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About Maugham: Collected Short Stories. This third volume of Maugham's stories, introduced and selected by the author himself, contains the celebrated series about Ashenden, a secret service agent in WWI. Based on Maugham's own experiences with the British Intelligence service in Switzerland, the stories are vignettes in which he dramatizes both the romance and absurdity of espionage as well as its ruthlessness and brutality. Two volume set of The Complete Short Stories of W. Somerset Maugham including: Volume 1; East and West, 955 pages, 30 stories. Volume 2; The World Over, 681 pages, 61 stories. Volume 2; The World Over, 681 pages, 61 stories. This first volume of Somerset Maugham's collected short stories includes the famous story 'Rain', the tragedy of the prudish missionary Mr Davidson and Sadie Thompson, the prostitute. W. Somerset Maugham (1874 – 1965) was a British playwright, novelist and short story writer. Born in the British Embassy in Paris, where his father worked, Maugham was an orphan by the age of ten.