

КАРМАННОЕ ЧТЕНИЕ НА АНГЛИЙСКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

Jack London

**THE LITTLE LADY
OF THE BIG HOUSE**

**Джек Лондон
МАЛЕНЬКАЯ ХОЗЯЙКА
БОЛЬШОГО ДОМА**

Адаптация текста и словарь

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**THE LITTLE LADY
OF THE BIG HOUSE
by Jack London**

1.

“**Paula**¹,” **Dick Forrest**², a rich rancher, said to his wife, a vivacious, athletic, and self-aware woman. “My best friend, **Evan Graham**³, will arrive tomorrow morning. Tell the servant to put him in the **watch-tower**⁴. I hope he will work on his book.”

“Graham?—Graham?” Paula asked. “Do I know him?”

“You met him once two years ago, in **Santiago**⁵. He had dinner with us.”

¹ **Paula** — Паола

² **Dick Forrest** — Дик Форрест

³ **Evan Graham** — Ивэн Грэхем

⁴ **watch-tower** — сторожевая башня

⁵ **Santiago** — Сантьяго

“Oh, one of those naval officers?”
Dick shook his head.

“The **civilian**¹. Don’t you remember that big blond fellow—you talked about music with him for half an hour?”

“Oh, to be sure,” Paula vaguely recollected. “He’d met you somewhere before ... **South Africa**², wasn’t it? Or **the Philippines**³?”

“That’s right. South Africa, it was. Evan Graham. Next time we met was on the boat on the **Yellow Sea**⁴.”

“But **who about him**⁵, and what about him?” Paula queried. “And what’s the book?”

“Well, first of all, **beginning at the end**⁶, **he’s broke**⁷—that is, for

¹ **civilian** — штатский

² **South Africa** — Южная Африка

³ **Philippines** — Филиппины

⁴ **Yellow Sea** — Жёлтое море

⁵ **who about him** — кто он такой

⁶ **beginning at the end** — если начать с конца

⁷ **he’s broke** — он разорён

him, he's broke. He's got an income of several thousand a year left, but all that his father left him is gone. But he doesn't whimper. He'd graduated from the university. His book covers last year's trip across **South America**¹, West coast to East coast. The Brazilian government voluntarily gave him an honorarium of ten thousand dollars for the information concerning unexplored portions of **Brazil**². Oh, he's a man, a real man! You know the type—clean, big, strong, simple; been everywhere, seen everything, knows most of a lot of things, straight, looks you in the eyes—well, in short, a real man, indeed!”

Ernestine³, Paula's sister, clapped her hands, and exclaimed: “And he will come tomorrow!”

Dick shook his head reprovingly.

¹ **South America** — Южная Америка

² **Brazil** — Бразилия

³ **Ernestine** — Эрнестина

“Oh, **nothing in that direction**¹, Ernestine. Many nice girls like you have tried to hook Evan Graham. And, between ourselves, I couldn’t blame them. But he’s had fast legs, and they’ve always failed **to get him into a corner**², where, dazed and breathless, he could mechanically mutter ‘Yes’ and come out of the trance to find himself roped, thrown, and married. Forget him, Ernestine. Graham is not for you. He’s old like me—just about the same age, forty years old—and, like me, he’s seen a lot. He knows how to run away in time. He doesn’t care for young ladies. He is merely old, and very wise.”

¹ **nothing in that direction** —здесь ничего не получится

² **to get him into a corner** — загнать его в угол

2.

“Where’s my little boy?” Dick shouted, walking through the Big House in quest of its Little Lady.

He came to the door that gave entrance to the long wing. It was a door without a knob, a huge panel of wood in a wood-paneled wall. But Dick knew the secret; he pressed the spring, and the door swung wide.

“Where’s my little boy?” he called again.

A glance into the bathroom was fruitless, as were the glances he sent into Paula’s wardrobe room and dressing room. He passed the short, broad

stairway that led to her empty divan. He noticed a **drawing easel**¹.

“Where’s my little boy?” he shouted out to the sleeping porch; and found only a demure Chinese woman of thirty, who smiled with embarrassment.

This was Paula’s maid. Dick had taken her, as a child almost, for Paula’s service, from a fishing village on the Yellow Sea.

“Where is your mistress?” Dick asked.

“She maybe with young ladies—I don’t know,” she stammered; and Dick swung away on his heel.

“Where’s my little boy?” he shouted, just as a big limousine pulled up.

“I wish I knew,” a tall, blond man in a light summer suit responded from the car; and the next moment Dick Forrest and Evan Graham were shaking hands.

¹ **drawing easel** — мольберт

The servants carried in the hand baggage, and Dick accompanied his guest to the watch tower quarters. The two men were almost of a size. Graham was a clearer blond than Forrest, although both were equally gray of eye, and equally and precisely similarly bronzed by sun. Graham's features were in a slightly larger mold; his eyes were a little longer. His nose was a little straighter as well as larger than Dick's, and his lips were a little thicker, and a little redder.

Forrest threw a glance at his wrist watch.

"Eleven-thirty," he said. "Come along at once, Graham. We don't eat till twelve-thirty. **I am sending out a shipment of bulls**¹, three hundred of them, and I'm proud of them. You

¹ **I am sending out a shipment of bulls** — я отправляю партию быков

simply must see them. What saddle do you prefer?”

“Oh, anything, **old man**¹.”

“English?—Australian?—Scottish?—Mexican?” Dick insisted.

“Scottish, if you please,” Graham surrendered.

They sat their horses by the side of the road and watched the herd.

“I see what you’re doing—it’s great,” Graham said with sparkling eyes.

They turned their horses back for the Big House. Dick looked at his watch again.

“Lots of time,” he assured his guest. “I’m glad you saw those bulls. They are nice indeed. Over there are the fish ponds, you’ll have an opportunity to catch a mess of trout, or bass, or even catfish. You see, I love to make things work. The water works twenty-four hours a day. The ponds are in series, according to the nature

¹ **old man** — старина, дружище

of the fish. The water starts working up in the mountains. It irrigates a score of mountain meadows before it makes the plunge and is clarified to crystal clearness in the next few rugged miles; and at the plunge from the highlands it generates half the power and all the lighting used on the ranch. Then it subirrigates lower levels, flows in here to the fish ponds.”

“Man,” Graham laughed, “you could make a poem about the water. I’ve met fire-worshippers, but you’re the first real water-worshiper I’ve ever encountered ...”

Graham did not complete his thought. From the right, not far away, came a mighty splash and an outburst of women’s cries and laughter. They emerged in a blaze of sunshine, on an open space among the trees, and Graham saw an unexpected a picture.

And in the center of the pool, vertical in the water, struck upward

and outward into the free air, while on its back, slipping and clinging, was the figure form, Graham realize that it was a woman who rode the horse. Her slim round arms were twined in **stallion-mane**¹, while her white round knees slipped on the sleek.

Graham realized that the white wonderful creature was a woman, and sensed the smallness and daintiness of her. She reminded him of some **Dresden china figure**² set absurdly small and light and strangely on the drowning back of a titanic beast.

Her face smote Graham most of all. It was a boy's face; it was a woman's face; it was serious and at the same time amused. It was a white woman's face—and modern; and yet, to Graham, it was all-pagan. This was not a creature and a situation

¹ **stallion-mane** — грива

² **Dresden china figure** — фигурка из дрезденского фарфора

one happened upon in the twentieth century.

The stallion sank. Glorious animal and glorious rider disappeared together beneath the surface, to rise together, a second later.

“Ride his neck!” Dick shouted. “Catch his foretop and get on his neck!”

The woman obeyed. The next moment, as the stallion balanced out horizontally in obedience to her shift-age of weight, she had slipped back to the shoulders.

“Who ... who is it?” Graham queried.

“Paula—Mrs. Forrest.”

“**My breath is quite taken away**¹,” Graham said. “Do your people do such things frequently?”

“First time she ever did that,” Forrest replied.

¹ **my breath is quite taken away** — у меня дух захватило