

LES MOUSQUETAIRES AU CONVENT

Music by Louis Varney

Libretto by P. Ferrier & J. Prevel

First Performance: Théâtre des Bouffes, Paris, 16 March 1880

The scene is set in Touraine, during the reign of Louis XIII. Our young Musketeers are called Gontran de Solanges and Narcisse de Birssac. We learn on their first appearance that a plot is apparently being hatched against Cardinal de Richelieu in the village where they are quartered. The young men couldn't care less, for all that interests them is how to get in touch with two beautiful girls at the Ursuline convent: Marie and Louise. They steal the robes of two monks sleeping soundly near by. Bridaine, an abbot, informs our friends that he has the job of convincing the two young girls to take the veil. The false monks immediately offer their services for the girls' conversion.

The second act takes place inside the convent. The Mother Superior announces to the young ladies that two monks from Palestine are coming to give them a sermon. Gontran and Brissac start by revealing their identity to their sweethearts. The moment for the sermon arrives but unfortunately Brissac has partaken more than sufficiently of the convent meal and is a little, indeed very, tipsy. Their pious mission ends in drunken revelry.

In the third act, the Musketeers decide to hasten events. With Marie and Louise's consent, they plot their abduction. Unfortunately, they are under watch. What can they do? The only solution is to use a ladder and escape through the window. But, alas, all issues are carefully watched. Fortunately luck is on the lovers' side, for this is the world of operetta. All of a sudden, the two monks stripped of their belongings by the Musketeers in the first act are found to be two dangerous conspirators plotting against the Cardinal. Without realizing it, Gontran and Brissac had upset their criminal plans. The lovers are thus granted a pardon, allowing Marie to become Madame de Solanges and her sister, Louise, Madame Narcisse de Brissac.