

THE IMPERIAL THEATER

time, but suddenly and quietly, three figures showed darkly out of the mist. They kept well beyond the circle of light made by the swinging lamp, which made a great, yellow patch on the mud of the street.

All three of them wore long military cloaks with high collars, and their cocked hats were placed so as to conceal as much as possible of their features. Nevertheless, at the first sight of one of these figures, Cartouche started and his keen eyes wandered from Fifi's face. But Fifi herself was looking toward the other end of the street, from which came the sound of horses' hoofs and the rattle of a coach in the mud. It came into sight—a huge dark unwieldy thing, with four horses, followed by a couple of traveling chaises. As the coach lurched slowly along, it passed from the half-darkness into the circle of light of the swinging lamps. Within it sat a frail old man, wrapped up in a great white woolen cloak. He wore on his silvery hair a white beretta. His skin was of the delicate pallor seen in old persons who have lived clean and gentle lives, and he had a pair of light and piercing eyes, which saw everything, and had a mild, but compelling power in them.