

A Very Strange Dinner



The king took D'Artagnan's sword and threw it to the ground!

- Preview:**
1. Read the name of the story.
 2. Look at the picture.
 3. Read the sentence under the picture.
 4. Read the first paragraph of the story.
 5. Then answer the following question.

You learned from your preview that the king was

- a. a happy man.
- b. going to prison.
- c. married.
- d. not married.

Turn to the Comprehension Check on page 10 for the right answer.

Now read the story.

Read to find out how D'Artagnan fools the king.

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D'Artagnan and Athos were driving through the gates of the Bastille in a coach. D'Artagnan did not want to take his friend to prison. He knew that he must, since the king told him to. King Louis XIV was angry. Athos's son loved the same girl as the king. Athos asked the king if his son could marry the girl. The king got very angry. He signed an order for D'Artagnan to take Athos to prison.

The two friends reached the last gate. D'Artagnan cried, "Look there, Athos!"

It was their old friend Aramis. Both men thought about the many adventures they had all had. Twenty years ago, Aramis, Athos and their friend Porthos were musketeers. Now, only D'Artagnan was a musketeer.

Athos was sad. He did not want Aramis to know he was going to prison.

D'Artagnan said, "Don't worry, I have an idea."

Athos and D'Artagnan followed Aramis into the Bastille. They saw he was about to have dinner with the man in charge. His name was Baisemeaux.

"Hello," said D'Artagnan.

Baisemeaux jumped to his feet. "Hello, sir," he said. "What can I do for you?"

D'Artagnan appeared to be surprised. "You told me to come for dinner," replied D'Artagnan. "I would like my friend Athos to join us."

"Oh, my," said Baisemeaux. "I don't remember asking you to come."

"Well, then, we shall leave here at once! Come Athos," said D'Artagnan.

"No, no. Please stay and eat

with us." Baisemeaux didn't want to hurt D'Artagnan's feelings. He knew that D'Artagnan was the king's head musketeer.

"I'm sorry. I can't stay," replied D'Artagnan, "but my friend Athos will be happy to join you. I shall return in time for dessert. I must see the king at once!"

Athos then sat down to join Aramis and Baisemeaux. D'Artagnan turned and ran from the room.

D'Artagnan rushed back to the palace. He knew Athos must feel strange. To think that Athos was supposed to be locked up in the Bastille — but no, he was eating dinner with the man in charge!

When D'Artagnan got to the palace, he ran straight to the king's room.

"Did you do it?" the king asked.

"Yes, Athos is in the Bastille," replied D'Artagnan.

"Well," said the king, "did he try to get away?"

"Oh, no, sir. I told him to run away but he would not. I even told him I would get him a horse to get away with but still he would not go. He said, 'Take me to prison as the king ordered.'"

"What!" screamed the king. "You did not listen to my orders?"

"I tried not to, sir. Maybe you should send me to prison, too," said D'Artagnan, quietly.

The king couldn't believe his ears. He said, "If I sign an order to put you in prison . . . it's for life!"

"I know," said D'Artagnan. "If you don't, you will look like a fool for letting me talk to you this way. Here's my sword."

The king took the sword and threw it to the ground! He knew it was a terrible thing to put a muske-

teer in prison. D'Artagnan grabbed the sword and put it to his neck, ready to kill himself.

The king ran to him and pushed the sword away. "Please D'Artagnan, don't do it. I'll write an order to set your friend Athos free."

D'Artagnan returned to the Bastille with the order in hand. He turned to Baisemeaux and said, "Sir, you have been eating with a prisoner of the king. I have an order here to set him free."

Baisemeaux turned white. "What's going on here?" he asked.

"Here is the order to set Athos free," replied D'Artagnan.

Baisemeaux didn't know what was going on. "Fine, take him away," he said. "This dinner has been a strange adventure."

Athos couldn't stop smiling. He was free. He thanked his friend and wondered how he did it.

"Let's go, Athos. I'll take you home now."

Once again, the two friends went through the gates of the prison. Only this time, Athos was free.

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COMPREHENSION CHECK

Choose the best answer.

1. D'Artagnan
 - a. lived in the forest.
 - b. worked at the Bastille.
 - c. was the king's head musketeer.
 - d. enjoyed his life on the farm.
2. At one time, D'Artagnan, Porthos, Aramis, and Athos were all
 - a. kings.
 - b. musketeers.
 - c. enemies.
 - d. in jail.
3. King Louis XIV sent Athos to prison because
 - a. Athos's son stole money from the king.
 - b. Athos was no longer a good musketeer.
 - c. Athos's son loved the same woman as the king.
 - d. Athos was a very dangerous person in France.
4. Baisemeaux was
 - a. away from his job at the Bastille.
 - b. in jail for a crime.
 - c. a brother to the king.
 - d. in charge of the Bastille.
5. When D'Artagnan and Athos arrived at the Bastille,
 - a. Athos was locked up in a dark room.
 - b. Baisemeaux knew that D'Artagnan was not telling the truth.
 - c. D'Artagnan tricked Baisemeaux easily.
 - d. Aramis did not remember who Athos was after such a long time.
6. D'Artagnan made arrangements for Athos to have dinner with Baisemeaux and Aramis because
 - a. he knew that Athos was a good friend of Baisemeaux's.
 - b. he thought the king would like Athos to have an enjoyable evening.
 - c. he had somewhere to go and didn't want Aramis to be alone.
 - d. he didn't want Aramis to know that Athos was being sent to prison.
7. D'Artagnan was
 - a. a brave and clever man.
 - b. a lazy, but proud man.
 - c. a mean and angry man.
 - d. a very frightened man.
8. The king set Athos free
 - a. because he knew he had been wrong to send Athos to prison.
 - b. because he cared for D'Artagnan and his wishes.
 - c. because he wanted Athos to gather information for him.
 - d. to take Baisemeaux's place at the Bastille.
9. Another name for this story could be
 - a. "Dinner With Friends."
 - b. "The Trick and the Trade."
 - c. "Life at the Castle."
 - d. "Locked up in the Bastille."
10. This story is mainly about
 - a. how Baisemeaux became a musketeer.
 - b. how the king came to dinner at the Bastille.
 - c. how D'Artagnan kept Athos out of prison.
 - d. how friends enjoy having dinner together.

Preview Answer:

d. not married.

Check your answers with the key on page 67.

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