



The Man Who Outshone the Sun King

Charles Drazin

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The story — straight out of Dumas — of the rise and fall of Nicolas Fouquet, Louis XIV's first finance minister and the man who "outshone the Sun King."

Sometime late in 1664, the musketeer D'Artagnan rode beside a heavily-armoured carriage as it rumbled southwards from Paris, carrying his great friend Nicolas Fouquet to internal exile and life imprisonment in the fortress of Pignerol. There he would be incarcerated in a cell next door to the Man with the Iron Mask.

From a glittering zenith as the King's first minister, builder of the chateau of Vaux-le-Vicomte, collector of books, patron of the arts and lover of beautiful women, Fouquet had fallen like Icarus. Charged with embezzlement, convicted and sentenced, it is in his downfall and incarceration that the man's strength of character and grace emerge, as he somehow survives both solitary confinement and absence of books, pen and ink.

The richness and contrasts of Fouquet's remarkable story are brilliantly portrayed by Charles Drazin to reveal how the cunning, charisma and charm of Fouquet enchanted and beguiled, while at the same time sowed the seeds of his destruction.

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