

THE FORTUNES OF FIFI

Fifi, quite beside herself with curiosity, leaned forward, nearly putting her head in the coach window. At that very moment, the coach, almost wedged in the narrow street, came to a halt for a whole minute. The bright, fantastic light of the lamps overhead streamed full upon Fifi's sparkling face, vivid with youth and hope and confidence, and a curiosity at once gay and tender, and she met the direct gaze of the gentle yet commanding eyes of the old man.

Instantly an electric current seemed established between the young eyes and the old. The old man, wrapped in his white mantle, raised himself from his corner in the coach, and leaned forward, so close to Fifi that they were not a foot apart. One delicate, withered hand rested on the coach window, while with an expression eager and disturbing, he studied Fifi's face. Fifi, for her part, was bewitched with that mild and fatherly glance. She stood, one hand holding up her skirts, while involuntarily she laid the other on the coach window, beside the old man's hand.

While Fifi gazed thus, attracted and subdued, the three figures in the black shadow were likewise