

# May's credibility is being played for and the odds are ...

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I have not always agreed with FT columnist Janen Ganesh. He was far too close to George Osborne for that to happen. But now Osborne's in the wilderness Ganesh has had to look at the world a little more critically. He is certainly doing that [today in the FT](#) when looking at Therese May's prospects.

His argument is three fold. First, he says no one was better suited to be a compromiser on Brexit than May: she had hardly stated a public position on it before 23 June.

Second, he says that allowed her to permit consultation and accountability in a way that would have shared responsibility for outcomes in the negotiations and saved her.

Third, she's done the exact opposite: by refusing to give ground for anyone and going for a hard Brexit any outcome is hers alone. And as he concludes, I think correctly:

*Mrs May is both invincible and frail. She could hold power for a decade, or two more years. If it is hard to picture the second scenario, remember that every prime minister since Margaret Thatcher lost their credibility in one go, not in stages: Sir John Major after Britain's disorderly exit from the exchange rate mechanism, Tony Blair after the Iraq war soured, Gordon Brown when he ducked a snap election and David Cameron on the morning of the referendum loss.*

I have little doubt the UK's Brexit negotiations will fail: the twenty seven negotiating partners want them to. The UK civil service will not have its heart and soul in the job. Even May must deep down doubt why she is pursuing a path so reckless. The only likely outcome in two years will be crashing out of the EU. And that will be a failure simply because we have been told that a deal will be done.

I am not confident that means that the Tories will fail: that would require a viable alternative and there is none apparent as yet. But it does mean May might well fail. Janen Ganesh is right: May's credibility is being played for and the odds are stacked against her.