

JOHN GALSWORTHY

# THE FORSYTE SAGA

## IN CHANCERY



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# THE FORSYTE SAGA

## IN CHANCERY

ENGLISH

CLASSIC LITERATURE

Подготовка текста, комментарии и словарь

*Е. Г. Тигонен*

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*To Jessie and Joseph Conrad*

Two households both  
alike in dignity,  
From ancient grudge,  
break into new mutiny.

*Romeo and Juliet*

# PART I

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## *Chapter I*

### AT TIMOTHY'S

The possessive instinct never stands still. Through florescence and feud, frosts and fires, it followed the laws of progression even in the Forsyte family which had believed it fixed for ever. Nor can it be dissociated from environment any more than the quality of potato from the soil.

The historian of the English eighties and nineties will, in his good time, depict the somewhat rapid progression from self-contented and contained provincialism to still more self-contented if less contained imperialism — in other words, the ‘possessive’ instinct of the nation on the move<sup>1</sup>. And so, as if in conformity, was it with the Forsyte family. They were spreading not merely on the surface, but within.

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<sup>1</sup> **the nation on the move** — нация в движении (в развитии)

When, in 1895, Susan Hayman, the married Forsyte sister, followed her husband at the ludicrously low age of seventy-four, and was cremated, it made strangely little stir among the six old Forsytes left. For this apathy there were three causes. First: the almost surreptitious burial of old Jolyon in 1892 down at Robin Hill — first of the Forsytes to desert the family grave at Highgate. That burial, coming a year after Swithin's entirely proper funeral, had occasioned a great deal of talk on Forsyte 'Change, the abode of Timothy Forsyte on the Bayswater Road, London, which still collected and radiated family gossip. Opinions ranged from the lamentation of Aunt Juley to the outspoken assertion of Francie that it was 'a jolly good thing to stop all that stuffy Highgate business.' Uncle Jolyon in his later years — indeed, ever since the strange and lamentable affair between his granddaughter June's lover, young Bosinney, and Irene, his nephew Soames Forsyte's wife — had noticeably rapped the family's knuckles<sup>1</sup>; and that way of his own which he had always taken had begun to seem to them a little wayward. The philosophic vein in him, of course, had always been too liable to crop out of the strata of pure Forsyteism, so they were in a way prepared for his interment in a

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<sup>1</sup> had noticeably rapped the family's knuckles — (раз.)  
дал по рукам (всем семейству)

strange spot. But the whole thing was an odd business, and when the contents of his Will became current coin<sup>1</sup> on Forsyte 'Change, a shiver had gone round the clan. Out of his estate (£ 145,304 gross, with liabilities £ 35 7s. 4d.) he had actually left £ 15,000 to "whomever do you think, my dear? To Irene!" that runaway wife of his nephew Soames; Irene, a woman who had almost disgraced the family, and — still more amazing was to him no blood relation. Not out and out, of course<sup>2</sup>; only a life interest — only the income from it! Still, there it was; and old Jolyon's claim to be the perfect Forsyte was ended once for all. That, then, was the first reason why the burial of Susan Hayman — at Woking — made little stir.

The second reason was altogether more expansive and imperial. Besides the house on Campden Hill, Susan had a place (left her by Hayman when he died) just over the border in Hants, where the Hayman boys had learned to be such good shots and riders, as it was believed, which was of course nice for them, and creditable to everybody; and the fact of owning something really countrified seemed somehow to excuse the dispersion of her remains — though what could have put cremation into her head they could not think! The usual invitations,

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<sup>1</sup> **became current coin** — (разг.) стало общеизвестно

<sup>2</sup> **not out and out, of course** — (разг.) не все, конечно

however, had been issued, and Soames had gone down and young Nicholas, and the Will had been quite satisfactory so far as it went, for she had only had a life interest; and everything had gone quite smoothly to the children in equal shares.

The third reason why Susan's burial made little stir was the most expansive of all. It was summed up daringly by Euphemia, the pale, the thin: "Well, I think people have a right to their own bodies, even when they're dead." Coming from a daughter of Nicholas, a Liberal of the old school and most tyrannical, it was a startling remark — showing in a flash what a lot of water had run under bridges since the death of Aunt Ann in '86, just when the proprietorship of Soames over his wife's body was acquiring the uncertainty which had led to such disaster. Euphemia, of course, spoke like a child, and had no experience; for though well over thirty by now, her name was still Forsyte. But, making all allowances<sup>1</sup>, her remark did undoubtedly show expansion of the principle of liberty, decentralisation and shift in the central point of possession from others to oneself. When Nicholas heard his daughter's remark from Aunt Hester he had rapped out: "Wives and daughters! There's no end to their liberty in these days. I knew that 'Jackson' case would lead to things — lug-

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<sup>1</sup> **making all allowances** — (разг.) даже учитывая все обстоятельства



ging in Habeas Corpus<sup>1</sup> like that!” He had, of course, never really forgiven the Married Woman’s Property Act, which would so have interfered with him if he had not mercifully married before it was passed. But, in truth, there was no denying the revolt among the younger Forsytes against being owned by others; that, as it were, Colonial disposition to own one-self, which is the paradoxical forerunner of Imperialism, was making progress all the time. They were all now married, except George, confirmed to the Turf and the Iseeum Club; Francie, pursuing her musical career in a studio off the King’s Road, Chelsea, and still taking ‘lovers’ to dances; Euphemia, living at home and complaining of Nicholas; and those two Dromios, Giles and Jesse Hayman. Of the third generation there were not very many — young Jolyon had three, Winifred Dartie four, young Nicholas six already, young Roger had one, Marian Tweetyman one; St. John Hayman two. But the rest of the sixteen married — Soames, Rachel and Cicely of James’ family; Eustace and Thomas of Roger’s; Ernest, Archibald and Florence of Nicholas’; Augustus and Annabel Spender of the Hayman’s — were going down the years unreproduced<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> **Habeas Corpus** — (лат.) предписание о представлении арестованного в суд для рассмотрения законности ареста; основной английский закон

<sup>2</sup> **unreproduced** — (зд.) без потомства, не оставляя наследников

Thus, of the ten old Forsytes twenty-one young Forsytes had been born; but of the twenty-one young Forsytes there were as yet only seventeen descendants; and it already seemed unlikely that there would be more than a further unconsidered trifle or so. A student of statistics must have noticed that the birth rate had varied in accordance with the rate of interest for your money. Grandfather 'superior Dosset' Forsyte in the early nineteenth century had been getting ten per cent. for his, hence ten children. Those ten, leaving out the four who had not married, and Juley, whose husband Septimus Small had, of course, died almost at once, had averaged from four to five per cent. for theirs, and produced accordingly. The twenty-one whom they produced were now getting barely three per cent. in the Consols to which their father had mostly tied the Settlements they made to avoid death duties<sup>1</sup>, and the six of them who had been reproduced had seventeen children, or just the proper two and five-sixths per stem.

There were other reasons, too, for this mild reproduction. A distrust of their earning powers, natural where a sufficiency is guaranteed, together with the knowledge that their fathers did not

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<sup>1</sup> **Settlements they made to avoid death duties** — передача имущества по дарственной записи освобождала от налога на наследство

die, kept them cautious. If one had children and not much income, the standard of taste and comfort must of necessity go down; what was enough for two was not enough for four, and so on — it would be better to wait and see what Father did. Besides, it was nice to be able to take holidays unhampered. Sooner in fact than own children, they preferred to concentrate on the ownership of themselves, conforming to the growing tendency *fin de siècle*<sup>1</sup>, as it was called. In this way, little risk was run, and one would be able to have a motor-car. Indeed, Eustace already had one, but it had shaken him horribly, and broken one of his eye teeth; so that it would be better to wait till they were a little safer. In the meantime, no more children! Even young Nicholas was drawing in his horns, and had made no addition to his six for quite three years.

The corporate decay, however, of the Forsytes, their dispersion rather, of which all this was symptomatic, had not advanced so far as to prevent a rally when Roger Forsyte died in 1899. It had been a glorious summer, and after holidays abroad and at the sea they were practically all back in London, when Roger with a touch of his old originality had suddenly breathed his last at his own house

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<sup>1</sup> **fin de siècle** — (фр.) букв. конец века; подразумевает декадентство и крайний индивидуализм

in Princes Gardens. At Timothy's it was whispered sadly that poor Roger had always been eccentric about his digestion — had he not, for instance, preferred German mutton to all the other brands?

Be that as it may<sup>1</sup>, his funeral at Highgate had been perfect, and coming away from it Soames Forsyte made almost mechanically for his Uncle Timothy's in the Bayswater Road. The 'Old Things' — Aunt Juley and Aunt Hester — would like to hear about it. His father — James — at eighty-eight had not felt up to the fatigue of the funeral; and Timothy himself, of course, had not gone; so that Nicholas had been the only brother present. Still, there had been a fair gathering; and it would cheer Aunts Juley and Hester up to know. The kindly thought was not unmixed with the inevitable longing to get something out of everything you do, which is the chief characteristic of Forsytes, and indeed of the saner elements in every nation. In this practice of taking family matters to Timothy's in the Bayswater Road, Soames was but following in the footsteps of his father, who had been in the habit of going at least once a week to see his sisters at Timothy's, and had only given it up when he lost his nerve at eighty-six, and could not go out without Emily. To go with Emily was of no use, for who could really talk to anyone in the presence of his

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<sup>1</sup> **be that as it may** — (*устар.*) как бы то ни было

own wife? Like James in the old days, Soames found time to go there nearly every Sunday, and sit in the little drawing-room into which, with his undoubted taste, he had introduced a good deal of change and china not quite up to his own fastidious mark, and at least two rather doubtful Barbizon pictures<sup>1</sup>, at Christmastides. He himself, who had done extremely well with the Barbizons, had for some years past moved towards the Marises<sup>2</sup>, Israels<sup>3</sup>, and Mauve<sup>4</sup>, and was hoping to do better. In the riverside house which he now inhabited near Mapledurham he had a gallery, beautifully hung and lighted, to which few London dealers were strangers. It served, too, as a Sunday afternoon attraction in those week-end parties which his sisters, Winifred or Rachel, occasionally organised for him. For though he was but a taciturn showman, his quiet collected determinism seldom failed to influence his guests, who knew that his reputation was grounded not on mere aesthetic fancy, but on his power of gauging the future of

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<sup>1</sup> **Barbizon pictures** — картины художников-барбизонцев (пейзажисты, 30–60-е гг. XIX в.)

<sup>2</sup> **Marises** — Якоб Марис (1837–1899), голландский пейзажист

<sup>3</sup> **Israels** — Израэльс (1824–1911), голландский живописец; пейзажи, жанровые сценки

<sup>4</sup> **Mauve** — Антон Мауве (1838–1888), голландский художник-пейзажист

market values. When he went to Timothy's he almost always had some little tale of triumph over a dealer to unfold, and dearly he loved that coo of pride with which his aunts would greet it. This afternoon, however, he was differently animated, coming from Roger's funeral in his neat dark clothes — not quite black, for after all an uncle was but an uncle, and his soul abhorred excessive display of feeling. Leaning back in a marqueterie chair and gazing down his uplifted nose at the sky-blue walls plastered with gold frames, he was noticeably silent. Whether because he had been to a funeral or not, the peculiar Forsyte build of his face was seen to the best advantage this afternoon — a face concave and long, with a jaw which divested of flesh would have seemed extravagant: altogether a chinny face though not at all ill-looking. He was feeling more strongly than ever that Timothy's was hopelessly 'rum-ti-too'<sup>1</sup> and the souls of his aunts dismally mid-Victorian. The subject on which alone he wanted to talk — his own undivorced position — was unspeakable. And yet it occupied his mind to the exclusion of all else. It was only since the Spring that this had been so and a new feeling grown up which was egging him on towards what he knew might well be folly in a Forsyte of forty-five. More and more of late he had been conscious

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<sup>1</sup> **rum-ti-too** — (здесь) чудной, чудаковатый

that he was 'getting on.' The fortune already considerable when he conceived the house at Robin Hill which had finally wrecked his marriage with Irene, had mounted with surprising vigour in the twelve lonely years during which he had devoted himself to little else. He was worth to-day well over a hundred thousand pounds, and had no one to leave it to — no real object for going on with what was his religion. Even if he were to relax his efforts, money made money, and he felt that he would have a hundred and fifty thousand before he knew where he was. There had always been a strongly domestic, philoprogenitive side to Soames; balked and frustrated, it had hidden itself away, but now had crept out again in this his 'prime of life.' Concreted and focussed of late by the attraction of a girl's undoubted beauty, it had become a veritable prepossession.

And this girl was French, not likely to lose her head, or accept any unlegalised position. Moreover, Soames himself disliked the thought of that. He had tasted of the sordid side of sex during those long years of forced celibacy, secretively, and always with disgust, for he was fastidious, and his sense of law and order innate. He wanted no hole and corner<sup>1</sup> liaison. A marriage at the Embassy in Paris, a few months' travel, and he could bring

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<sup>1</sup> **hole and corner** — (разг.) тайный

Annette back quite separated from a past which in truth was not too distinguished, for she only kept the accounts in her mother's Soho Restaurant; he could bring her back as something very new and chic with her French taste and self-possession, to reign at 'The Shelter' near Mapledurham. On Forsyte 'Change and among his riverside friends it would be current that he had met a charming French girl on his travels and married her. There would be the flavour of romance, and a certain *cachet*<sup>1</sup> about a French wife. No! He was not at all afraid of that. It was only this cursed undivorced condition of his, and — and the question whether Annette would take him, which he dared not put to the touch until he had a clear and even dazzling future to offer her.

In his aunts' drawing-room he heard with but muffled ears those usual questions: How was his dear father? Not going out, of course, now that the weather was turning chilly? Would Soames be sure to tell him that Hester had found boiled holly leaves most comforting for that pain in her side; a poultice every three hours, with red flannel afterwards. And could he relish just a little pot of their very best prune preserve — it was so delicious this year, and had such a wonderful effect. Oh! and about the Darties — had Soames heard that dear Winifred was having a most

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<sup>1</sup> *cachet* — (*фр.*) изысканность, шик



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Джон Голсуорси

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