



Curious Encounters of the Human Kind - Borneo: True Asian Tales of Folly, Greed, Ambition and Dreams

Paul Spencer Sochaczewski

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How has a town named after a female vampire ghost spawned an entire genre of kitschy horror films? Why did a quiet Swiss man choose to live rough in the rainforest with the semi-nomadic Penans - and what inner spirit drove him to fight a David vs. Goliath rebellion against timber tycoons and corrupt officials who were destroying the Penans's forest home? Has White-Brown colonialism been replaced by Brown-Brown arrogance? What's the story of the grandmother who spits at meddling ghosts (but only because they spit first)? Why did the first White Rajah of Borneo amass a vast harem of concubines? What happened when I tried to ride the tidal bore that almost killed Somerset Maugham? In what way was an illiterate Borneo teenager instrumental in helping Alfred Russel Wallace develop the theory of natural selection? How close are we to orangutans, "our poor cousins who look like they haven't done so well in life."

This is Borneo as you've probably never imagined, full of curious people, startling happenings, and unexpected moments of humanity and introspection, giddiness and solemnity, avarice and ambition.



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