



Da jeg i 1958 fik *Mannen med jernmasken*, som kan læses i denne bogseries bind 11, forærende og læste hæftet var jeg på en gang dybt fascineret og dybt skuffet over forsiden. Jeg ventede at finde ham afbilledet i fortællingen, men han var ingen steder at finde. Jo i et brev på sidste side fortælles, at kong Ludvig 14. befaler, at hans tvillingebror, Philippe, skal tilbringe resten af sit liv med ansigtet skjult af en jernmaske. Så forsiden foregreb fortsættelsen af historien - en fortsættelse, som Dumas aldrig skrev!

Men elegant er forsiden på hæftet med den blankpolerede maske og

Prins uden maske!

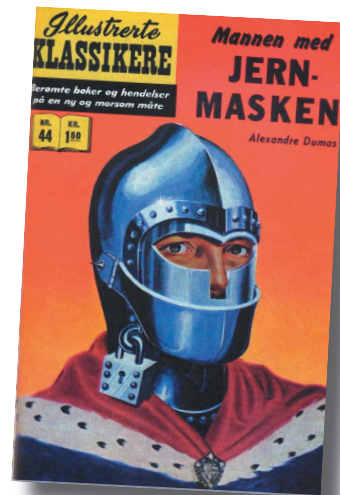
Anders Hjorth-Jørgensen

den fornemme hermelinkåbe. En kåbe, et kongeligt symbol, som Philippe næppe fik mulighed for at bære i sit fængsel.

Når man tænker på den akkuratse, Gilberton-redaktør Roberta Strauss krævede af sine tegnere, må man forbavses over denne forside udført af en anonym kunstner. Til gengæld må det konstateres, at Ken Battlefield i sin omsætning af Dumas roman til tegneserie på det smukkeste lever op til kravet om korrekte historiske detaljer både når det gælder påklædning og miljøer.

Det var ikke tilfældet i 1. udgave af titlen, tegnet af August M. Froelich. Han interesserede sig ikke specielt for detaljen, hvilket bl.a. ses i nedenstående sekvens, hvor Aramis afvæbner sig selv. I hånden holder han to tromlerevolvere på trods af, at historien udspilles i 1661. De blev først sat i produktion to århundreder senere.

Men iøvrigt er detaljerne få i Froelichs gengivelse af den gamle klassiker. Se blot på næste side, som viser



siderne 36-39 fra hæftet og sammenlign med det samme forløb i bog 11, side 211-214. Hvor sidsnævnte er et rent udstyrsstykke, når det gælder kulisser, undlader Froelich totalt at tegne baggrunde - en teknik, som præger det meste af de 44 sider, han breder historien ud over. Hans version bliver kedeligt dialogteater uden tidskolorit. Det kunne Roberta Strauss ikke acceptere, og dikterede derfor den nye udgave.

Desværre kasserede hun også Henry C. Kiefers dynamiske forside, som formidler indholdet væsentligt bedre end 2. udgaves flotte forside, som lover meget mere, end den kan holde.



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How have you managed to become the favorite of the king, you who have never spoken twice to him?

I have seen him more than a hundred times, but we have kept it secret, that's all.

Ah, captain, so you have brought M. d'Herblay to me?

And something better still, Monsieur—Liberty!

D'ARTAGNAN EXPLAINED TO M. FOUQUET THAT HE HAD BEEN SECRETLY INSTRUCTED BY THE KING TO ARREST HIM...

The king desires me to tell you he is more than ever your friend.

Congratulations, Monsieur, and adieu!

My idea is that it arises out of some feeling of jealousy.

You are pronounced to be a public robber!

Good heavens! That is not all. You are also proclaimed a traitor!

Why does the king set me at liberty?

You ought to ask what was his reason for having you arrested!

That is not all. You are also proclaimed a traitor!

Why should he have pardoned me, then?

THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

In the name of our friendship, do not deceive me, Am I still superintendent?

As long as you like!

D'Herblay, speak openly. I implore you. By what means have you succeeded in overcoming Louis XIII's prejudices? He did not like you, I know.

The King will like me now!

D'HERBLAY'S ACCOUNT OF THE CONSPIRACY FAILED TO SHATTER M. FOUQUET'S LOYALTY TO LOUIS XIII, EVEN THOUGH THE KING HAD ORDERED HIS ARREST.

I defy even you to perceive that the prisoner of the Bastille is living in his brothers' bed.

But the king?

He has gone to take the place in the Bastille which his victim has occupied for such a long time past!

You and his Majesty have a secret between you?

Yes, a secret! I'll tell it to you!

What king? The king who hates you or the king who likes you?

The king yesterday!

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And you took him there?

Yes. While he was descending into gloom, the other was ascending into light.

Such an action was committed here in my house.

It would almost seem it had been built for such a purpose!

Under my roof, you committed this crime—this crime worse than an assassination!

You have dishonored me. He was my guest!

Have I a mad man to deal with?

You may have acted on my behalf, but I do not accept your service. At the same time, I do not wish your ruin. I give you four hours to get out of the King's reach!

Four hours?

Reflect, Monsieur, the king is still alive, and his imprisonment saves your life!

You have an honorable man to deal with—a man who would sooner die, even, rather than allow you to complete his dishonor!

THE MAN IN THE IRON MASK

It is more than you need to get on board a vessel.

Shall I go alone or warn the prince?

Go at once, to save your life—I, to save my honor!

Civil war would follow! My condemned Philippe was, let him remain so, then?

D'HERBLAY HURRIED TO THE SIDE OF HIS FRIEND, PORTHOS, WHO HAD HELPED TO KIDNAP THE KING...

Come, Porthos, dress yourself. We are going off.

I would much prefer to sleep!

On any other occasion, I should say that those gentlemen were making their escape.

Have you seen M. Fouquet?

Yes, this very minute in a carriage!

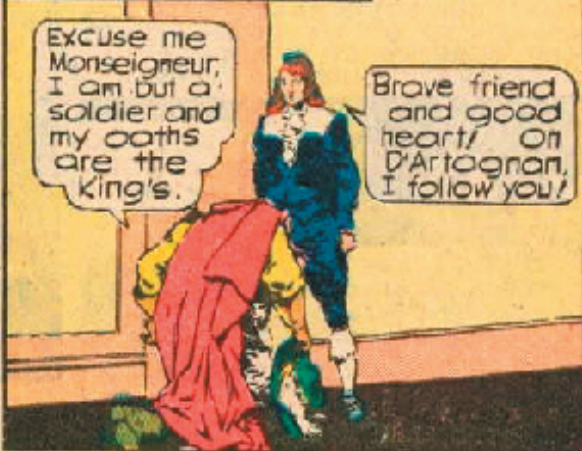
D'ARTAGNAN AND PORTHOS ENCOUNTER THEIR FRIEND, D'ARTAGNAN, WHO IS IGNORANT OF THE PLOT IN WHICH HIS OLD CRONIES ARE INVOLVED...

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...PHILLIPE THEN TURNS TO HIS MOTHER...



AS PHILLIPE TURNS TO LEAVE THE PALACE...




AS D'ARTAGNAN AND PHILLIPE RIDE TOWARDS THE BASTILLE...



Read, Monseigneur!



M. d'Artagnan will conduct the prisoner to the Ile Ste Marguerite. He will cover his face with an iron visor which the prisoner cannot raise without peril of his life.



A comic panel with a white background and a blue border. It contains a block of text and a small illustration of an iron visor at the bottom.

It is a just decision. I am ready.

Aramis was right, this one is quite as much a King as the other!

