

Mademoiselle

By

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Based on

The true life story of Julie D'Aubigny

Circa 1690

Feature

Treatment

In the late 16th century, in the tranquil town of Avignon, France, JULIE D'AUBIGNY (early to mid 20's) sets the Convent of Saint Mary on fire. As she walks through the halls of the burning church, she narrates her reasons. Claiming it was for love, she explains to us that we can only truly understand her reasoning if we start at the beginning.

YOUNG JULIE (12) stands before her father, SIEUR D'AUBIGNY (30s) in their modest apartment inside the Versailles palace grounds, as he scolds her for stealing from the kitchens. Her father is a very skilled swordsman, when he isn't drunk, and decides that the best punishment for his daughter is to force her to learn how to swordfight as well. Young Julie reassures us that even though they have a difficult relationship, this punishment was the best thing he had ever done for her. She has plenty of on her first day of class, taking humiliation from her peers and fencing master, SIEUR BEAUFORT (40s). After a few more weeks of training, she is able to beat every boy in her class, impressing the COMTE D'ARMAGNAC (40's), her father's boss. Young Julie continues to hone her skills. She comes face to face with her future when an opera is put on at the palace. Forbidden by her father from watching, Julie climbs a tree defiantly and watches from the branches, envisioning that someday she'll be the one on that stage. Fast forward, Julie is now 16 years old. Never stopping her training, she is a force to be reckoned with. Sieur Beaufort and the Comte have returned from their journey, and Julie visits Sieur Beaufort's first training practice back. In minutes, she has Sieur Beaufort on the ground. Watching all this from afar, the Comte is now more than curious about Julie; he desires her. The Comte threatens her father's job to get Julie into his bed, but she gets a little something for herself too: Sieur Beaufort's dismissal by the Comte, as well as the promise of a new fencing

master. Then, tragedy strikes when Julie finds her father dead from alcohol poisoning. Days later, she misses her first practice with her new fencing master, spending time in the gardens grieving her father. SERRANE (21) finds her and challenges her to a duel for skipping, thinking it will help her in the grieving process. The fight ends in a stalemate with Julie feeling filled with adrenaline and lust. In this erotic tension, they sleep together, beginning their sexual affair. The Comte hears of Julie's antics and endows her to SIR JEAN DE MAUPIN (mid 20s), a humble accountant. Then he leverages her to stay with him while sending Sir Maupin away on business. She agrees, secretly knowing that she doesn't intend to be around for long. Her opportunity comes when Serrane kills someone in a duel and must skip town. Julie says goodbye to Versailles, accompanying him.

They traverse the French countryside, putting on fencing demonstrations and singing in bars to make money. She narrates to us that the euphoria of her easygoing freedom wouldn't last long-- because this is the moment she meets MADELEINE (18). The daughter of a merchant running her family's stall at the market, Julie spots her and is immediately infatuated. They begin their love affair with hushed tones, sideways glances, and secret letters. Meanwhile, Serrane grows increasingly irritable and finds Madeleine's love letters in Julie's room. Tired of his paramour, Serrane tells Madeleine's father, who sends her away to the Convent of Saint Mary in Avignon. Julie dumps Serrane and goes after her first love, joining the convent and continuing her love affair. They get their chance to escape when an old nun passes away. Julie plants the corpse in Madeleine's room, sets the room on fire, and joins Madeleine outside. We are all caught up, but Julie assures us that her story is far from over. She skips out on her trial, but is sentenced to burn at the stake, which irreparably frightens Madeleine. After it all becomes too

much, Madeleine leaves Julie and returns home. Heartbroken, but understanding, Julie makes her way back to Versailles to meet with the Comte for the last time. She tells him to get her a pardon from the king, or else she'll reveal herself as his mistress and tarnish his reputation forever. He complies, only on the promise that Julie will never return to Versailles. She acquiesces and makes her way to Paris.

In Paris, the opera has now come into fruition and GABRIEL-VINCENT THENEVARD (early to mid 20s) is on the hunt for talent to perform in an original piece. He gets his wish when he passes a bar and hears the voice of an angel. He looks inside to find Julie (now in her early to mid 20s) singing beautifully to the drunk crowd. She looks a bit drunk herself. Gabriel tries to get close to her, but in the crowd he accidentally spills a drink on her. Noticing his rapier, Julie challenges him to a duel. Gabriel accepts, not taking her too seriously, and in less than a minute he is being wheeled off to a hospital after being stabbed through the shoulder. Julie assures us she wants to make it right, so she visits him in the hospital, apologizes, and then... has sex with him. He doesn't become her lover, but more so a true friend... who she occasionally sleeps with. Gabriel introduces her to JEAN-BAPTISTE LULLY (Late 30s), an opera writer/director and she is cast in her debut role of Pallas in *Cadmus et Hermione*. Gabriel helps Julie practice, and at the opening of the opera Julie receives a standing ovation. Julie then continues onto her opera career, performing and originating title roles for various esteemed operas. She passes a flyer in the street and sees her name, "MADEMOISELLE MAUPIN at the OPERA," and tears the flyer down to keep it as a memento.

Gabriel, tired of Julie's various lovers, tells her that it is hurting her reputation. Julie, of course could care less about her reputation, but was upset at Gabriel's judgment. During a

performance between the two of them, she bites his ear, drawing blood. Then, looking off to the side, she sees the true love of her life sitting in a box, the MARQUISE DE FLORENSAC or CHARLOTTE (early 30s), with an enchanted smile on her face. Everything else falls away and it's just her and Julie until Gabriel snaps her back to reality. To prove her final point about her commitment to the stage, Julie stabs herself on stage with a real knife. Gabriel is unimpressed, but rushes her to the hospital and stays by her side nonetheless. Charlotte visits her, surprising Julie, thus beginning their love affair. They fall in love fast and hard, delighted to have finally found each other. One night at a party, they have an argument. Julie publicly kisses another woman to irritate Charlotte, but that has its own consequences. Three men who were wooing the young lady all challenge Julie to a duel for her "disrespect." Julie happily obliges. She takes down all three men at the same time, killing one of them in the process. Julie runs, knowing the law would soon be after her. Charlotte appears in her stagecoach and whisks Julie away to her country home, hiding her. The courts want Julie's head, and she spends a year hiding.

Charlotte is able to convince the King's brother to advocate for a pardon. The King finds Julie extremely amusing, and grants the pardon in the end. Julie is ecstatic and pledges her love and life to Charlotte who gladly pledges the same. They return to Paris and Julie gets a lead role in the opera *La Venitienne* as Isabella, beginning a successful run. Charlotte watches her with admiration in her eyes, but begins to cough erratically halfway through and decides to retire for the night. Charlotte is able to conceal her sickness, convincing Julie she is perfectly fine and that she'll see her when Julie returns from performing on the road. Julie goes on ahead, but Gabriel stays behind. He visits Charlotte and finds her immobilized by the fever she has contracted. Gabriel sends a messenger to alert Julie immediately, but by the time Julie returns home it is too

late. Charlotte de Florensac has passed away. Julie... doesn't feel like telling her story any longer, so she rests. Gabriel lets her stay in his home for a while after she retires from the opera, but when he marries it's time for Julie to move on. Then she receives a letter from a person she'd thought she would never see again.

Julie sits across from her husband, Sir Jean de Maupin, leaning back into her chair after telling him about her life since she left Versailles and the Comte. Jean is understanding, and accepts Julie as she is, telling her that she is welcome to stay with him. He's not looking for a wife, but a companion would be nice. Julie accepts, knowing that she'll never love someone again like she loved Charlotte, but at least she has found a final safe haven.

Julie D'Aubigny passed away between the ages of 33 and 37.

Her cause of death is unknown.

Two things are for certain... She led an amazing life.

And kicked some serious ass.

