

# VERSAILLES

SEASON 2



# VERSAILLES

## SEASON 2




A CANAL+ CREATION ORIGINALE  
A SEASON OF 10 52-MINUTE EPISODES

SERIES CREATED BY SIMON MIRREN & DAVID WOLSTENCROFT  
SECOND SEASON WRITTEN BY SIMON MIRREN, DAVID WOLSTENCROFT, ANDREW BAMPFIELD, TIM LOANE  
DIRECTED BY THOMAS VINCENT, MIKE BARKER, LOUIS CHOQUETTE  
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PRODUCER: STEPHANIE CHARTREUX  
PRODUCED BY CAPA DRAMA, ZODIAK FICTION, INCENDO

WITH  
GEORGE BLAGDEN, ALEXANDER VLAHOS, TYGH RUNYAN, STUART BOWMAN, ANNA BREWSTER, EVAN WILLIAMS,  
SUZANNE CLEMENT, CATHERINE WALKER, ELISA LASOWSKI, MADDISON JAIZANI, JESSICA CLARK, PIP TORRENS,  
HARRY HADDEN-PATON, GRETA SCACCHI, LIZZIE BROCHERE, MARK RENDALL, GEORGE WEBSTER, GEOFFREY BATEMAN,  
STEVE CUMYN, JOE SHERIDAN, ALEXIS MICHALIK, JAMES JOINT, NED DENNEHY

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A man dressed as Louis XIV sits on a blue throne in a grand hall with portraits.

## LOUIS XIV

~  
GEORGE BLAGDEN

Versailles is the mirror image of Louis. As the king's power grows, so does the palace. But as the season begins, Louis is still haunted by nightmares. The kidnapping of his son, and the death of Henriette keep him awake and prevent him from finding peace. Yet he should be feeling satisfied: his palace is admired by the entire world, he shares his bed with the most beautiful woman in France, the nobility is behind him, and he is ready to invade Holland... But, much like his new palace, there is still much work to be done behind the beautiful facade. Cracks begin to show. Louis is trapped in the labyrinth of Versailles and is trying to escape from its Minotaur. Consumed by his ego and growing paranoia, the king is losing his way, blinded by his work, and by the eyes of Madame de Montespan...

And it is women who will comfort him in his internal battle, even though Montespan appears to be pulling him towards the darkness and hastening his demise.



MADAME DE  
MONTESPAN

~

ANNA BREWSTER

*After winning the king's affections, Madame de Montespan gets a taste for power and is determined to keep it. She flatters the king, fulfilling his sexual desires, and making him the envy of all. Her influence on Louis grows and spreads to his political decisions. She becomes the de facto "Queen of Versailles". But no matter how ambitious and calculating she may be, Madame de Montespan is actually a vulnerable and terrified woman. She has seen what happens to favourites the king grows tired of. She knows that if the king's favour should wane, the court would become a merciless den of predators. She is prepared to do anything to keep the affection of Louis, with whom she is hopelessly in love: even sell her soul to the devil.*

BEWARE OF  
YOUR OWN AMBITIONS

~

*A few months after Henriette's death, Louis seems to have completed the grieving process and overcome his pain, but he will need time to get back on his feet.*

*In this season, Louis XIV has finalised the first stage of his ambitious plan. But, just like King Midas, who learned the same lesson at his own expense, he will discover that realising your dreams can also turn out to be dangerous. Absolute power does not come without immense responsibilities...especially for such a young man. Sometimes, power is a heavy burden to bear. Becoming the captain is one thing, steering the ship is quite another.*

*Inside the golden prison that Versailles has become, business is going well. With new faces in court, new alliances are being forged, new threats emerge...And the ladies are breathing fresh air into Versailles.*

*Madame de Montespan is the King's new favourite. Climbing steadily up the ladder, she now holds a prominent place in the court. The singular and fiery princess Palatine, future wife of Philippe; the virtuous but temperamental Madame Scarron; and the Queen Marie-Thérèse, ready to counter-attack by rallying her supporters to her cause.*

*In the Queen's eyes (and those of others, like Bishop Bossuet), the court is in rapid decline, and the situation is only getting worse. The immoral gangrene spreads a little further every day. Fabien Marchal sees the imminent threat to the king and the palace; for if Versailles buckles under this burden, all of France will be swept up in its fall.*

*Fabien is fighting on all fronts, and his task is far from easy. Courtiers flock to Versailles; this is when the poison scandal erupts. Poisonings become a form of currency in court: a solution that inspires more and more people to rid themselves of potential rivals. But is this just a manifestation of the decay weakening Versailles, or is it an indicator of a more complex conspiracy concocted beyond the palace walls?*

*Condemned by the king, Philippe and the Chevalier de Lorraine (back from exile) are glad to be away from the court. But they soon get drawn back into its intrigues. They will not be left out, and so set themselves a goal: if Louis wants to shine like the Sun, then Philippe will sparkle like the Moon. He will be the star in the darkness.*

*Will a monarch's dream see him caught in a trap of his own making?*

Simon Mirren and David Wolstencroft  
Series creators

## "MONSIEUR" PHILIPPE

~

ALEXANDER VLAHOS

Philippe has not forgiven Louis for Henriette's death, and has decided to remain in Saint-Cloud, far from Versailles and his brother. But it's a different story for Louis. He needs Philippe close-by, and he must see him married once again: the choice of wife is a major political decision that will enable him to forge new alliances in the war against Holland. So he lures Philippe to Versailles by returning his lover to him, the Chevalier de Lorraine, who he had sent into exile in Italy. Philippe knows that, as is tradition, he has no choice but to accept the woman that Louis will choose for him. A woman who could not be further from the late Henriette: the larger-than-life Liselotte, Princess Palatine.

Against all expectations, a bond develops between Philippe and Liselotte. But just as the knight had demonstrated with Henriette, his jealousy knows no bounds.





~~MADAME~~  
SCARRON ~~MADAME DE~~  
MAINTENON

~

CATHERINE WALKER

A shining beacon in the distance. That is what Madame Scarron, the future Madame de Maintenon is. Welcomed into the court at the request of Madame de Montespan to take care of the child born from her relations with Louis, she is a pious woman, utterly devoted to her task. To begin with, Louis barely notices her: she is older than him, with an austere air, and doesn't seem to fit in with the atmosphere of the court. But behind the scenes, Madame Scarron is a fine, intelligent and ambitious woman. She possesses a quality that Madame de Montespan lacks: patience. An iron fist within a velvet glove.

# THE DARK **SIDE** OF VERSAILLES

~

The success of the first season of VERSAILLES reinforced the choices we made. We have produced the second season by drawing on what made the first season impactful and original, whilst seeking to plough the furrow of historical fiction in an even more surprising way...It was with this in mind that the actors and teams threw themselves into pushing the artistic demands that create Versailles' identity even further.

It will be clear that our project is situated far, far away from "Once upon a time in Versailles" and from the hagiographic portrait of Louis XIV as an absolute monarch painted by the history books. This modern approach makes Louis a fictitious character and makes his internal struggle accessible; a struggle between private fears and lofty ambitions.

In this new season, we want to dare to show the dark side of Versailles, in a world where history often prefers to remember only the light. Before becoming the absolute monarch that we know, Louis will have to overcome the most terrible of obstacles, both political and private.

Women play a central role in season two. Sometimes sublime and ambitious, sometimes vulnerable and loving, sometimes iconoclastic and spiritual, but always determined and unique. They punctuate the narrative and make it original. It was vital to place them at the heart of the tale because they really were the beating heart of Versailles, and their influence on the fingerprint left by the reign of Louis XIV was fundamental.

Claude Chelli and Aude Albano  
Producers for Capa Drama



## MARIE~THÉRÈSE

~  
ELISA LASOWSKI

*Marie-Thérèse is forced to suffer daily humiliation inflicted upon her by Montespan, the new "Queen of Versailles" and Louis' favourite. She cannot bear to see her rival flaunting her rounded belly and catching everyone's eye, especially that of the king. Nor can she tolerate the decadent atmosphere that has taken over the court and diverted the nobility from the path of morality and religion.*

*In the hope of returning order to the chaos, she calls upon Father Pascal, her confessor and confidante. She also approaches Madame Scarron, who she can sense has a positive influence on the king.*



**CHEVALIER  
DE LORRAINE**

~

EVAN WILLIAMS

Having returned from a long exile in Italy, the Chevalier de Lorraine is the same as ever: flamboyant and mischievous; an incorrigible party-goer, possessive lover and rival of anyone who gets too close to Philippe. Initially flustered by the freshness and spontaneity of Princess Palatine, he becomes irritated by the bond that she develops with Philippe, and decides to make her pay. He takes cruel pleasure in humiliating her and mocking her "rustic" manners and lack of femininity.

To boost his energy, the knight immerses himself in the potions and drugs circulating the court. He spots the opportunity for a lucrative...and destructive business.



**PRINCESS  
PALATINE**

~

JESSICA CLARK

Liselotte is a young, 19-year-old German princess, forced to leave her country and loved ones to marry Philippe and seal the alliance between France and the Palatinate. Despite her tender age, she is a force of nature who loves nothing more than riding horses, hunting, and eating. Extremely candid and natural, she has no interest in religion or etiquette. She is a free, iconoclastic spirit, who speaks her mind...

But as strong and stubborn as she may be, she remains a young and isolated woman, a stranger in the court, and suffers the indifference of her husband and the repeated humiliation of the Chevalier de Lorraine.







## MADAME AGATHE

~

SUZANNE CLÉMENT

*In her home nearby the palace, Madame Agathe receives noble guests, seeking her aid to win back a lover's heart, rid themselves of an embarrassing husband or unwanted rival. She is an expert in divination and in concocting potions and poisons. She is an elegant, mysterious and very professional woman, especially when it comes to building her business and winning the loyalty of her clients. But she can become terrifying and ice-cold, and is afraid of nothing and no-one.*

# 1672/ 1678

1672-1678. The Franco-Dutch war wages on, Louis XIV confronts his bitter rival, Guillaume d'Orange. But danger threatens even inside the kingdom, within the court of Versailles itself with the Poison scandal. Between mysticism and obscurity, a dive into the dark side of power, with the king's downward spiral, and his return towards the light.

Louis has completed the first stage of his plan: to build the most beautiful palace in Europe, far away from Paris...And to lock the nobility inside it so as to exercise absolute control over it. But his plan backfires. Louis has created a new civilisation where the courtiers are ready to do anything to get to the Sun. Behind the veneer of etiquette, they dream of money, power, and climbing the social ladder. They will do whatever they have to: morality is waning, and poison spreads...Versailles is rotting. Blinded by his affection for Madame de Montespan, Louis is deaf to the Church's injunctions. The greatest enemy standing before him is no longer the nobility, nor is it Guillaume d'Orange: the palace that he himself designed could end up becoming his worst enemy.



BONTEMPS

~

STUART BOWMAN

Louis' faithful servant has a ringside view of Madame de Montespan's growing influence over the king and the court, and finds himself torn between his desire to protect Louis and his mission to obey him at all times. His friendship with the king will be put in jeopardy...



THOMAS  
BEAUMONT

~

MARK RENDALL

The playwright's quill has seduced Louis, who accepts him into his service as his personal historian. He is tasked with chronicling his exploits and recording the "official" history of Versailles. This cover enables him to spy on the king under the instruction of Guillaume d'Orange. He takes advantage of his position to attend highly confidential meetings and approaches important figures in the court to glean information from them.



SOPHIE

~

MADDISON JAIZANI

*Fabien uses Sophie to infiltrate the parlours of Versailles. As the poisonings increase, he relies on her to feed back to him private discussions and shameful admissions...Forced, by order of the king, to marry the Duke of Cassel, she discovers, at her own expense, the cruelty of life in the court of Versailles. When Palatine arrives, Sophie takes up the role of companion to Monsieur's wife. A genuine friendship develops between the two young women: both of whom find themselves trapped in a marriage not of their choosing. But, although Palatine hopes that her marriage may one day blossom, Sophie knows that, for her, there is no hope of that... and decides to free herself, whatever the cost...*

# VERSAILLES AN INTERNATIONAL EVENT

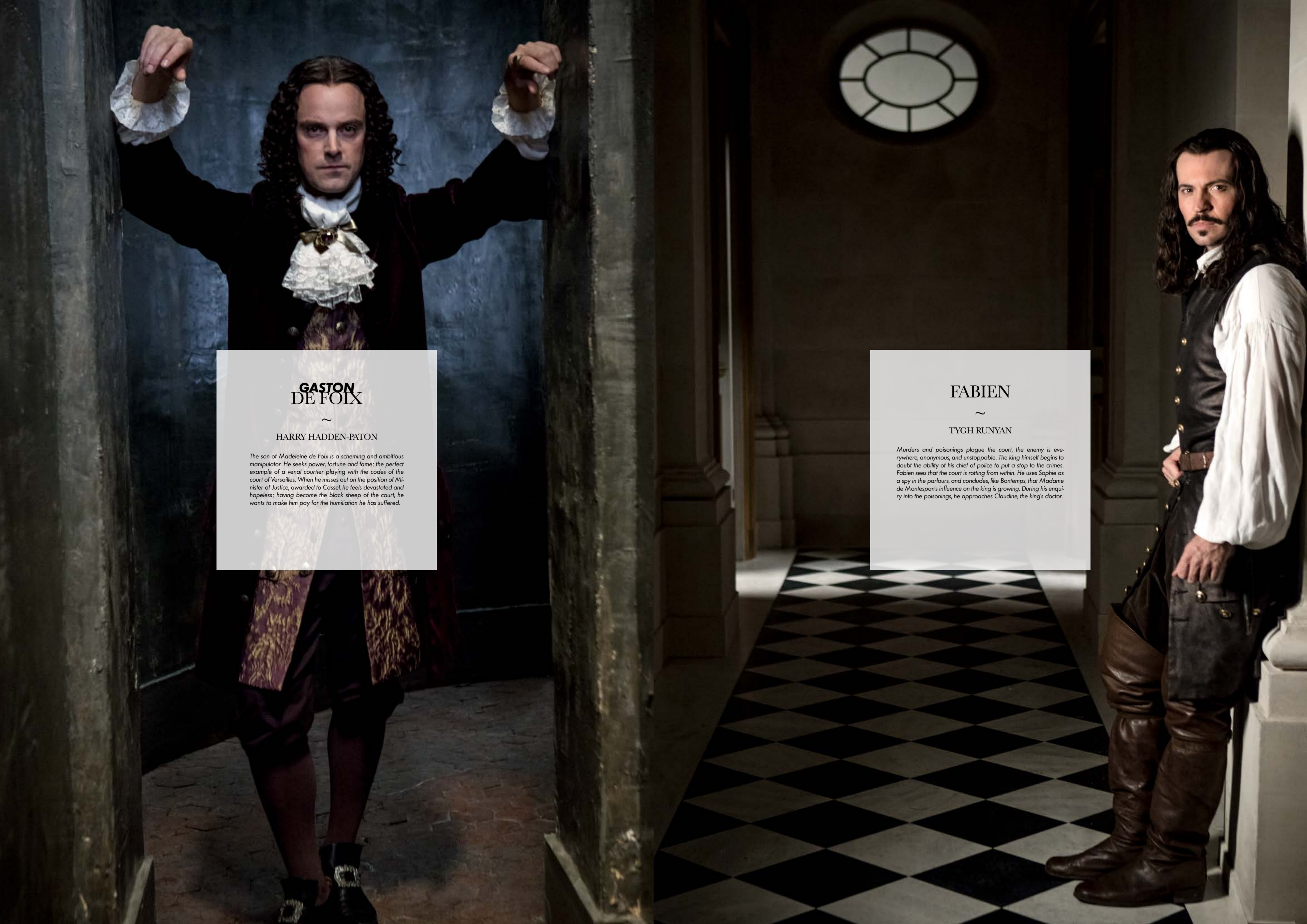
~

*The series has already been sold to over 135 countries, including major territories such as the United States, England, Germany, Spain, the Scandinavian countries, Belgium, Russia, Poland, Australia, Brazil and all the Latin American countries.*

*VERSAILLES has gathered viewing figures from its showings, such as on BBC Two in the United Kingdom, which achieved the channel's highest viewing figures since 2010 for a purchased series, with three million TV viewers and an audience share twice the usual average for that segment.*

*In the United States, the series became the best ever series launched on Ovation, and also features in the top 10 most downloaded programmes since the channel's inception.*

*It was also a huge success in Germany, on Sky Deutschland, with a 62% increase on average figures for the segment, and in French-speaking Belgium (third highest viewing figures for fiction in two years on La Deux), in Flemish Belgium (highest viewing figures of the year for a costume drama on Eén), and in Spain (best audience for that period on Movistar + across all genres and segments).*



## GASTON DE FOIX

~

HARRY HADDEN-PATON

*The son of Madeleine de Foix is a scheming and ambitious manipulator. He seeks power, fortune and fame; the perfect example of a venal courtier playing with the codes of the court of Versailles. When he misses out on the position of Minister of Justice, awarded to Cassel, he feels devastated and hopeless; having become the black sheep of the court, he wants to make him pay for the humiliation he has suffered.*

## FABIEN

~

TYGH RUNYAN

*Murders and poisonings plague the court, the enemy is everywhere, anonymous, and unstoppable. The king himself begins to doubt the ability of his chief of police to put a stop to the crimes. Fabien sees that the court is rotting from within. He uses Sophie as a spy in the parlours, and concludes, like Bontemps, that Madame de Montespan's influence on the king is growing. During his enquiry into the poisonings, he approaches Claudine, the king's doctor.*

# THE DUKE OF CASSEL

~

PIP TORRENS

To everyone's surprise, Louis decides to appoint the duke of Cassel as Minister of Justice, a post that has remained vacant after the fatal poisoning of his predecessor. Louis is aware of the danger posed by Cassel, and hopes to control him better by keeping him close-by, even if it means giving him power, and cruelly forcing Sophie to marry him, despite knowing that she is Fabien's spy. This way, he hopes to keep Cassel under constant surveillance. But Cassel does not change. He continues to be a deceitful, sadistic man...with an unabashed appetite for young women. He will make Sophie his victim. But the predator could become the prey...

# MADELEINE DE FOIX

~

GRETA SCACCHI

An old friend of Madame de Montespan's family, she arrives at court in the hope of finding a position for her son Gaston. But beneath her elegant exterior, Madeleine is determined and dangerous. Utterly devoted to her son, she is prepared to do anything to help him climb the social ladder.

# FATHER ÉTIENNE

~

NED DENNEHY

At first glance, Father Etienne seems the epitome of the benevolent, devoted priest, passing his time in the brothels, taverns and ill-famed districts to take care of those most in-need. He takes particular care of the children of prostitutes, by placing them in orphanages. But Father Etienne is hiding a very dark underbelly.

# CLAUDINE

~

LIZZIE BROCHERÉ

It is not just supporters that the king's doctor holds in the court. As Claudine monitors Madame de Montespan's pregnancy, the "Queen of Versailles" takes a dislike to her, unable to bear another woman having such direct and personal access to Louis. So she begins a campaign to push her out of Versailles. But Claudine is not a woman who is easily defeated. From the village, she and Fabien continue their investigations into the mystery of the poisons used in the court, and try to find the supplier. But by seeking too many answers, she ends up making increasingly dangerous enemies.

# FATHER PASCAL

~

JAMES JOINT

Renowned for his devotion, he arrives at court as personal confessor to the Queen. Marie-Thérèse hopes that he will help her to steer the court of Versailles back to the path of morality and piety, and to convince Louis to end his adulterous relations with Madame de Montespan. But making an enemy of Montespan turns out to be very dangerous...and he would be wrong to underestimate her power.

# GUILLAUME D'ORANGE

~

GEORGE WEBSTER

The young Dutchman, contending for power, remains Louis' main rival in Europe. Having failed in his attempt to kidnap the Dauphin, he is determined to find other ways to destabilise Louis and thwart his plans for expansion. The counterpart of Louis, Guillaume too dreams of glory and power. But to do this, he must topple De Witt, the man who raised him like a son, but who, he believes, usurped the throne. He has placed trusted contacts very close to the king, including the spy Thomas Beaumont, who has managed to win the role of the king's historian.

LOUIS XIV  
**GEORGE BLAGDEN**  
PHILIPPE  
**ALEXANDER VLAHOS**  
FABIEN  
**TYGH RUNYAN**  
BONTEMPS  
**STUART BOWMAN**  
MADAME DE MONTESPAN  
**ANNA BREWSTER**  
CHEVALIER DE LORRAINE  
**EVAN WILLIAMS**  
AGATHE  
**SUZANNE CLEMENT**  
MADAME DE MAINTENON  
**CATHERINE WALKER**  
MARIE-THÉRÈSE  
**ELISA LASOWSKI**  
SOPHIE  
**MADDISON JAIZANI**  
PRINCESS PALATINE  
**JESSICA CLARK**  
CASSEL  
**PIP TORRENS**  
GASTON DE FOIX  
**HARRY HADDEN-PATON**  
MADELEINE DE FOIX  
**GRETA SCACCHI**  
CLAUDINE  
**LIZZIE BROCHERE**  
THOMAS BEAUMONT  
**MARK RENDALL**  
GUILLAUME D'ORANGE  
**GEORGE WEBSTER**  
BOSSUET  
**GEOFFREY BATEMAN**  
COLBERT  
**STEVE CUMYN**  
LOUVOIS  
**JOE SHERIDAN**  
ROHAN  
**ALEXIS MICHALIK**  
FATHER PASCAL  
**JAMES JOINT**  
FATHER ÉTIENNE  
**NED DENNEHY**

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