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The Gentleman in the Parlour: A Record of a Journey from Rangoon to Haiphong

W. Somerset Maugham

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Somerset Maugham set out on an extraordinary trip in September of 1922. He would remain abroad for nine months and end up traveling by canoe, riverboat, rickshaw and mule from Rangoon to Mandalay in Upper Burma, down through Thailand to Bangkok, then to Phnom Penh and across the jungle by river to Angkor Wat. From there he went down river to Saigon, then by ship to Hue and Haiphong. He ends the audiobook with an anecdotal story of his fellow passengers while on shipboard to Haiphong.

It is a beautifully crafted travelogue by one of the century's most sophisticated and arresting personalities. From stranded Europeans to staid local inhabitants, Maugham's gaze takes in a myriad of details which he would later end up using in his short stories and novels. Come along on a journey to Southeast Asia as it was between the wars...and as it would never be again.

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