

LA FEMME MUSKETEER ALL FOR ONE

SYNOPSIS

The year is 1660. France and Spain are at war. King Louis XIV (Freddie Sayers), who inherited his crown when he was just four years old, is now coming into power. For the past eighteen years, the country was ruled by Cardinal Mazarin (G rard Depardieu), who has no intention to give up power. The people are divided between church and state, cardinal and king. Each has their own army. The cardinal has his guards and the king has his famous musketeers.

We begin with the French losing a battle with the Spaniards. An elderly man named Trevoux (William Gaunt) learns that they should not have lost if Mazarin had sent the supplies the French army needed. After being cautioned to be careful because there are Spanish soldiers and robbers in the woods, Trevoux sets out to see the king.

We follow a hooded rider through the forest with three others in hot pursuit. The rider makes a daring jump off a cliff to lose his pursuers, then finds himself in an area of stone ruins where a mysterious man engages him in combat. They go through a series of impressive feats with the rider always victorious. When the young man lets down his hair, we discover that "he" is really a "she" – Valentine D'Artagnan (Susie Amy) and her opponent is her father, the renowned retired musketeer D'Aartagnan (Michael York). D'Artagnan is training his daughter to follow in his footsteps. But they must rush home because they're late and Valentine's mother, Cecile (Susan Brown), is going to be angry. She's not terribly, just annoyed as Valentine is filthy and any minute they will have guests over for dinner. Mother is trying to set her up with a man but Valentine has no interest. She wants to run off and be a musketeer.

We meet Captain Villeroi (Marcus Jean Pirae), the most famous and deadliest swordsman in France and the one in charge of the cardinal's guards. He is testing out recruits by fighting with them. He gets a message that Mazarin wants to see him. He meets Mazarin at his office, richly decorated with religious icons. Mazarin is talking to a bookkeeper about how much money they've received in taxes and how much the records show. From the conversation, we learn that Mazarin is stealing money from the king. We also learn that the king has commissioned more musketeers at the urging of his old teacher, Trevoux.

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In the palace, Lady Bolton (Nastassja Kinski) is flirting with the Duke of Buckingham (Nicholas Rowe). While in the throes of passion, she scratches him with a hairpin with a poisoned tip. The Duke dies. Lady Bolton steals a ring off his hand and takes a small painting of Queen Anne, King Louis' mother, off the wall and escapes out a window. Soldiers follow, but she escapes in a waiting carriage.

King Louis performs in a ballet with a small audience. His mistress Marie Mancini (Clemency Burton-Hill) is there, as is Mazarin. Trevoux shows up and asks to speak to the king alone, which does not please Mazarin. Trevoux reveals to the king the truth about a battle he thought they had won, but actually had lost. The king learns that Mazarin is lying to him. Trevoux tells the king that the Spanish princess has just become available due to a failed engagement and that a marriage between France and Spain would stop the war. Louis is concerned about her looks and asks to see a portrait. But when Trevoux explains that she is on her way and will arrive within the week, the young king agrees to meet the princess.

Valentine is having dinner with her parents and potential husband Marcel (Andres Williams), who is arrogant and obnoxious. After dinner, she decides it's time to leave to become a musketeer. With her father's help, she sneaks off without saying goodbye to her mother, who wouldn't approve. D'Artagnan tells Valentine to go to Paris and see his old servant, Planchet. He gives her the sword that he used as a musketeer. Valentine's mother overhears the conversation and watches her daughter ride away.

Lady Bolton's carriage and driver are being attacked by the Duke's men when Valentine arrives on the scene. She disarms the men and drives them off. When Lady Bolton lies and says they were trying to rob her, Valentine agrees to escort her to Paris.

We meet three young, cocky, fearless musketeers – Etienne (Nico Nikoter), Antoine (Andrew Musselman) and Gaston (Caspar Zafer). The first two are caught cheating at dice and are chased by thugs. The third, romancing a girl in a house nearby, is chased by her irate brothers. As the young men run away together, they unknowingly stop an attempt by Captain Villeroi to blow up the musketeers' drinking bar. Later, the three are brought in front of Commander Finot (Roy Dotrice) and Captain Paul Muriac (Nicolas Irons) because they have been commissioned as musketeers for only one day and have already gotten in trouble. They had better watch their step or they are out! During this disciplinary action, we learn that their fathers were famous musketeers but, along with Valentine's dad, have retired.

Lady Bolton and Valentine arrive in Paris and part ways. Valentine and Gaston run into each other and nearly duel. He thinks she is a boy. They agree to meet the next day to fight it out. She goes to Captain Muriac and Finot and pleads to be in the musketeers. They tell her no women are allowed. She says she'll prove them wrong.

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The king and his mistress Marie are playing love games when he tells her he cannot marry her because he needs to marry for the good of the crown. She is upset when she hears that the Spanish princess is coming to meet him. Commander Finot arrives and the king advises him to go with the musketeers to help the demoralized troops who keep losing to Spain.

Lady Bolton reports to Mazarin with the portrait of Queen Anne. He cuts it open to find a letter revealing that the Duke of Buckingham might be King Louis' father – which means he isn't really the king! Mazarin plans to use this to control the king and France.

Valentine finds the establishment owned by Planchet (Constantine Gregory), the place where the musketeers drink, which was almost burned down by Villeroi. She stays with him and his wife. The next morning she meets Gaston and his two friends for a duel. They learn she is Valentine, the little girl they used to play with, and rekindle their friendship.

Mazarin orders Villeroi to pick a squad of loyal men to intercept the Spanish princess en route to meet the king – and kill her. Villeroi asks him about a plot of land that used to be in his family that he wants back and Mazarin tells him it was given to someone else. Villeroi is angry.

Princess Maria-Theresa (Kristina Krepela) travels in a carriage with two attendees. They wonder if the king is handsome or a frog.

Musketeers are called to the front with Finot.

Back at home, D'Artagnan is paid a visit by Porthos (John Rhys-Davies), Aramis (Allan Corduner) and Athos (Christopher Cazenove) – the fathers of the three boys – who are now performing as the famous Three Musketeers. They invite D'Artagnan to come with them to Paris to watch their show. He accepts.

Finot is killed in the country by Villeroi's men. Valentine is nearby and tries to help. With Captain Muriac, she reports to the king and Trevoux that Finot and all his men were murdered. The king, realizing that Mazarin is getting too powerful, orders the musketeers to protect the princess. Etienne, Gaston and Antoine are called to duty. Valentine wants to go but she is not commissioned.

The king tells Marie he needs to send her away. Totally distraught, she runs to her uncle, Marazin, and finds Lady Bolton in his office taking the letter. She takes it from her, reads it, and runs away. She wants to protect her king and rushes to the musketeers' headquarters, Lady Bolton on her heels. Valentine shows up. Marie gives Valentine the letter. Lady Bolton kills Marie and frames Valentine, who is now wanted for the murder of the king's mistress.

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On the run, Valentine goes to the musketeers' watering hole to gather her things. She explains what happened to Planchet. The cardinal's guards show up looking for her, intent on retrieving the letter. Valentine escapes out a window. The guards arrest the men present for aiding and abetting a murderer.

D'Artagnan arrives at Planchet's with his three friends and learns that his daughter is wanted for murder and that the boys are on assignment to protect the Spanish princess.

In the country, Etienne, Antoine and Gaston search for clues to the princess' whereabouts as they gamble and flirt with the local girls. At the same time, Captain Villeroi's men, wearing musketeer uniforms, take the princess and her attendants hostage.

The king finally learns, with Trevoux's help, just how much money Mazarin has been stealing from him and the country to fund his own army. Mazarin tells the king the Maria is dead, killed by Valentine D'Artagnan, and that the musketeers have been arrested for aiding her. Trevoux explains to the king that his musketeers are incarcerated and that his palace is guarded by Mazarin's. In other words, he is Mazarin's prisoner!

Valentine finds Captain Mauriac and her three young counterparts in the country. She explains her position to them and what happened back at home. She warns them that the cardinal's guards are about to attack. When they do, a fight ensues. Mauriac is killed when he takes a bullet meant for Valentine. The musketeers bury him in a hilltop grave.

Mazarin wants Lady Bolton to meet with Villeroi, who has threatened to deliver the Spanish princess to the king instead of detaining her as he was ordered to – unless Mazarin gives him the land he wants. Mazarin wants Lady Bolton to go in his place, get next to the princess and use her poisoned hairpin to kill her.

The musketeers, including Valentine, come across the area where the guards abducted the princess. They realize that the guards were disguised as musketeers when they kidnapped her, as village children are now wearing the discarded uniforms. They find a shawl made out of Spanish lace. After stealing food from the local merchants, the three guys get in trouble once again.

That night the musketeers camp out. Valentine and Gaston huddle for warmth. They like each other but are surprised the next morning when they wake up together.

King Louis mourns Marie.

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D'Artagnan and the other three retired musketeers travel together in the woods, on a mission to find their children – especially the accused fugitive Valentine.

Valentine and the three young musketeers ride into a village searching for the princess. Valentine and Gaston spot Lady Bolton arriving in her carriage. They hide and watch where she's going. She enters a tavern where Villeroi is waiting. Valentine crawls on the roof and watches through a peep hole she cuts out, but she is discovered and taken captive.

Lady Bolton and Villeroi decide to team up against Mazarin. Lady Bolton wants the letter that suggests the king is not legitimate. Valentine refuses to surrender it. Valentine is placed in captivity with the princess and her attendants. Villeroi takes her father's sword from her. In the prison, Valentine introduces herself to the princess and tells her that she is there to help escort her to the king. The princess gives her a hairpin to unlock the chains binding her hands.

In the village, D'Artagnan and his friends arrive, searching for their children. The townspeople are excited, as two thieves are about to be hung. The retired musketeers soon discover that the thieves are Antoine and Etienne, whom they rescue.

Valentine befriends the princess and explains that Lady Bolton killed Marie over the letter. Valentine never reveals what exactly was in the letter, but she makes it clear that the cardinal is out to hurt her because he doesn't want her to marry the king. She also admits that she's not sure whose side Villeroi is on – his own or Mazarin's.

D'Artagnan, his friends, and their sons plan to rescue Valentine and the princess.

In the throes of passion, Lady Bolton tells Villeroi that Louis XIII might not be the father of Louis XIV. If they can get the letter from Valentine and prevent the planned royal marriage, they will control the crown.

The princess asks Valentine if the king is attractive. She seems very concerned about his looks. Meanwhile, Valentine's father and the others plot their escape.

The next morning Villeroi and Lady Bolton arrive at the prisoners' cell. Valentine threatens them with the fact that the king will kill them for hurting the princess. Villeroi tells her she's just like her father – an idealist. Apparently Villeroi and her father were to duel, but D'Artagnan left Paris before they had a chance. Villeroi twists Valentine's wrist. Bolton demands the letter. Valentine denies having it. Bolton admits she's killed for it – and will again. During this exchange, the princess pickpockets the key to their cell from Villeroi. When they leave, she unlocks the door just as the musketeers arrive to save them. Villeroi and D'Artagnan finally duel. Valentine leads the princess out of the chateau grounds. Valentine comes to her father's aid just as he is losing the duel.

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Lady Bolton tries to escape with the princess and her attendants. When the fight ends, Villeroi is taken captive and Lady Bolton is tied up and abandoned, a gash on her cheek certain to be an ugly scar.

Our group of musketeers frees the other musketeers, who are being held captive by Mazarin, and they all deliver the princess and Villeroi to the king. Valentine is no longer accused of murder. The princess and the king find each other favorable and agree to marry. The king appoints D'Artagnan commander and commissions Valentine as the newest musketeer.

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