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The Queen's Favorites

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Marie-Antoinette's relationships with men were the stuff of much gossip, which didn't keep courtiers from aspiring to be her favorite.

Versailles, May 16, 1770: Marie-Antoinette weds the future Louis XVI. To escape the constraints of etiquette, she withdraws to the company of a few privileged souls as often as possible -- the circle of her favorites.

Far from the usual reserve of France queens, Marie-Antoinette set out to live as she saw fit. Above all, she delighted in spending time with her friends in places cut off from the rest of the court, devoted to privacy, intimacy, and rest: "Here, I am not the Queen, I am myself."

From Versailles to Trianon, intrigues develop and unravel among aspirants and their backers, at the Queen's whims.
