



The Fortune of the Rougons (Oxford World's Classics)

Émile Zola, Brian Nelson

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'He thought he could see, in a flash, the future of the Rougon-Macquart family, a pack of wild satiated appetites in the midst of a blaze of gold and blood.'

Set in the fictitious Provençal town of Plassans, The Fortune of the Rougons tells the story of Silvère and Miette, two idealistic young supporters of the republican resistance to Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte's coup d'état in December 1851. They join the woodcutters and peasants of the Var to seize control of Plassans, opposed by the Bonapartist loyalists led by Silvère's uncle, Pierre Rougon. Meanwhile, the foundations of the Rougon family and its illegitimate Macquart branch are being laid in the brutal beginnings of the Imperial regime.

The Fortune of the Rougons is the first in Zola's famous Rougon-Macquart series of novels. In it we learn how the two branches of the family came about, and the origins of the hereditary weaknesses passed down the generations. Murder, treachery, and greed are the keynotes, and just as the Empire was established through violence, the 'fortune' of the Rougons is paid for in blood.

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Christine Pena:

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