

The Three Musketeers by Terry Kroenung; iuniverse
M/M R&D, SS, SmS

Terry Kroenung • 55

HARBORMASTER

I am very sorry, but all ports have just been closed by royal order. No one may cross the Channel without a pass signed by the Cardinal himself.

PLANCHET

Blast it!

(the COMTE DE WARDES steps forward with a document; he is young, handsome, overdressed, foppish, with extravagant manners and matching arrogance)

DE WARDES *(he has a lisp)*

I have the very thing, my man.

HARBORMASTER *(inspecting it)*

Seems in order. Take it to the captain of the ship. Have a pleasant trip, my lord.

D'ARTAGNAN *(to Planchet)*

Keep a sharp eye out. I'm going to get us a pass. *(follows De Wardes across the stage; stops him at center)* Excuse me, sir.

DE WARDES *(turning; sneering)*

Are you addressing me?

D'ARTAGNAN

I am, sir. I am in need of your assistance.

DE WARDES

That is unfortunate, as I am in a great hurry to get to London. A lovely lady awaits me. *(tries to continue on)*

D'ARTAGNAN *(heading him off)*

A lovely man awaits me.

DE WARDES *(shocked)*

I beg your pardon?

D'ARTAGNAN

No, I must beg your pardon...and I must beg for your pass.

DE WARDES

Move aside, yokel.

D'ARTAGNAN (*hand on sword*)

No.

DE WARDES

I am the Comte De Wardes, you Gascon idiot! Out of my way!

D'ARTAGNAN (*drawing his sword and putting him on point*)

It is never recommended, my lord, to use "Gascon" and "idiot" in the same sentence. Now I must have your pass.

DE WARDES (*drawing and beating D'Artagnan's blade aside in a smooth and surprisingly un-foppish motion*)

You will have to come and take it from my cold dead hand.

D'ARTAGNAN

If that is your choice, my lord.

(they fight; it is fast and furious; De Wardes is elegant and well-trained; D'Artagnan is pressed for time and attacks like a madman; he eventually wounds De Wardes in an arm)

D'ARTAGNAN

One for Porthos! (*wounds him in the leg*)

D'ARTAGNAN

One for Aramis! (*wounds him in the body*)

D'ARTAGNAN

One for Athos!

(De Wardes falls; D'Artagnan kneels, takes the pass; De Wardes pulls a dagger and stabs D'Artagnan in the ribs)

DE WARDES

And one for me!