ROCHEFORT
He’ll have a headache when he wakes up. What do you keep in that bag?

MILADY
Heavy things. You were supposed to meet me ten minutes ago, Rochefort.

ROCHEFORT
My apologies, Milady. This young rascal insisted on fighting.

MILADY
Dueling is outlawed in Paris. The last thing we need is unwanted attention...

He started it!

(MILADY looks down at D’ARTAGNAN.)

MILADY
Who is he?

ROCHEFORT
Another farmer yearning to be a musketeer.

MILADY
Boys and their foolish dreams.

ROCHEFORT
This boy is different. He has a connection to Monsieur de Treville.

MILADY
Treville?! My God, Rochefort – what are you waiting for? Kill him! Kill him!

(She pulls a knife and starts for D’ARTAGNAN. ROCHEFORT stays her hand.)

ROCHEFORT
Milady, this boy is unable to defend himself.

MILADY
What does that matter? He knows Treville! And if Treville finds out that you and I met today, he’ll go straight to the King...

ROCHEFORT
Treville won’t find out.
How can you be certain?

ROCHEFORT

The boy doesn’t know who we are – he just arrived in Paris today. And he hasn’t actually met Treville. Not yet, anyway.

(ROCHEFORT crouches down and starts searching D’ARTAGNAN’s pockets.)

MILADY

But you said…

ROCHEFORT

I spoke hastily. What I meant was, he carries a letter of introduction to Monsieur de Treville.

(ROCHEFORT pulls D’ARTAGNAN’s wallet out of his pocket, opens it and removes a letter. He shows it to MILADY.)

Which he will never deliver. And you know as well as I do that Treville won’t see anyone without an introduction. So you see, Lady de Winter – there is no need for spilt blood. We are quite safe. Now as to the purpose of our meeting – Cardinal Richelieu has orders. You are to return to England without delay, and notify him immediately if the Duke of Buckingham leaves London.

MILADY

Any other instructions?

ROCHEFORT

Yes. In here. But you are not to read them until you cross the Channel.

(He pulls out a sealed envelope and hands it to her.)

MILADY

Very well. And where will you be?

ROCHEFORT

I am to stay here in Paris and keep an eye on Her Majesty. Remember now, the moment Buckingham makes a move…

MILADY

Yes, yes – have I ever failed you before?

(D’ARTAGNAN groans.)

ROCHEFORT

Then away with you – before we’re seen!

END
ROCHEFORT

A gift. Remember me.

I could never forget.

(He exits.)

Will he be safe, Constance?

It is a difficult voyage, Your Majesty.

It is not the voyage that worries me. It is that venomous Cardinal Richelieu...

(Lights down on ANNE and CONSTANCE as the scene shifts to RICHELIEU's chambers. ROCHEFORT enters.)

START

Your Eminence.

Well, Rochefort? Where is he? Where is Buckingham?

Gone, monsieur.

Gone?!

Back to England. He left over a week ago.

And you just now discovered it?

A man like Buckingham is very good at covering his tracks.
RICHIELIEU
So he's gone — and with him any chance I had of catching him with the Queen.

ROCHEFORT
All is not lost. My spies were able to give me other useful information — information, which if made public, would completely discredit Her Majesty.

RICHIELIEU
Go on.

ROCHEFORT
Before he left, the Queen gave Buckingham a parting gift — a token of her love.

RICHIELIEU
Which was...?

ROCHEFORT
The diamond set the King gave her as a birthday present. Twelve glorious diamonds attached to a sash. Imagine how angry the King will be when you tell him she gave it away to her lover.

RICHIELIEU
I cannot bludgeon the King with this news. It must be revealed delicately.

How?

ROCHEFORT

(A special comes up on LOUIS looking at himself in a handheld mirror.)

RICHIELIEU
Your Majesty!

(ROCHEFORT watches.)

RICHIELIEU
crosses to LUIIS's light. ROCHEFORT watches.

Cardinal Richelieu.

LOUIS
May I have a word with you?

RICHIELIEU

(Still preening)

LOUIS
Is it important? I'm busy...