

THE PRE-MUSKETEERS
By Wade Bradford
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AUDITION 1- for 1 m, 2 w

In this scene, Aramis helps Kat.

(The stage is dark except for a bright lamp which KAT carries. ARAMIS might be carrying one as well. Kat has a bag.)

ARAMIS: By the way, young lady, my name is Aramis. And you are?

KAT: It's Katherine, but you can call me Kat.

ARAMIS: You didn't tell me you lived in a mansion.

KAT: No, I didn't.

ARAMIS: Shouldn't we light some candles? Or warm this place up with a nice roaring fire?

KAT: Shh. I don't wish to disturb the servants. Now, where is it?

ARAMIS: Considering this is your home, you seem a bit lost. And I must say that it was rather odd that we entered through the back door and that you jimmied the lock with a tool pick.

KAT: I told you, I lost my key. Stop being so inquisitive. Here we are.

(The LIGHTS fade up to reveal the door of a large safe.)

ARAMIS: What a magnificent safe. Your family heirlooms will be well protected there.

KAT: Oh dear. I seem to have forgotten the combination.

ARAMIS: Is there anything I can do to help you remember it?

KAT: Yes, there is, Aramice—

ARAMIS: Aramis.

KAT: Whatever. It would be helpful if you stand guard, just to be sure that the thieves haven't followed us. And I will quietly try to remember the combination. Oh, and turn away from me please, I concentrate better in private.

(ARAMIS stands guard, his back to KAT. While he is looking off in the other direction, she takes out a stethoscope and cracks the safe.)

ARAMIS: *(Looking away.)* If those thieves dare to enter your home, rest assured I will punish them severely. No one should break into another person's home. Such a despicable crime. You would never see me stooping so low.

(While ARAMIS is talking SHE goes into the safe and begins taking out large quantities of money and valuables. She also puts on several necklaces, a couple bracelets, and a tiara.)

ARAMIS: *(Cont'd. Still looking away.)* I am simply glad I can be of service, and that you can safely store your family's treasures. Though, I would humbly ask that after we finish this task you join me to visit the musketeer headquarters. I think the captain would like to hear of my good deed... And then perhaps later on you and I might—

KAT: *(Handing HIM her bag.)* Carry this.

ARAMIS: It feels heavier than before. Did you not open the safe?

KAT: I did. But it was full. We must go to my other house.

ARAMIS: You have another house?

KAT: The mansion next door.

ARAMIS: My goodness, I like you more and more.

QUASI MONA: *(Offstage. Calling out.)* Hello? Is anyone there?

KAT: Maybe it's a ghost. We better hide.

ARAMIS: Nonsense. It sounds like some old servant. *(Calling out.)* We're down— *(SHE covers his mouth, HE removes her hand.)* What are you doing?

KAT: Trying to get you to stop talking.

(SHE kisses HIM, on the cheek or the lips.)

ARAMIS: Oh, well, why didn't you say so?

(SHE leads ARAMIS into the safe.)

AUDITION 2- for 4 m, 3 w, 2 flex

In this scene, the musketeers find themselves at the opera.

(LIGHTS dim on OPERA SINGERS and rise on LADY and PORTHOS who carries a small bag of chocolates.)

LADY: Thank you for attending to the refreshments.

PORTHOS: I feel like a lowly servant. And all for a tiny bag of chocolates. We must return at once to guard the queen.

LADY: Oh, I nearly forgot. Her Majesty says that you may have a refreshment, too.

PORTHOS: Really?

LADY: Anything you like.

PORTHOS: *(Handing bag to HER.)* Hold this. I'll be right back.
(Exits.)

(LIGHTS dim on LADY and rise on OPERA SINGERS.)

OPERA SINGER: You aren't supposed to be backstage.

ARAMIS: I've already explained. I'm an understudy!

(HE accidentally hurts the OPERA SINGER.)

OPERA SINGER: Ow! My arm! I am injured!

STAGE MANAGER: You're on, understudy.

(The STAGE MANAGER pushes ARAMIS onstage to awkwardly sing with KAT. LIGHTS dim on SINGERS and rise on QUEEN in her booth.)

QUEEN: Is that one of my bodyguards on stage?

ATHOS: Yes.

QUEEN: What does that mean?

ATHOS: It means I need another drink.

(LIGHTS back to PORTHOS.)

LADY: Do you have enough refreshments, Porthos?

PORTHOS: Yes, madam. *(Enters with popcorn, giant soda, and a big foam finger.)* I love the opera! What in the world... Aramis? *(Rushes to the backstage area.)* Aramis? What are you doing out there?

STAGE MANAGER: What are you doing back here?

ARAMIS: It's all right. He's an understudy, too.

PORTHOS: I'm an understudy? *(Backs into KAT.)*

KAT: Ow! My foot! I am injured!

STAGE MANAGER: *(Lifts PORTHOS'S hat, puts KAT'S wig onto his head, and replaces hat.)* Here you go, understudy.

(STAGE MANAGER pushes ARAMIS and PORTHOS out onto the stage. They perform with the MUSIC. They aren't half bad. Roses are thrown. ATHOS interrupts. He is intoxicated.)

ATHOS: You two are making a mockery of the musketeers.

PORTHOS: Oh no. He's been drinking.

ARAMIS: You're supposed to be guarding the queen.

ATHOS: We're all supposed to be guarding the queen. So she commanded me to come down and retrieve you.

PORTHOS: But who's guarding her now?

ATHOS: Oh, I'm sure she's fine.

(LADY enters.)

LADY: The queen has been kidnapped!

PORTHOS: What?

ARAMIS: By whom?

LADY: Four masked men. They pulled her from the balcony and whisked her away into a carriage outside.

ARAMIS: It can't be true!

ATHOS: We must save her at once!

PORTHOS: You've done enough already! I'm coming to your rescue, My Queen!

(CAPTAIN enters.)

CAPTAIN: You aren't going to anyone's rescue.

ARAMIS: But, sir! The queen!

CAPTAIN: I am well aware of the situation and I've already dispatched a squadron of musketeers. Real musketeers. Not those who would dare to disgrace the uniform. Athos! I had hoped you had turned your life away from the bottle. Aramis, I had foolishly believed that you would avoid being bewitched by a woman. And Porthos! (*Notices PORTOS is still wearing the wig and hat.*) I don't know what to say about you. Hand over your hats and sashes. You are musketeers no more.

ARAMIS: What will become of us?

CAPTAIN: Pray that we find the queen and that she is safe. Otherwise, the next bow you take will be before a guillotine.

(CAPTAIN takes their hats and sashes, then storms away in disgust. LIGHTS dim.)

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