

ADAM AND EVE, LTD.

book review — Escape from the Shadows

One of the most prolific British writers alive is Robin Maugham; novels, plays, stories, films and journalism have flowed from his typewriter for years. Now he offers his autobiography, *Escape from the Shadows*.

The shadows are long and inhibiting: A famous father, Frederick Herbert, First Viscount Maugham of Hartfield, a law lord and for a time lord chancellor of England; an even more famous uncle, Somerset Maugham ("Willie" to his nephew); and finally, the affliction of being homosexual. If Lord Maugham has escaped these shadows, as he claims (and I don't think he has), he has not escaped their effects.

His autobiography is a document of striking candor and honesty. Public confessions are made for several motives; sometimes to purge the soul of guilt; sometimes, as with St. Augustine, to offer an example of salvation through repentance; sometimes, as with Jean-Jacques Rousseau, to discover oneself. Maugham's motives may be a blend of all these, but I think his book is also a work of revenge.

Revenge on the icy lawyer, his own father, who tried to crush his self-esteem as a man. Revenge on the cynical author, Uncle Willie, who scorned his literary ambitions. Revenge on Eton and Cambridge and the British class system that punished him for being what it had made him.

I remember meeting Robin Maugham in Tanganyika in 1950 or so. He seemed one of those upper-class adventurers who haunt Arab and African countries in search of cheap boys and freedom from blackmailers. His romantic depths did not show. Yet at the time he was struggling to keep his sanity, to reconcile himself to life.

Fascinating Book

Escape from the Shadows is a fascinating, even a sensational book. Among the characters we're shown intimately are Somerset Maugham, Noel Coward, Harold Nicholson, Winston Churchill, Glubb Pasha of the Arab Legion, Wylan Auden and many others, including the infamous Guy Burgess who defected with Donald Maclean to Russia, and a couple of other even less savory figures.

Maugham's life has been adventurous.

He was severely wounded in a tank battle in the North African desert, surviving with bits of shrapnel in his brain. He soldiered in military intelligence with Glubb Pasha and traveled with Arabs in the desert.

He exposed the slave traffic of the Sahara. In the sumptuous Mamounis Hotel in Marrakesh, T. S. Eliot once told him he should try the Saada Hotel in Agadir; he did, and was buried alive when the hotel was swallowed up in an earthquake. Rescued, his first thought was to send a message to Eliot that he was safe.

Maugham loved his mother and his sisters and his nanny. But at a preparatory boarding school he learned that there were stranger kinds of love. At Eton, an older boy who had a crush on him initiated him sexually. In the holidays he discovered that girls too aroused him. It was confusing.

In Love Again

Gerard Haxton, Somerset Maugham's homosexual companion, tried to clear the confusion by taking the young man with him to Venice and making a pass at him. Robin Maugham imagines that Willie may have engineered the whole thing as a perverse experiment.

Later on in Nice, on board his luxurious yacht, Willie prescribed a tour of the bordellos, disgusted at his nephew for being in love with a girl. For a while young Maugham thought he was normal.

Then a lovely boy came into his life. Again he was in love and Willie, again scornful of such folly, had to point out he was paying the boy for his services.

Anyone who can survive an education of that sort from an uncle of such enormous fame and prestige deserves nothing by sympathy. No wonder Robin Maugham remained emotionally retarded, guilt driving him to prefer social inferiors as lovers. He was lucky to escape the police.

But there's a lot more to this book than homosexual confession. Maugham has a lively malice that makes for plenty of good anecdote. And he gives us an inside look at the decaying set who dominated the British metropolis after World War II.

Escape from the Shadows, by Robin Maugham, Mueson, 278 pages, illustrated, \$13.95.

Not too many years ago there was a couple who liked to be called Adam and Eve. They lived together in this place full of fruit flowers birds trees and animals and they danced a lot and ate a lot and took naps. There was no traffic no war and no neon signs.

It was a very good scene.

However, Adam's head was full of ideas and ambition and he was always tinkering and fooling with things and one day he suddenly put together an internal combustion engine. Wow, he said. I did it - I put together this - ah - internal combustion engine.

From there on it was easy. In no time he had banged out a frame, worked up tires, a little upholstery and a rearview mirror.

Soon Adam was wheeling Eve around the place, but before he really had the feel of the thing he zonked a couple of animals. After that the landlord grew sort of unhappy and suggested they find lodging elsewhere so they moved to Detroit. He got together a bunch of guys and began turning out fantastic numbers of cars. He was an overnight success and was quickly accepted as a community leader.

What with working day and night and weekends however, it was no surprise to anyone when Eve ran off with a Baptist preacher, and was last seen managing a small apple jelly stand at Bloomers Ferry, Idaho.

Things really came up shiny for Adam. He enlarged his Detroit operation and branched into other industry, business and finance. Stacking up success after success, he continued to amaze astound delight and titillate the world with his discoveries inventions and displays of remarkable talent and genius. He invented the cigarette and gunpowder. And the pencil eraser. He gave the world flying machines duck callers and alphabet soup.

Acclamation flowed in from all sides. He was voted Mr. VIP by the Junior Chamber of Commerce. He was made a full colonel in the National Guard. He was given a lifetime subscription to TV Guide. He dated film stars, and important columnists wrote in-depth studies of him entitled *What Makes Adam Run?* Twice he appeared on the Johnny Carson show.

Years passed and pressures began to mount on Adam. He felt obliged to come up with ever greater triumphs. So he built larger cities stadiums missiles and Disneylands. He covered the planet with outdoor billboards four land highways and drive-in restaurants. He conceived the quantum theory, solved the mystery of Stonehenge and perfected the inner spring mattress in the same afternoon. But his public grew ever more demanding. More, they screamed, more. So Adam gave them computers parking meters TV commercials napalm paper plates shuffleboard yoga iced tea artificial grass and finally people began to notice something.

There weren't any trees left.

Or flowers birds ants butterflies bears seashells frogs fish meadows mountain streams marshes gentle summer rains...or rainbows.

There was a lot of pavement buildings traffic signals noise litter garbage exhaust fumes vapor trails and crowded jumbled nerve jangling confusion.

Things are getting out of hand, people fretted. It's a shame, they would say. But finally everyone sort of got used to the litter and noise and all the rest...That's progress they said. That's the price we pay.

And no one seemed to mind.

Whatever happened to Adam? He was killed by a large bus when he stopped at a roadside stand one day...for a jar of apple jelly.

An Ecological Fable by W.B. Park - Look Magazine

Rock of Ages — record review — Rock of Ages — record review

By DAVE PERKINS

Rock of Ages, The Band's new release on Capital Records, is quite simply, one of the finest live albums that you will ever hear. Taken from their four night stand at Howard Stein's Academy of Music in New York around last New Year's Eve, it combines the guaranteed excellence of The Band with what may have been about the best group of horns ever put together for one night. Snooky Young plays the trumpet for the Count Basie Band or Lionel Hampton's orchestra. He is definitely one of the finer lead trumpeters anywhere. Howard (29 Flavours) Johnson on baritone sax (you may have caught his fine work for Taj Mahla), Joe Farrell (tenor and soprano sax), Earl McIntyre (trombone), and J.D. Parrone (alto sax and clarinet) round out the horn section.

But, of course, it was not the horns that the people came to see. It was Garth Hudson, organ, Robbie Robertson, Guitar, Richard Manuel, piano, Levon Helm, drums and Rick Danko, bass.

The Band.

They've been together about ten years now, starting out as Ronnie Hawkins' Hawks before playing back up for Bob Dylan when he went rock in 1965. Eventually they retired to a big pink house in West Saugerties, New York and released *Music From Big Pink* in 1968. That album became an instant legend, and so did the Band. Now four albums (*Big Pink*, *The Band*, *Stage Fright*, *Cahoots*) and four years along comes *Rock of Ages*. It is composed of 17 tracks laid out over four sides. Two cuts, *Don't Do It*, and *Get Up Jake* have not been heard on any Band albums before this. *Don't Do It* takes a

little getting used to, but *Get Up Jake* is a definite needle lifter. But it is really the only weak cut on the album.

All their million sellers are there; *Rag Mama Rag*, *The Shape I'm In*, etc. and each seems to take on a different dimension with the addition of the horns. The sound on this album is quite adequate, unlike most live albums where the instruments sound like they are being played through a wind tunnel.

The production is generally good although woefully weak on one cut, *The Shape I'm In*.

Another feature of *Rock of Ages* is the special price. You can pick it up for under \$5 if you shop around. That is definitely a bargain. If you are a fan of the Band, this will only strengthen your affection for them. If you're not into The Band, I couldn't think of a better place to start.