



# **A Siren: "Contented! The whole city was enraptured."**

*Thomas Adolphus Trollope*

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Thomas Adolphus Trollope was born on the April 29th, 1810 in Bloomsbury, London. He was the eldest son to the barrister, Thomas Anthony and writer Frances Milton (middle names are crucial as there are many writers in the Trollope family) and is the older brother to Anthony Trollope. Thomas had a fine education at Harrow and Winchester College prior to studying at Oxford University. There followed a brief spell teaching at a Birmingham Grammar school. But for him other horizons were soon to beckon. A great traveller and explorer his first book, *A Summer in Brittany*, was published in 1840, it was to be the beginning of a long and prolific career. His mother, the well-known and highly regarded, especially for her novels that took on social injustice, Frances Milton Trollope, now offered him a writing partnership. Writing books was a profession she had taken up due to the necessity of earning money following the disintegration of a Utopian community in the United States that she had taken the family to and her husband's continual financial misfortune. Her husband had died in 1838 and she was now intent of moving forward on new works and in a new country. She moved with Thomas to Florence. Their partnership soon proved successful as Thomas was a historian, traveller, scholar and researcher as well as being a writer and his mother already had a reputation as a writer. Whilst there, Thomas was introduced too, and soon married, a guest of his mother's, the English poet and writer, Theodosia Garrow, who also wrote and supported Italian Nationalism. Theodosia's inheritance and Trollope's earnings allowed them to create a beautiful home in Florence, the Villino Trollope, where numerous British literary figures visited and stayed and became a centre for expats from George Eliot to Elizabeth and Robert Browning. The library there was said to contain 5,000 volumes. In March 1853, a daughter, Beatrice, was born to them. Whilst overshadowed by his brother Anthony's literary success, many noted a striking resemblance in style and physical appearance of the two as well as in their literary works. And one trait that was common to all the Trollope's was their output. Thomas alone was responsible for sixty volumes during his career. Although not of the first rank as an author he was nonetheless respected and thorough in his research and workings. Anthony was always full of praise for his brother and the two remained close with their mother, Frances Milton, who died in 1863, the authoress of over 100 volumes. Tragically Theodosia was to die only two years later in 1865. Personally these were times of great distress for Thomas. Thomas did however, marry again, and to another writer, Frances Eleanor, (née Ternan) and, despite an age gap of twenty five years, they set up a similarly beautiful home and centre for literary socialising and expats but this time in Rome. Thomas was a versatile writer whose works often featured Italy whether it be its history, locations or characters, and were strong literary accomplishments although he himself was modest about his literary talents. In 1890 he and Frances retired to Devon where he wrote three volumes of his autobiography. Thomas Adolphus Trollope died on November 11th, 1892 while visiting Bristol and had said to his wife: "Where I fall let me lie." This she did and he was buried in Arnos Vale Cemetery.

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