, Nursie, delay the Cardinal's men as long as you can! **(they salute and leave)**

QUEEN: Athos, Porthos and Aramis!

ALL: (enter and bow) At your service your majesty

QUEEN: Your legendary skills are needed. Cardinal Richelieu has made his move

ARAMIS: I deduce that he is trying to frame you my queen, using your diamonds.

PORTHOS: Oh he's very good isn't he?

ATHOS: Then we must intercept the courier!

PORTHOS: Immediately!...after dinner

ARAMIS: There is the matter of the duels of course. We are honour bound to fight them.

QUEEN: Fight them and then depart. Connie, I think this might count as a great service to France. Find D'artagnan and ask him to help the Musketeers. Where the Cardinal will watch you three, he might overlook D'artagnan. For the sake of France, you must not fail! **(exits)**

ATHOS: None shall thwart our mission! **(slaps thigh)**

PORTHOS: Not everyone could be so macho in fishnets you know!
(Exit SR)

SCENE 5

(In the Ante chamber – CAM and ROQ in decorating gear)

ROQ: Decorating! I'm a brilliant swordsman not a decorator

CAM: The Cardinal says just get it done quickly **(continuing in the style of dodgy Cockney builder/ Del Boy)** See these ceiling frescoes by Poussin, the murals by Vermeer...a couple of coats of magnolia..cover the whole lot. Botch, botch! Cushty!

(NURSIE and ZOOT enter DSR)

ZOOT: One for all **(and all for one)**

NURSIE: Remember Zoot, the plan is to delay them as much as possible!

ZOOT: Got it! Right we're here to help!

ROQ: Right fetch that trestle and put it here. **(ZOOT does so)**

NURSIE: I'll get the other one **(NURSIE puts it too far away)**

CAM: I'll get the plank.

(CAM places the plank on ROQ's trestle drops the other end which lands on ROQ's foot)

ROQ: You idiot!! **(Picks up plank)** Move that closer.

CAM: Righto! **(He does so)**

(ZOOT moves other trestle further away again ROQ puts plank down and it drops again)

ROQ: What! Look put that one here and that one here. Do not move them.

(ZOOT and CAM do)

NURSIE: I'll get the other plank.

ROQ: Right. **(ROQ successfully places the first plank on the trestles and NURSIE boxes him in with the second one. Turns to find himself boxed in)**
What!!

CAM: Let me help boss **(Lifts plank to let ROQ out turns round to put plank back and ends up boxed in himself)** Eh?!

ROQ: Good grief you're useless. **(Successfully releases CAM)** What are you two sniggering at. Now pass me that pot

ZOOT: **(Does so excruciatingly slowly)**

CAM: Hurry up you idiot! You're so slow, you'd have to speed up to stop. What's wrong with you?

NURSIE: Well he's a minstrel

ROQ: Mmm chocolate..eh what?

NURSIE: He can only move to a beat

ZOOT: That's right! Hit the music maestro

(Slapstick to The Stripper ending with CAM and ROQ stuck to walls etc – swearing in French and Zoot picking up comedy subtitles. Blackout)

SCENE 6

**By the Fountain outside in Paris
(DART pacing, looking at the time)**

DART: It's nearly time for my first duel, but my father told me never to fight unless I really had to. Maybe I can explain it was an accident.

CONNIE runs on SR

CONNIE: Oh D'artagnan, I've been looking for you everywhere!

DART: I am at your service my lady

CONNIE: There is a dreadful plot!

DART: I thought that too

CONNIE: What? No, against the Queen. She has asked that you work with the

Three Musketeers to thwart Cardinal Richelieu's plan

DART: Work with my heroes? This is my dream! I'm longing to meet them. But first honour dictates I must deal with these duels first

CONNIE: Do we have time for a song?

DART: Maybe a short one

(Music starts, Musketeers enter, tabards with them)

ATHOS: Wait a moment who is this vision of loveliness? **(music zips up)**

PORTHOS: Which one?

ATHOS: The lady – I wonder about you sometimes Porthos

PORTHOS: Oh yes, she's well tasty

ATHOS: I do believe something is happening...my heart is racing, my palms are sweating and I feel an uncontrollable urge to burst into song!

PORTHOS: Oh good, I thought I was coming down with viral musical-itis!

ARAMIS: We are not ill gentlemen, I do believe we are in the presence of a Principal girl.

PORTHOS: Good point!

ATHOS: Thank you I do try and keep it sharp

ARAMIS: No! That can only mean one thing..

ATHOS: Four Principal boys and only one love interest – may the best Principal Boy win!

SONG 5– In Love with the Shape of you (in which it is clear CONNIE prefers DART)

Clock strikes 2 and Musketeers start putting on their work tabards

DART: Time for my first duel

CONNIE: Oh D'artagnan it could be dangerous. Who is it with?

ATHOS: Me!

PORTHOS: Me!

ARAMIS: Me!

CONNIE: You are duelling the Three Musketeers?! But you are meant to be working together

DART: The Three Musketeers! You are my heroes! I'm so pleased to meet you, I've heard all about you! The last thing I want to do is fight you.

ATHOS: It is a matter of honour

PORTHOS: My profiterole would never forgive me

ARAMIS: Draw your sword D'artagnan **(he does)** Call that a sword? **(draws his – it bigger)**

PORTHOS: Call that a sword? **(draws his – bigger again)**

ATHOS: Call that a sword? **(draws his – it is enormous!)** This is a sword. **(To Connie)** If you want to change your mind about him, I'll understand.

DART: How about I fight all three of you at once to save time?

ARAMIS: a most logical thought.

ATHOS: En garde! **(they swish their swords, only Porthos' makes a lightsaber vroom SFX and he has to hit it to get it working properly. They duel having fun rather than being aggressive)**

ATHOS: He's rather good isn't he?

PORTHOS: Just like his father

ARAMIS: Better!

DART: Thank you!

CARD Enters with CAM and ROQ

CARD: Oh look! Lawbreaker caught in the act. That's three points on your licence and one way trip to jail– oh didn't you know duelling is illegal now? Arrest them!

(Four stand back to back)

ATHOS: We should have no problem fighting off these idiots.

ROQ: But we won't be fighting. **(Whistles SFX)** Dogtanian, and MY Muskehounds, secure the prisoners!

(They swarm in and surround them)

PORTHOS: They are so cute...yet deadly

ARAMIS: There is no choice but surrender

CONNIE: That's not fair! They didn't know!

CARD: But the King himself made this law (**Fanfare**) and how convenient that he should be coming this way now

KING, QUEEN, NURSIE, ZOOT and townsfolk enter

ZOOT: One for all (**and all for one**)

KING: What is going on here?

CARD: The musketeers have been caught breaking the law. They have shamed France, they must be disbanded now your Majesty.

NURSIE: Whaaaaaaaat? Well my gast is flabbered! My dis is grunted.

ZOOT: You can't just go around making stuff up! I'll..I'll sing an angry song at you!

CARD: Tell me minstrel, do you play requests?

ZOOT: Yes?

CARD: Good, I'd like you to play cards. Maybe then you'd shut up.

QUEEN: No law has been broken. Duelling isn't illegal

KING: Ah... well it might be

QUEEN: Oh Louis, you didn't!

CONNIE: They should at least be entitled to a trial!

NURSIE: My poor boys! Oh Cardinal have mercy (**flings herself at him**) No really, you can have Merci...all of her! (**CAM & ROQ drag her off**)

CARD: This is the end of the musketeers!

ZOOT: Talk is cheap– well, until lawyers get involved!

KING: Then we shall have a trial here and now!

(SONG 6 – Ending in the Musketeers being disbanded, Tabards handed in)

Dumdumdaa!

Curtain close on Cardinal laughing Mwahahaha!!)