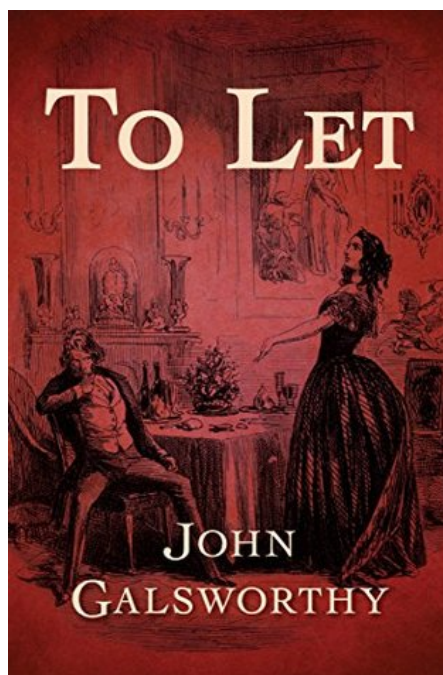




To Let

John Galsworthy

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The final chapter in the saga of a once-wealthy English family tormented by the sins of their past.

Old loves threaten to jeopardize a family's future in the final installment of the Forsyte Saga. Part social satire, part melodrama, this captivating novel brings to fascinating life author John Galsworthy's preoccupations with class, gender, and morality.

Soames and Irene Forsyte have finally separated after years of turmoil. Irene is now wed to Soames's cousin Jolyon and Soames to Annette. But when the children of these marriages, second cousins unaware of the prolonged and painful family saga that has slowly unfolded across generations, uncover the dark history, their parents will stop at nothing to put an end to their love affair. Soames's daughter, Fleur, is charming and beautiful, but does she have the same tendencies toward possessiveness that drove a wedge between Soames and Irene? Or will the young aristocrat Michael Mont succeed in winning Fleur's hand, thus restoring the family to wealth and prominence? And does Soames find a morbid reflection of himself when he combs through the effects of his departed Uncle Timmy, a lifelong recluse and hoarder?

To Let brings to a fitting conclusion John Galsworthy's engrossing saga of family life and the conflicting demands of romance and social class. The Forsyte Saga is a masterpiece of British literature, as pertinent and as resonant today as it was in Edwardian England.

This ebook has been professionally proofread to ensure accuracy and readability on all devices.

To Let Details

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From Reader Review To Let for online ebook

Dr.J.G. says

To Let goes on with lives of the various families, and chiefly of young Jolyon and his now wife Irene and their home at Robin Hill, with his other children and their various cousins and uncles being part of the story. Soame's nephew Val Dartie falls in love with young Jolyon's daughter by his second marriage, Holly, and the two second cousins manage to marry and be happy in spite of an initial lack of acceptance by the clan due to their being not only second cousins but also related to parties feuding majorly about Irene's divorce of one and marriage to other cousin.

This has the unfortunate consequence of encouraging the other pair of second cousins, Jon and Fleur, in thinking they may make it a success as his sister and her first cousin did. This time however things are very different, and Jon's parents are as unlikely to approve of this match as Soames initially is. Soames gives in due to his heart being completely ruled by his daughter, and goes so far as to plead with Irene for his daughter's happiness, offering to never interact in their lives for sake of overall peace. But Irene cannot risk it, and Jon is sensitive to her and his father's point of view when he comes to know of their history.

He would be in a quandary but for the similarity of Fleur with her father in claiming him as her father had claimed his mother, and this repels him. Fleur's lack of comprehension in her loss is matched by her father's when he lost a wife he had a very slim chance to have a life with. And the beautiful home of Irene is now to let even as they leave to go as far away as they can from this place and this history.

.....

Alessandra says

Molto bello anche questo terzo e ultimo capitolo della saga dei Forsyte. Si perdono amore e affetti, ma ciò che più teme un vero Forsyte è la perdita della proprietà, vivere in affitto. Eppure è ciò che succede ai vari personaggi, si affittano mogli per avere un erede, si affittano fidanzati, che poi diventano mariti, per dimenticare il vero amore, si affittano artisti per non accorgersi della propria solitudine, e via così. Soames Forsyte è l'emblema di tutto ciò: una vita dedicata a possedere cose perdendo le persone.

E. says

I have fallen in love with Galsworthy's writing. This third novel of the Forsyte Saga confirmed it. Few can describe a setting as well as he does. Few have such a subtle wit. And, most importantly, few writers convey human emotion as powerfully, subtly, and authentically as does Galsworthy.

When I had reached the 2/3rds points, I had the paradoxical emotions of wanting to hurry on to see how the story ends . . . and the desire to slow down and savor the remaining moments, not wanting to leave off these characters.

However, I thought the novel weakened in the final chapters (or maybe I was just too tired and distracted last night when I was finishing?). I had intended to give it five stars and declare it my favourite of the saga. The final chapters seemed melodramatic and sentimental.

One of Galsworthy's daring choices, is to make Soames Forsyte the central character of the saga, despite a wide array of vivid characters to choose from. Soames disgusts us, for many reasons, but particularly his

sense of entitlement. Yet, we feel his hurt, comprehend his reasoning, and gain some sympathy for him.

It was also an interesting choice how Irene is presented. She is ideal beauty and object of desire and passion throughout the saga. Yet, unlike most of the other characters, she is never fully formed for us. Rather, we mostly experience her through the desires and observations of others, mostly, but not exclusively, men. It was a decision that allows Irene to become an object or ideal for the reader, rather than a complete person. But this is done precisely to demonstrate how she was treated as such in middle class British culture of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

There are six more novels in the Forsyte Chronicles. They will be on my list.

Katya says

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Kim says

I'm not sure why I've found it difficult to write a review of this novel. It may be because much of what I want to say about it I've already written in my reviews of the the first two novels of the *The Forsyte Saga* trilogy, *The Man of Property: The Forsyte Saga* and *In Chancery*, which can be found [here](#) and [here](#).

This novel is as witty a commentary on English middle class values as the first two novels in the trilogy. Galsworthy's prose is elegant and full of irony and yet he depicts even the least attractive of his characters with understanding and compassion. Although I occasionally thought the narrative dragged just a bit, I remained engaged, probably because after listening to the first two novels, I had invested a lot of time in getting to know the Forsytes and wanted to know what happened to them.

As a whole, the trilogy is much more than just a multi-generational soap opera. Galsworthy chronicled the passing of the Victorian and Edwardian ages, and the social, economic and political changes experienced by the English middle class as it moved into the 20th century. Into that social commentary, he wove a meditation on love, life, death, beauty, the good and the bad of human feelings and aspirations. For a novelist writing in the 1920s, Galsworthy had a rather old-fashioned style, but his writing is accessible, he had something to say and he was able to make his characters and the dilemmas they face seem very real.

All in all, I found listening to the audiobook edition of the novel a most worthwhile and at times moving experience. As I've mentioned in my reviews of the other novels in the trilogy, David Case is entirely the right narrator for this work. However, there is a minor problem with the production values of the audiobook in that a number of sentences are repeated, something which obviously should have been picked up in the editing process.

It was good to be listening to this book as my friend Jemidar was reading it. I'm glad that she liked the book as much as I did.

Courtney H. says

To Let finishes up the Forsyte saga (but is only third in Galsworthy's 9 books). It picks up two decades after the end of "In Chancery," and clashes the two Forsyte branches--Soames and Jolyon/Irene--together when their children, now grown, meet and fall in love. This book engaged me more quickly than the first two in the series, possibly because the groundwork was done, and I was already bought into the characters. The second generation is aging, and the first generation hangs on by a thread; Timothy, too afraid to take risks, reaches age 100 in this book. His slow descent casts a shade over the the story, a reminder of inevitable decline of a person, a family, a class, an era. When he dies, the last central meeting place of the Forsytes is dismantled and sold for parts; and still Soames seeks to purchase the best pieces. Part of the third generation is well on their way to middle age; and the youngest are coming into their own.

Galsworthy plays the tension between the generations well. In some ways, it is hard to sympathize with the deception by the parents to hide the truth from Fleur (Soames' daughter) and Jon (Jolyon and Irene's daughter); obviously it is a society where some things are simply not spoken of, but I think it underestimated Jon and Fleur. But he does well at making the reserved agony of the parents, who had long burrowed the old injuries. Soames still has not come to terms with the fact that his emotional injuries were really self-inflicted; and he seems unable to grasp that his rape of Irene and his refusal to acknowledge what he did, had severed the possibility of the families bridging the gap. I was pleased, too, that Galsworthy did not turn it into a Romeo/Juliet thing. I thought that was where it would lead, and I underestimated him in thinking that. His characters are thinkers; there is a method to what they do. Jon's decision in the end was admirable if somewhat self-effacing. That being said, he understood what happened and stood by his mother--in an era where I think that sort of behavior was not common. It is even more impressive that Galsworthy thought to write that for his characters.

As with the other books, Galsworthy's main characters were fleshed out and imperfect. Soames remains horribly stunted, but he did seem to love his daughter, for what that was worth. Fleur was fantastic: young, impetuous, self-absorbed, smart. She was imperfect and spoiled, but quite real. As with his other characters, Galsworthy avoided pedestals and kept his characters, even his female characters, with two feet planted on the floor. Even the characters we don't get to know well (like Holly and Dartie, who remained peripheral to this book as well) are fleshed out. There are some exceptions to that--Timothy's loyal servants are a bit archetypical--but for the most part, Galsworthy does well in avoiding caricatures. As a result, the interactions between characters, from the bloom of love to the moments of self-doubt, seem both real and easily ascribable to those characters.

I enjoyed this book, and it was a satisfying conclusion to the work Galsworthy did in pulling his characters through three generations, from Victorian England to between-War England. I didn't love any of the books, but they were solid reads, and I would not mind returning to Galsworthy's subsequent Forsyte installments at some point.

Ali says

To Let the third book of The Forsyte Saga opens several years after we last saw the Forsyte family, it is now 1920, and Fleur, Soames' daughter and Jon, Jolyon and Irene's son are almost nineteen, and so far have never met. Since the scandal which resulted in Irene marrying her ex-husband Soames' cousin Jolyon Forsyte, the two sides of the family have not met. Fleur and Jon have so far heard no whiff of the events of twenty years earlier; their parents have shielded them from the past, each of them have existed comfortably in the world created for them by their adoring parents.

Full review: <https://heavenali.wordpress.com/2015/...>

Dana Loo says

“In affitto” è la degna conclusione di una saga che regala ancora una volta pagine di altissima letteratura, un quadro vividissimo di una gloriosa epoca in agonia, che esala gli ultimi respiri al pari di Timothy, ultimo baluardo dei vecchi Forsyte; che offre l'analisi di una società profondamente cambiata, dove la proprietà, l'interesse economico-finanziario e la sicurezza cedono il posto a un individualismo sempre più sfrontato, evanescente e in continuo fermento e dove anche la figura femminile accenna i primi passi verso quell'emancipazione sintomo di una rivoluzione futura imminente; e che infine racconta di una storia d'amore che è quasi una beffa del destino e che, come il vaso di Pandora, scoperchierà un'eredità ingombrante e ancor dolorosa, viva e pulsante che racchiude un passato inviolabile e un futuro pericolosamente incerto e forse precluso a due giovani e innocenti innamorati.

Il romanzo si apre con un interludio che è la quintessenza della dolcezza e della tenerezza intrisi nella figura e nei comportamenti del piccolo Jon, figlio di Jolyon e Irene, un bimbo sensibile che diventerà un adulto timido, introverso, con un animo da poeta e un attaccamento morboso e leale verso la sua famiglia...

Questo animo gentile e ingenuo rimarrà fatalmente abbagliato dalla personalità ben più forte, volitiva e determinata di Fleur, figlia amatissima di Soames e Annette che, tra le altre cose, erediterà dal padre proprio quel bisogno di possesso fisico quasi ossessivo che portò alla distruzione la sua relazione con Irene.

Un amore travagliato che ritroverà coinvolta tutta la famiglia e che, inevitabilmente, risveglierà fantasmi del passato, segreti inconfessati, tanto dolore e risentimento mai sopiti.

Ma al di là di tutto questa saga rimane un inno al Vittoriano che lentamente ma inesorabilmente deve cedere il passo al nuovo, un'epoca che era stata di grandi contrasti e contraddizioni, di cambiamenti sociali, politici, economici, scientifici, culturali, di grandi espansioni ma anche epoca di profonda rigidità e moralismo che proprio la figura di Soames con le sue idiosincrasie, i suoi amarcord, le sue profonde introspezioni, la sua ossessione per la proprietà, la sua sensibilità per la bellezza, rappresenta perfettamente...

“Soames sedeva là, percependo quasi inconsciamente l'avvenire, ma rivolgendo con decisione tutti i suoi pensieri al passato come un uomo che cavalchi in una notte tempestosa, con il viso rivolto alla coda del cavallo galoppante. Attraverso le dighe vittoriane, le acque irrompevano, sommergendo la proprietà, l'educazione, la morale, la melodie e le vecchie forme dell'arte – acque che portavano alla sua bocca un sapore salato, come di sangue, e che giungevano fino a lambire i piedi di quella collina di Highgate, dove il Vittoriano era sepolto...”

There is no one to pity or blame. Soames loves his daughter Fleur, and while she was a tiny baby he felt she belonged to him. She grew up and fell in love with -- of all people! -- Irene and Jolyone's son Jon. Soames almost likes the idea of theatrical "balance" of life: he and the passion of his life, Irene, WILL unite through their children and through them they WILL live in the house he had built for Irene decades ago.

Jon and Fleur are so different: he is the son of an artist and a woman who treasures beauty in everything; she is a daughter of a man of property and a highly practical French woman. The exchange that happens between the kids made me think that if not for the secrets, if not for the Shakespearean arrangement of things: they might have pulled away from each other... Jon needs to believe in things; he needs to love people and help them while Fleur's point of view is: *"But you can't help people, Jon; they're hopeless. When you pull them out they only get into another hole. Look at them, still fighting and plotting and struggling, though they're dying in heaps all the time. Idiots!"*

While her father Soames HAD to have Irene because she was his wife, his "property", Fleur has to have Jon because she is used to having what she wants. And who knows, if not the circumstances, the unlucky timing, the devoted love of the son to his parents, the never explained to us from Irene's point of view disgust to Soames... it could all be different.

Through the book we see the decline of property: in the changing of the generations, ideals, and old beliefs proved to be wrong.

"The young are tired of us, our gods and our ideals. Off with their heads, they say smash their idols! And let's get back to-nothing! And, by Jove, they've done it! Jon's a poet. He'll be going in, too, and stamping on what's left of us. Property, beauty, sentiment all smoke. We mustn't own anything nowadays, not even our feelings. They stand in the way of Nothing."

Jon listened, bewildered, almost outraged by his father's words, behind which he felt a meaning that he could not reach. He didn't want to stamp on anything!

"Nothing's the god of to-day," continued Jolyon; "we're back where the Russians were sixty years ago, when they started Nihilism."

"No, Dad," cried Jon suddenly, "we only want to live, and we don't know how, because of the Past that's all!"

"By George!" said Jolyon, "that's profound, Jon. Is it your own? The Past! Old ownerships, old passions, and their aftermath. Let's have cigarettes."

Soames feels the fall of the property and old ways through his own lenses: *"The sight of her with that fellow had brought all memory back. Even now he could not understand why she had been so impracticable. She could love other men; she had it in her! To himself, the one person she ought to have loved, she had chosen to refuse her heart. It seemed to him, fantastically, as he looked back, that all this modern relaxation of marriage though its forms and laws were the same as when he married her that all this modern looseness had come out of her revolt; it seemed to him, fantastically, that she had started it, till all decent ownership of anything had gone, or was on the point of going. All came from her! And now a pretty state of things! Homes! How could you have them without mutual ownership? Not that he had ever had a real home! But had that been his fault? He had done his best."*

"Tell them to hold on!" old Timothy had said. But to what were they to hold on in this modern welter of the "democratic principle"? Why, even privacy was threatened! And at the thought that privacy might perish, Soames pushed back his teacup and went to the window. Fancy owning no more of Nature than the crowd out there owned of the flowers and trees and waters of Hyde Park! No, no! Private possession underlay

everything worth having. The world had slipped its sanity a bit, as dogs now and again at full moon slipped theirs and went off for a night's rabbiting; but the world, like the dog, knew where its bread was buttered and its bed warm, and would come back sure enough to the only home worth having to private ownership. The world was in its second childhood for the moment, like old Timothy eating its titbit first!"

The last of the old Forsyte, Timothy, eating the yummiest pieces of his dinner first, the old man who stopped thinking even of the future which was two minutes from now is the symbol of the collapse of the old traditions, the symbol of the new generation which wants to have all and now. The past is now "to let": to try on like a carnival outfit, for the goal is to never settle in, to keep on moving. But such a desire is temporary, and in due time the society will come back to the natural instinct of owning its homes and lands and loved ones; after all it is the natural instinct of people, the one that makes the progress possible, the one that in a way lets Love flourish its lessons of life onto those, who are still "in caves" of their instincts to seize and control. For to Love is to let - to let one free. To let the loved one free and to own one's own life as much as it is possible in the world of being tied with ropes of relationship, partnerships, feelings and emotions to all the human beings in one's life.

I think it is redundant to say that I have enjoyed reading the third volume of the Saga, its language and all the emotions, so effortlessly expressed by Galsworthy in 1921 and so relevant to us, humans, in 2011.

Victoria Evangelina Belyavskaya

Leslie says

4½ stars. What a fitting yet melancholy ending to the Forsyte saga! I even felt sorry for Soames by the end...

A word of warning -- this novel does NOT stand alone! To be appreciated, or even understood, the previous novels & 'interludes' of the series need to be read first.

Griselda says

Sadly, Jon and Fleur Forsyte just do not have as much to offer the reader as their parents and grandparents do in the earlier volumes of The Forsyte Saga. The book goes over and over the relationship, making very slow forward progress. The death of Timothy really does mark the end of the 'proper' family and leaves only Soames as a character of any interest.

Bob In says

I liked the book a lot. Galsworthy has a very, nice evocative touch with nice personality insights. However, he rushed the ending. It was not in full scene, but in summary, muting, for me, the emotional impact of changes Fleur and Jon chose.

His diction sometimes was archaic, but it usually pleased me. Here's two passages that especially pleased me.

His mother never made him practice piano tunes he didn't like, "so that he remained eager to convert ten thumbs to eight fingers."

He was quite of the opinion that the country should stamp out tuberculosis; but this was not the place. It should be done farther away. He took, instead, an attitude common to all true Forsythes, that disability of any sort in other people was not his affair, and the State should do its business without prejudicing in any way the natural advantages Which he had acquired or inherited.

Gopal Vijayaraghavan says

This is the last novel of the family saga of Forsyte. In this emotional drama of love between fourth generation cousins of Forsyte family, the forbidden Romeo and Juliet like love between Jon and Fleur is narrated. The heart break which is caused between a father and daughter and a mother and son opens old wounds and rivalries between Soames and Joylon. As the young lovers, unaware of the past, want the past not to stand in their way, their parents hold that they cannot escape the long shadow of the past. This novel, unlike the earlier two novels, is more tightly woven around this tragic comedy and ends in Soames' melancholic rumination of the burial of Victorianism and his failure to get the beauty and love in spite of his all other possessions. Galsworthy has succeeded in capturing the mood of the middle class post war(WWI) Britain where everything is in a flux and new democratic forces are raising.
