



Shanghai Grand: Forbidden Love and International Intrigue in a Doomed World

Taras Grescoe

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On the eve of WWII, the foreign-controlled port of Shanghai was the rendezvous for the twentieth century's most outlandish adventurers, all under the watchful eye of the fabulously wealthy Sir Victor Sassoon. ??

Emily Hahn was a legendary *New Yorker* writer who would cover China for nearly fifty years, and play an integral part in opening Asia up to the West. But at the height of the Depression, "Mickey" Hahn, had just arrived in Shanghai nursing a broken heart after a disappointing affair with an alcoholic Hollywood screenwriter, convinced she would never love again. After entering Sassoon's glamorous Cathay Hotel, Hahn is absorbed into the social swirl of the expats drawn to pre-war China, among them Ernest Hemingway, Martha Gellhorn, Harold Acton, and the colourful gangster named Morris "Two-Gun" Cohen. But when she meets Zau Sinmay, a Chinese poet from an illustrious family, she discovers the *real* Shanghai through his eyes: the city of rich colonials, triple agents, opium-smokers, displaced Chinese peasants, and increasingly desperate White Russian and Jewish refugees—a place her innate curiosity will lead her to discover first hand. But danger lurks on the horizon and Mickey barely makes it out alive as the brutal Japanese occupation destroys the seductive world of pre-war Shanghai and Mao Tse-tung's Communists come to power in China.

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