

The Moon and Sixpence

Grammar Notes

Why the author chose this structure

58 chapters · 290 points

I11I211I3 × Claude Sonnet

Grammar Patterns in This Book

Parallel Structure

Korean uses semantic parallelism while English demands stricter **grammatical symmetry**.

Korean: Prime Minister... General... (semantic parallel)

English: The Prime Minister... the General... (grammatical parallel)

Maugham employs parallel structure as a powerful tool for **contrast and irony**. The juxtaposition of "pompous rhetorician" and "tame hero" creates sharp **social criticism** with **rhythmic impact**.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Parallelism **maximizes contrast effects**, presenting complex social criticism in **clear, memorable form**. This creates **aphoristic impact** that resonates with readers, making abstract social observations concrete and unforgettable.

Subject-Verb Agreement

Korean lacks number agreement while English ensures **grammatical precision** and **semantic clarity** through subject-verb matching.

Korean: adulation... (no number distinction)

English: [adulation] is... (singular agreement)

Maugham maintains **precise agreement** even in complex sentences, creating **stylistic authority**. Correctly identifying "adulation" as the core subject in "adulation of his admirers is" demonstrates **logical thinking** and **intellectual rigor**.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Precise agreement shows the **author's cultivation** and **logical accuracy** through grammatical completeness, delivering complex ideas in **trustworthy form** that enhances the reader's confidence in the narrator's reliability.

Non-finite Verb

Korean uses adnominal endings like "다니던" while English employs infinitives, participles, and gerunds to **fine-tune temporal and aspectual nuances**.

Korean: party-attending youth

English: when she [used to go] to parties

Maugham uses non-finite verbs to capture **streams of consciousness** and **layered memories**. The participle "holding a daffodil" creates simultaneity, while "to go to parties" suggests habitual past action. This compresses **complex psychological states** into elegant prose.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Non-finite verbs allow him to express **temporal multiplicity** - the way past and present intersect in human consciousness, revealing the **psychological tensions** that define his characters' inner lives.

Complex Tense

Korean indicates temporal relationships through verb endings, while English uses **auxiliary combinations** to create subtle temporal layering.

Korean: gradually heightened [완료상]

English: [had been gradually coming] (past perfect continuous)

Maugham employs complex tenses to express the **gradual nature of psychological processes**. "Had been gradually coming" isn't simple past but shows the **continuity of consciousness change**. This emphasizes that character transformation is **never sudden**.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Human psychological change is **gradual and complex**. Complex tenses capture this **inner temporality** precisely, presenting Strickland's transformation as an **inevitable process** rather than a sudden decision.

Passive Voice

Korean uses adnominal forms like "끌린" while English passive voice shifts focus from **agent to result**.

Korean: [attracted] people (adnominal)

English: people who [have been attracted] (passive)

Maugham uses passive voice to create **objective distance**. "Have been attracted" suggests that art's power, not individual will, is the true agent. This reveals the narrator's **detached observation** of how artistic myths are constructed.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Passive voice **questions human agency**, highlighting how people are moved by **larger forces** - art, fame, destiny. This aligns with the novel's **fatalistic worldview** where characters are shaped by forces beyond their control.

Participial Construction

Korean uses adnominal forms like "접촉했던" while English participial constructions **compress complex situations** into single sentences.

Korean: [contacted] people (adnominal)

English: [such as had come in contact] (participial)

Maugham uses participial constructions to map **complex social networks** in panoramic sweeps. Combined with parallel structures like "writers who had known him, painters who had met him," this creates a **multidimensional view** of how artistic myths are constructed.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Participial constructions **compress time and space**, efficiently presenting **multiple perspectives** on Strickland. This vividly captures the **formation of collective memory** around the artist figure.

Relative Clause

Korean modifies nouns with preceding adjectives, while English uses relative clauses that follow. This **post-modification** structure feels unnatural to Korean speakers.

Korean: [uninteresting] people

English: people [whom they took no interest in]

Maugham employs relative clauses to **dissect complex social relationships** with surgical precision. The structure "whom they took no interest in" with the stranded preposition creates a **conversational tone** that masks sharp social criticism.

Why Maugham chose this structure: It allows him to **layer multiple pieces of information** within a single sentence, capturing the intricate web of social obligations and hypocrisies in one fluid observation. The relative clause becomes a tool for **psychological excavation**.

It-Cleft / Formal Subject

Korean places topics first while English uses "It" to **control emphasis** and **information flow**.

Korean: [Suffering ennobling character] is not true

English: [It] is not true [that suffering ennoble]

Maugham uses It-constructions to present **philosophical propositions**. "It is not true that" creates **authoritative tone** while challenging conventional wisdom, revealing the **author's conviction**.

Why Maugham chose this structure: It-constructions transform **abstract concepts** into **concrete propositions**, delivering complex philosophical insights with **clarity and authority**. This enhances the novel's **intellectual depth** while maintaining accessible prose style.

Subjunctive

Korean expresses hypotheticals with endings like "~했을 텐데" while English subjunctive uses **tense shifts** to indicate distance from reality.

Korean: would have [추측 어미]

English: [would have thought] (past perfect subjunctive)

Maugham employs subjunctive mood to explore **moral dilemmas** and **social expectations**. "Would have thought well of me if I had been able" reveals the narrator's **internal conflict** between **propriety and conscience**.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Subjunctive explores **unrealized possibilities**, effectively revealing characters' **inner reflections** and **moral struggles**. This enhances the novel's **ethical complexity** by showing what might have been

alongside what actually occurred.

Inversion

Korean maintains natural word order while English inversion rearranges for **emphasis and rhythm**.

Korean: etchings [were hanging] (natural order)

English: [were etchings] (inverted order)

Maugham uses inversion for **stylistic elegance** and **visual effect**. "On which were etchings" adds **literary dignity** to spatial description, **linguistically recreating** the refined taste of the upper class.

Why Maugham chose this structure: Inversion gives prose **poetic rhythm** and elevates ordinary description into **artistic expression**. This enhances the overall **aesthetic sophistication** of the work, matching form to the refined social world being depicted.

Chapter 1

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

It is still possible to discuss his place in art, and the **adulation of his admirers is** perhaps no less capricious than the disparagement of his detractors; but one thing can never be doubtful, and that is that he had genius.

the adulation of his admirers is perhaps no less capricious

subject: the adulation (of his admirers)

verb: is

The prepositional phrase **of his admirers** creates **grammatical distance** between subject and verb. **admirers** is plural, but it's not the subject — **adulation** (singular) is. Hence **is**, not **are**.

Maugham deliberately creates this complexity. The long, heavy subject (**the adulation of his admirers**) carries the conceptual weight, while the verb stays simple. This front-loading is typical of his style: pack the complexity into the noun phrase, then resolve it cleanly.

In Korean, the particle system makes subject identification easier. In English, word order and intervening phrases can obscure the grammatical relationships.

2. Parallel Structure

The Prime Minister out of office is seen, too often, to have been but a pompous **rhetorician, and the General without an army** is but the tame hero of a market town.

The Prime Minister... is seen to have been but a pompous rhetorician,

and

the General... is but the tame hero of a market town

Perfect parallelism: **The [title] [circumstance] is [diminished reality]**. Maugham uses grammatical symmetry to reinforce thematic symmetry — both examples illustrate the **same principle** of deflated power.

The repeated **but** (meaning "merely") is crucial. It appears in both clauses, creating not just structural parallel but **tonal** parallel. The word choice emphasizes reduction, deflation.

In Korean, the sentence endings differ ("~드러나고" vs "~뿐이다"), but English maintains the **is** pattern throughout. This grammatical consistency makes the conceptual connection stronger.

3. Passive Voice

It was a hazardous, though maybe a gallant thing to do, since it is probable that the legend commonly received has had no small share in the growth of Strickland's reputation; for there are many who **have been attracted** to his art by the detestation in which they held his character or the compassion with which they regarded his death; and the son's well-meaning efforts threw a singular chill upon the father's admirers.

many who have been attracted to his art

present perfect passive: have been + past participle

Why not simple past **were attracted**? The present perfect **have been attracted** indicates that the attraction **began in the past and continues to the present**. These people didn't just get attracted once — they remain attracted.

The passive voice emphasizes that they were **drawn by the art's power** rather than making an active choice. It's not "they chose to like his art" but "his art compelled them."

This grammatical choice supports Maugham's theme: Strickland's art has a magnetic quality that **persists** and **compels**. The tense and voice work together to create this sense of ongoing, involuntary attraction.

4. Relative Clause

I do not speak of that greatness **which is achieved by the fortunate politician or the successful soldier**; that is a quality which belongs to the place he occupies rather than to the man; and a change of circumstances reduces it to very discreet proportions.

that greatness which is achieved by the fortunate politician

antecedent: that greatness

relative pronoun: which (object)

passive: is achieved by...

Why passive voice here? **is achieved by** makes **greatness** the grammatical subject, not the politician. This supports Maugham's argument that follows — this greatness "belongs to the place he occupies rather than to the man."

Active voice would be: "the fortunate politician achieves greatness" (politician as agent). Passive voice: "greatness is achieved by the politician" (greatness as focus). The grammar reinforces the philosophical point: this kind of greatness is **external to the person**.

The relative clause structure also creates distance between **greatness** and its human agents, grammatically enacting the conceptual separation Maugham is arguing for.

5. Participial Construction

And **when such as had come in contact with Strickland in the past**, writers who had known him in London, painters who had met him in the cafés of Montmartre, discovered to their amazement that where they had seen but an unsuccessful artist, like another, authentic genius had rubbed shoulders with them there began to appear in the magazines of France and

America a succession of articles, the reminiscences of one, the appreciation of another, which added to Strickland's notoriety, and fed without satisfying the curiosity of the public.

when such as had come in contact with Strickland in the past

past participle phrase: had come in contact (past perfect)

elliptical relative: such (people) as had come...

Why past perfect **had come** instead of simple past **came**? The main verb is **discovered** (simple past). The **had come** represents action **prior to** that discovery.

—[had come in contact]—▶ discovered —▶ (now)

remote past

past

Maugham creates **temporal layering**. The contact was background; the discovery was the event. English forces this distinction through tense, creating a sense of **temporal depth** that moves from remote past through past to the narrative present.

The **such as** construction (**such people as had come...**) is more formal than modern usage, typical of Maugham's elevated style.

Chapter 2

1. Subjunctive

I knew him more intimately than most: I met him first before ever he became a painter, and I saw him not infrequently during the difficult years he spent in Paris; but I do not suppose **I should ever have set down my recollections if the hazards of the war had not taken me to Tahiti.**

I should ever have set down ← past counterfactual (would have pp)

if ... had not taken ← condition in past perfect (had pp)

"If the war had **not** taken me to Tahiti, I would **not** have written these recollections" — but the war **did** take him there, so he **is** writing them.

English pushes both clauses **two steps back in time** (had pp + should/would have pp) to signal unreality. The double-past creates distance from actual events.

Why Maugham opens with this structure: He's emphasizing that this entire memoir exists because of **accident**, not intention. The counterfactual tense embeds this contingency into the grammar itself.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

And if I may judge from the reviews, **many of these books are** well and carefully written; much thought has gone to their composition; to some even has been given the anxious labour of a lifetime.

many of these books are ← plural subject + plural verb

much thought has gone ← singular subject + singular verb

to some even has been given ← inverted passive

The key is **books** (plural), not "many of." The prepositional phrase "of these books" doesn't change the fact that "many" refers to multiple books, requiring "are."

In the same sentence, "much thought has gone" uses "has" because "thought" is uncountable (singular). Maugham alternates plural/singular within one sentence for **rhythmic variation** — "are" and "has" create different beats.

The final clause inverts to "to some even has been given" instead of "even has been given to some" — putting the recipient first emphasizes the **magnitude** of effort some books receive.

3. Passive Voice

When so much **has been written** about Charles Strickland, it may seem unnecessary that I should write more.

has been written ← present perfect passive

= someone has written (active) → it has been written (passive)

"So much has been written" means the writing started in the past, continued over time, and the **accumulated result** exists now. If Maugham had written "was written," it would mean "written back then (finished)." "Is written" would mean "being written now."

But "has been written" emphasizes the **pile-up effect** — all those books and articles exist as a current reality.

Why present perfect here? Because Maugham is expressing a **present dilemma**: "Given all that has accumulated, should I add more?" The tense connects past writing to present hesitation.

4. Parallel Structure

Heaven knows what pains the author has been at, what bitter experiences he has endured and what heartache suffered, to **give some chance reader a few hours' relaxation or to while away the tedium of a journey.**

what pains ... has been at

what bitter experiences ... has endured

what heartache [has] suffered

↓

to give ... relaxation or to while away ...

Three parallel "what" clauses build up the author's suffering, then the parallel infinitives "to give ... or to while away" deliver the **anticlimax** — all that pain for such modest purposes.

The parallelism isn't just grammatical decoration. It's **rhetorical architecture**: Maugham stacks three heavy clauses about suffering, then balances them against two light clauses about trivial entertainment.

"Give relaxation" and "while away tedium" are perfectly parallel infinitive phrases, emphasizing how **small** the reward is compared to the **massive** investment of pain.

5. Inversion

Then came the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars, and the poets sang new songs.

Normal order: The French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars came

Inverted order: Then came the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars

With "then" at the start, the subject and verb flip positions. This isn't just stylistic flourish — it's **dramatic staging**. "Came" appears first, like an announcement, then the massive subject "the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars" follows.

The inversion makes the events feel **sudden and momentous**, as if they're bursting onto the historical stage. "Then the French Revolution came" would be flat; "Then came the French Revolution" has **theatrical force**.

Maugham uses this structure to mark a **turning point** in his historical narrative — the moment when everything changed.

Chapter 3

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

It is long since I frequented it, and if the **novels that describe its present singularities are** accurate much in it is now changed.

novel₁ that describe ... are accurate

novel₂ that describe ... are accurate

novel₃ that describe ... are accurate

English **forces** subject-verb agreement: **novels** demands **are**, never **is**. Korean doesn't change the verb form whether it's one novel or many.

Maugham's choice of **novels** (plural) suggests **multiple testimonies** pointing to the same changes. One novel might be biased; several novels describing the same transformation carry more weight. The grammar enforces this logic of corroborating evidence.

2. Subjunctive

They wished to be taken for men of the world, and could have passed anywhere for the managing clerks of a city firm.

wished to be taken for ... – wanted others to see them as

could have passed for ... – would have been mistaken for

wished to be taken for uses passive voice because they wanted **others to perceive them** as worldly. It's not about becoming worldly, but about **being seen as** worldly.

could have passed for suggests they had the appearance but not the reality. They looked the part of managing clerks without actually being them.

The contrast: aspiration (**wished**) vs. appearance (**could have passed**). They wanted to seem sophisticated but only managed to look like clerks.

3. Parallel Structure

I have a recollection of large, unbending women with great noses and rapacious eyes, who wore their clothes as though they were armour; and **of little, mouse-like spinsters, with soft voices and a shrewd glance.**

I have a recollection of:

└ large, unbending women with great noses and rapacious eyes

↳ little, mouse-like spinsters, with soft voices and shrewd glance

The parallel **of...** structure creates a **gallery of contrasts** within one sentence. Korean splits this into separate sentences, but English holds the opposition in tension.

large/unbending vs little/mouse-like, great noses/rapacious eyes vs soft voices/shrewd glance — every element contrasts. The parallel structure makes the opposition architectural: two types of literary women, precisely balanced against each other.

4. Participial Construction

It is not without melancholy that I wander among my recollections of the world of letters in London **when first, bashful but eager, I was introduced to it.**

when first, bashful but eager, I was introduced to it

↑

inserted adjective phrase

bashful but eager is **inserted** mid-sentence, capturing the narrator's contradictory state of mind in that moment. It feels like a memory surfacing — the shyness and excitement remembered simultaneously.

The placement of **first** is also telling: not **when I was first introduced** but **when first... I was introduced**. The adverb **first** jumps forward, emphasizing the **primacy** of that experience. The syntax mirrors the vividness of a first encounter.

5. Passive Voice

When we had done discussing the merits of the latest book, it was natural to wonder how many copies **had been sold**, what advance the author had received, and how much he was likely to make out of it.

how many copies had been sold ← past perfect passive

what advance the author had received ← past perfect active

how much he was likely to make ← past + future projection

had been sold is **past perfect passive** — the selling happened before the moment of discussion. English layers the temporal relationships: **discussed** (past) → **had been sold** (earlier past).

The third item is particularly interesting: **was likely to make** represents a **future projection from a past viewpoint**. They were wondering, back then, how much he would earn going forward. English verb forms can encode these complex temporal relationships with precision.

Chapter 4

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Miss Waterford, torn between the aestheticism of her early youth, when she used to go to parties in sage green, holding a daffodil, and the **flippancy of her maturer years, which tended to high heels and Paris frocks, wore** a new hat.

The subject **Miss Waterford** and verb **wore** are separated by **50 words** of modification:

Miss Waterford, [torn between... Paris frocks,] wore a new hat.

subject [long modifier] verb

English syntax demands subject-verb order, so the long parenthetical pushes the verb far away. This creates **syntactic suspense** — we wait through her entire internal conflict before learning what she actually did.

Maugham uses sentence structure to mirror psychology: the **distance** between subject and verb reflects Miss Waterford's distance from decisive action.

2. Parallel Structure

Everyone **seemed to be talking, and I, sitting in silence, felt awkward; but I was too shy to break into any of the groups that seemed absorbed in their own affairs.**

Three clauses connected by semicolon and **but** create a **rhythm of contrast**:

[Everyone seemed to be talking,]

[and I, sitting in silence, felt awkward;]

[but I was too shy to break into any groups]

The repetition of **seemed... seemed** wraps everything in uncertainty, while the narrator's **felt** stands out as the one definite experience. Maugham builds a **contrast between appearance and reality** — what seems to be happening vs. what the narrator actually feels.

The parallel structure mirrors the narrator's social paralysis: surrounded by apparent conversation, but unable to join.

3. Inversion

There was a high dado of white wood and a green paper **on which were etchings** by Whistler in neat black frames.

Normal order would be **etchings were on which**. Maugham inverts to **on which were etchings**:

Normal: etchings were on which (= on the green paper)

Inverted: on which were etchings

The inversion guides the reader's eye: **location first, then contents**. We see the green paper, then discover what's on it. This matches how we actually scan a room — we notice surfaces before we notice what's placed on them.

The inversion creates **visual rhythm** in the description, mimicking the way our attention moves through space.

4. Participial Construction

Miss Waterford, torn between the aestheticism of her early youth, when she used to go to parties in sage green, **holding a daffodil**, and the flippancy of her maturer years, which tended to high heels and Paris frocks, wore a new hat.

holding a daffodil shows **simultaneous action** through present participle:

when she used to go to parties in sage green, holding a daffodil

main action

accompanying action

The present participle makes **holding** feel **integral** to the party-going, not just incidental. The daffodil wasn't something she happened to carry — it was **part of the aesthetic pose**.

Maugham uses the participle to capture how the flower was woven into her identity during that period. The grammar mirrors the way aesthetic symbols become **extensions of the self**.

5. Non-finite Verb

Miss Waterford, torn between the aestheticism of her early youth, when she used **to go to parties in sage green**, holding a daffodil, and the flippancy of her maturer years, which tended to high heels and Paris frocks, wore a new hat.

to go in **used to go** forms the **habitual past construction**:

used to + infinitive = repeated past action

she used to go = she habitually went (but no longer does)

The infinitive **to go** is **grammatically required** after **used to**. But it also carries semantic weight — the infinitive suggests **potential and direction**, which contrasts with her current state of being "torn between" conflicting impulses.

Maugham uses **used to go** to emphasize that this aesthetic period is **definitively over**. The construction creates temporal distance between past certainty and present confusion.

Chapter 5

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Her flat was always neat and cheerful, gay with flowers, and the **chintzes in the drawing-room, notwithstanding their severe design, were** bright and pretty.

Her flat was always neat and cheerful, gay with flowers,

and the chintzes in the drawing-room, notwithstanding their severe design, were bright and pretty.

The subject **chintzes** is separated from its verb **were** by a long interruption: **in the drawing-room, notwithstanding their severe design**. English demands **agreement across distance**.

chintzes (plural) → **were** (plural). If Maugham had written **was**, it would be grammatically wrong, regardless of the intervening phrases. Korean flows naturally with modifiers, but English **enforces** number agreement even when subject and verb are far apart. The grammar is unforgiving about this precision.

2. Parallel Structure

The son—his name was Robert—was a boy of sixteen at Rugby; and you **saw him in flannels and a cricket cap, and again in a tail-coat and a stand-up collar**.

you saw him in flannels and a cricket cap,

and again in a tail-coat and a stand-up collar

and again is the key. First: "flannels and cricket cap" (sportswear), second: "tail-coat and stand-up collar" (formal wear). **again** creates **contrast**, not mere repetition.

Maugham uses identical structure (**in + clothing**) but **again** signals **different versions** of the same boy. The parallel structure provides **stability**, while **again** provides **variation**. It's the same grammatical frame holding two contrasting images—the boy in his different roles.

3. Subjunctive

She said this not disparagingly, but affectionately rather, **as though, by acknowledging the worst about him, she wished to protect him from the aspersions of her friends**.

as though, by acknowledging the worst about him,

she wished to protect him from the aspersions of her friends

as though triggers the subjunctive mood. **she wished** is past tense, but it's actually **speculation**—"as if she wanted to."

Maugham doesn't use the indicative (she wanted to protect) because that would state it as fact. The subjunctive keeps it as the **observer's interpretation**. We don't know her actual intention; we're reading her behavior.

The subjunctive creates **interpretive distance**—it's what it seemed like, not what it was. English uses mood to signal the difference between observation and certainty.

4. Passive Voice

There are bosoms on which so many tears **have been shed** that I cannot bedew them with mine.

There are bosoms on which so many tears have been shed

that I cannot bedew them with mine

have been shed is present perfect passive. Not "tears were shed" (simple past) but "tears have been shed"—**accumulation** from past to present.

The perfect aspect emphasizes the **continuing result**: those bosoms are **still wet** from all the previous tears. If Maugham had written **were shed**, it would be a completed past event. **have been shed** means the effect persists.

The point: those bosoms are **already saturated**. There's no room for more tears. The present perfect conveys this state of **emotional saturation**.

5. Relative Clause

It is a charming faculty, but one often abused by those **who are conscious of its possession**: for there is something ghoulish in the avidity with which they will pounce upon the misfortune of their friends so that they may exercise their dexterity.

those who are conscious of its possession

who introduces a **restrictive** relative clause. Not all people, but specifically **those who are conscious** of having this faculty.

Maugham's logic: the comforting faculty itself is charming → but people **who are aware** they have it become problematic. The **who** clause creates the **distinction**. It's not the ability that's the problem, it's the **self-consciousness** about the ability.

The relative clause **narrows the focus** from the general faculty to the specific type of person who abuses it. Grammar creates the moral distinction.

Chapter 6

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

One morning Mrs. Strickland sent me round a note to say that she was giving a dinner-party that evening, and **one of her guests had failed** her.

One of her guests had failed her — Here **fail** means "to disappoint, to let down." The Korean translation softens it to "couldn't come," but the original carries blame.

One of her guests (subject: singular)

had failed (verb: singular agreement)

her (object)

One of + plural noun takes **singular verbs**. Even though **guests** is plural, we use **had failed** (singular). English forces this grammatical agreement.

Fail someone means "to disappoint, to let down" — not just "unable to come" but "breaking a commitment." Maugham chose this verb to expose the **obligation** underlying social invitations.

2. Relative Clause

The Stricklands "owed" dinners to a number of persons, **whom they took no interest in**, and so had asked them; these persons had accepted.

whom they took no interest in — The preposition **in** is stranded at the end. Formally, it should be **in whom they took no interest**.

Formal: persons in whom they took no interest

Informal: persons whom they took no interest in

Maugham chose the informal version. Why? This sentence exposes social **hypocrisy**. Too much formality would sound pompous and miss the point.

The choice of preposition placement sets the **tone**. Maugham's choice: natural, conversational English to expose the artificiality of social obligations.

3. Passive Voice

It was because the Member of Parliament found that he could not leave the House that I **had been invited**.

I had been invited — Past perfect passive. Why not simply **I was invited**?

The passive infinitive fits the formal dinner setting — things **happen to** the guests rather than guests making things happen. They wait to be **acted upon**.

Chapter 7

1. Complex Tense

But on my last day in town, coming out of the Stores, I met her with her son and daughter; like myself, she **had been making** her final purchases before leaving London, and we were both hot and tired.

had been making – past perfect continuous (ongoing action up to that point)

were – simple past (state at that moment)

The Korean translation uses "쇼핑을 하고 있었다" for both timeframes, but English distinguishes them grammatically. **had been making** means she was shopping **before** they met and continued until the moment of meeting.

If Maugham had written **was making**, it would mean "she was shopping when we met." **had been making** means "she had been shopping for some time before we met." English **forces** this temporal precision.

Why this tense choice? To emphasize that both characters were doing the **same thing** — not a coincidence, but a shared experience of London life's rhythm.

2. Parallel Structure

The season was **drawing to its dusty end, and everyone I knew was arranging to go away.**

The season was drawing to its dusty end,

and everyone I knew was arranging to go away.

This is **parallel structure**: both clauses follow the same pattern:

- Subject + was + -ing (continuous)
- Verbs of movement toward an end (**drawing to**, **arranging to**)

The parallelism isn't just stylistic — it's semantic. Both the season and the people are moving toward **departure**. The sentence structure mirrors the content: everything is winding down together.

Why this parallel construction? Maugham wants to show that individual departures aren't random — they're part of London's seasonal rhythm. The grammar embodies the theme.

3. Subject-Verb Agreement

Perhaps Charles Strickland was dull judged by a **standard that demanded** above all things verbal scintillation; but his intelligence was adequate to his surroundings, and that is a passport, not only to reasonable success, but still more to happiness.

a standard that demanded above all things verbal scintillation

↑

relative pronoun that

that demanded is a **restrictive relative clause** modifying standard. The verb demanded agrees with the singular antecedent standard.

English places relative clauses **after** their antecedents (standard that demanded), while Korean places them **before** ("~하는 기준"). This **post-modification** pattern is fundamental to English syntax and creates the characteristic "building outward" structure of English sentences.

The relative clause here isn't just grammatical filler — it defines what kind of standard Maugham is talking about: one that prizes wit over substance.

4. Participial Construction

I pictured their lives, **troubled by no untoward adventure, honest, decent, and,** by reason of those two upstanding, pleasant children, so obviously destined to carry on the normal traditions of their race and station, not without significance.

I pictured their lives,

↓

troubled by no untoward adventure,

honest,

decent,

and [...] not without significance

troubled, honest, decent are **post-positioned modifiers** of their lives — a mix of past participles and adjectives. This creates a **cumulative effect**: each modifier adds another layer to the picture.

English allows this **stacking** of modifiers after the noun, building the description outward. The comma-separated series creates a rhythm of gradual revelation — we see their lives piece by piece.

Why this structure? Maugham wants us to **contemplate** this ordinary life slowly, appreciating its quiet virtues one by one. The grammar mirrors the act of careful observation.

5. Non-finite Verb

I pictured their lives, troubled by no untoward adventure, honest, decent, and, by reason of those two upstanding, pleasant children, so obviously destined **to carry on the normal traditions of their race and station, not without significance.**

so obviously destined to carry on the normal traditions

↑

infinitive of purpose

to carry on is an **infinitive of purpose** with **destined**. The **to** signals **futurity** and **direction** — these children are aimed toward continuing traditions.

not without significance is **litotes** (double negative for understatement). Instead of saying "significant," Maugham says "not without significance" — a more **restrained** claim. This is characteristic British understatement: affirming by denying the opposite.

Why the infinitive structure? It emphasizes **inevitability** and **purpose** — these children aren't just living; they're **destined** for something specific.

Chapter 8

1. Complex Tense

She asked me what I **had been doing** with myself during the summer, and with this help I managed to make some conversation till tea was brought in.

had been doing – past perfect continuous

The Korean "무엇을 하며 지냈는지" is simple past. But English **had been doing** is **past perfect continuous** — "what you had been continuously doing up to that point."

Timeline:

all summer [had been doing] → asked → (now)

ongoing activity

conversation moment

It's not simply **What did you do?** but **What had you been doing?** — focusing on the **continuity** of activity over that period. English embeds this temporal nuance directly in the verb form.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

I have been able to invest them with none of those characteristics which make the **persons of a book exist** with a real life of their own; and, wondering if the fault is mine, I rack my brains to remember idiosyncrasies which might lend them vividness.

persons of a book exist – plural subject + plural verb (grammatically correct)

The agreement is standard, but the word choice is telling. Maugham uses **persons** instead of the usual **characters**. This isn't accidental:

characters – fictional figures

persons – real human beings

By saying **persons of a book**, he emphasizes that fictional characters should feel like **actual people**. The phrase connects to "real life of their own" — not just plot devices, but beings with **independent vitality**. The grammar is simple; the literary ambition is complex.

3. Parallel Structure

There was just that shadowiness about them which you find in people whose lives are part of the social organism, so that they exist **in it and by it only**.

in it and by it only – parallel prepositional phrases + emphatic adverb

The parallel structure **in it and by it** creates a double dependency:

exist in it – spatial dependence (within the organism)

exist by it – causal dependence (through its agency)

only – no other way

Maugham places **only** at the end for emphasis. These people don't just live within society — they are **created by it**. The parallel prepositions (**in** and **by**) show **complete subordination**: they have no independent existence. The structure mirrors the meaning: just as the phrases depend on each other, these people depend entirely on their social context.

4. Passive Voice

I wondered if the poor devil **had been hammered** on the Stock Exchange or run over by an omnibus.

had been hammered – past perfect passive

Hammer in stock market context means "to suffer heavy losses" — literally "to be pounded." The passive voice shows he's the **victim** of market forces.

had been hammered – past perfect passive (already completed)

run over – past participle (hypothetical)

There's also a tense difference: **had been hammered** suggests something that **already happened** before the narrator's wondering, while **run over** is more immediate and hypothetical. The past perfect passive emphasizes that if it happened, it was **done to him** by external forces (the market), not something he did to himself.

5. Subjunctive

Finally it occurred to me that I would call **as though nothing had happened**, and send a message in by the maid asking Mrs. Strickland if it was convenient for her to see me.

as though nothing had happened – subjunctive with past perfect

As though triggers the subjunctive mood, and **had happened** is past perfect. This creates **counterfactual** meaning:

nothing had happened – contrary to fact

reality: something DID happen

The key here is **performance**. The narrator knows something happened but wants to **act as if** it didn't. The subjunctive **as though** grammatically encodes this pretense. English uses tense-shifting (past perfect for unreality) to signal the gap between what he knows and how he'll behave.

Chapter 9

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

What Colonel MacAndrew had told me seemed very improbable, and I suspected that Mrs. **Strickland, for reasons of her own, had concealed** from him some part of the facts.

Mrs. Strickland, for reasons of her own, had concealed

subject + interrupting phrase + verb

The phrase **for reasons of her own** **interrupts** the natural subject-verb flow. Maugham could have written **Mrs. Strickland had concealed the facts for her own reasons** — but he didn't.

Why the interruption? It forces the reader to **pause** and absorb "her own reasons" before reaching the action. The information hits us **before** we know what she concealed. This creates suspense through syntax.

English uses interrupting phrases to control **information flow** and **reading rhythm** — something Korean handles differently through word order and particles.

2. Complex Tense

I realised that he had come away with me in order to discuss once more what he **had been already discussing** for hours with his sister-in-law.

what he had been already discussing for hours

past perfect continuous + already

The past perfect continuous shows **ongoing action** in the past before another past event:

—[had been discussing]—▶ came away —▶ (now)

continuous for hours

past event

Maugham emphasizes the **duration and continuity**. They weren't just discussing — they had been **in the middle of** discussing for hours when he came away.

The placement of **already** in the middle intensifies this: the discussion had **already begun** and was **still ongoing**. The continuous aspect suggests the conversation isn't finished — it will likely continue.

3. Parallel Structure

It appeared that when everything was settled he would be **four or five hundred** pounds out of pocket.

four or five hundred pounds

number + or + number + noun

This A or B structure expresses **approximation** — somewhere between 400 and 500 pounds. It's more specific than "about 400" but still deliberately vague.

Why not **approximately 400-500** or **around four hundred**? The **or** construction feels more **conversational** and **spontaneous** — as if MacAndrew is **calculating in his head** while speaking.

This pattern (**two or three days**, **five or six people**) is distinctly English. It suggests the speaker is **estimating in real time** rather than giving a prepared figure.

4. Participial Construction

It appeared that **when everything was settled** he would be four or five hundred pounds out of pocket.

when everything was settled

temporal clause + subject + passive past

settled here is **passive voice** — things don't settle themselves, they **get settled** by someone or by circumstances. The passive suggests the **completion** of various arrangements.

Why past tense **was settled** instead of **is settled**? This creates **hypothetical completion** — MacAndrew is projecting into a future moment when everything **will have been** settled, but he expresses it as if it's already done.

The passive voice also removes agency — it doesn't matter **who** settles things, just that they **get settled**. This fits the context of financial arrangements being worked out.

5. Non-finite Verb

It was clear that a man after seventeen years of wedlock did not leave his wife without certain occurrences which must have led her **to suspect that all was not well with their married life**.

led her to suspect that all was not well

verb + object + to-infinitive + that-clause

lead someone to do something shows **causation through stages**:

occurrences → led her → to suspect → that all was not well

events caused the action the content of suspicion

The **to-infinitive** expresses **direction** — the events **pointed her toward** suspicion. This isn't direct causation (**made her suspect**) but **gradual realization**.

all was not well is **euphemistic** — a genteel way of saying "things were bad." The formal, understated language reflects the social class and era. Maugham captures the **linguistic restraint** of Edwardian middle-class discourse.

The passive voice **conceals the agent** — we don't know who called him away. This is deliberate vagueness from Mrs. Strickland, trying to reassure her children without revealing too much.

"Called away on business" sounds official and temporary, unlike "he left" which would imply his own choice. The passive makes it seem like external circumstances, not abandonment.

Past perfect because this "calling away" happened **before** the moment she spoke to the children.

4. Complex Tense

I foresaw that it would be difficult to make my exit with dignity, and I wished to goodness that I **had not returned** to London till Mrs. Strickland had composed her difficulties.

Past counterfactual expressing regret.

I wished... that I had not returned

present regret past perfect (but I did return)

English uses **temporal displacement** to signal unreality. **had not returned** is one step further into the past than simple past, creating the sense of "alternative timeline."

The speaker's psychology: already entangled in an awkward situation. The **till Mrs. Strickland had composed her difficulties** extends the counterfactual — he should have waited until **after** she sorted things out, but he didn't.

5. Participial Construction

I foresaw that it would be difficult to make my exit with dignity, and I wished to goodness that I had not returned to London **till Mrs. Strickland had composed her difficulties**.

Past perfect emphasizing completion.

till Mrs. Strickland had composed her difficulties

until (she had reached a state of having sorted everything out)

had composed doesn't just mean "was arranging" — it means "**had finished arranging**." The past perfect emphasizes the **completed state**, not the ongoing process.

till + past perfect creates a specific temporal relationship: "until that state of completion was reached." The speaker regrets not waiting until she had **fully resolved** everything, not just until she was working on it.

Chapter 11

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

It was a tall, shabby building, that cannot have been painted for years, and it had so bedraggled an air that the **houses on each side of it looked** neat and clean.

Korean naturally translates this as "양옆의 집들이" (houses on both sides), but the English structure creates a different visual flow:

the houses on each side of it looked neat and clean

subject: the houses

modifier: on each side of it (prepositional phrase post-modifying the subject)

verb: looked

Korean puts modifiers before nouns ("양옆의 집들"), but English can place them after. **houses on each side** forms one subject unit meaning "the houses that are on each side."

Maugham's choice of **the houses on each side of it** guides the reader's eye: start with the shabby building, then pan left and right to the neighboring houses. It's cinematic sequencing through syntax.

2. Inversion

There was a large wooden bedstead **on which was a billowing red eiderdown**, and there was a large wardrobe, a round table, a very small washstand, and two stuffed chairs covered with red rep.

This is **locative inversion** within a relative clause. Normal order would be:

Normal: A billowing red eiderdown was on it

Inverted: on which was a billowing red eiderdown

Korean naturally puts location first ("침대 위에 이불이 있었다"), but English typically requires subject-first order. Here, **on which** (location) precedes the verb **was**.

Why does Maugham invert? To emphasize the prepositional phrase **on which** and create focus on the **surface** of the bedstead. The inversion draws attention to the spatial relationship — **on top of** this bedstead lies the eiderdown. It's descriptive cinematography through syntax.

3. Parallel Structure

There was a large wooden bedstead on which was a billowing red eiderdown, and there **was a large wardrobe, a round**

table, a very small washstand, and two stuffed chairs covered with red rep.

This sentence creates **parallel structure** within the `there was` construction:

```
there was a large wardrobe,  
  
    a round table,  
  
    a very small washstand,  
  
and two stuffed chairs covered with red rep
```

The first three items are simple noun phrases, but the last one adds a past participle modifier: `covered with red rep`. This breaks the perfect parallelism deliberately.

Maugham could have written "two red stuffed chairs," but he chose `covered with red rep` to emphasize the **material and color**. The chairs aren't just red — they're **covered** in red rep (a ribbed fabric). This detail reinforces the room's overall red color scheme (red eiderdown, red chairs) and suggests something deliberately coordinated, perhaps artificially cozy.

4. Participial Construction

It was evident that she had been prepared to weep, **for she had provided herself with a sufficiency of handkerchiefs**; I admired her forethought, but in retrospect it made her tears perhaps less moving.

Here `provided` takes a **reflexive construction**:

```
she had provided herself with a sufficiency of handkerchiefs  
  
= she had equipped herself with enough handkerchiefs
```

The structure `provide oneself with` emphasizes **self-preparation**. She didn't just "bring" handkerchiefs — she **provided herself** with them, suggesting deliberate forethought.

The past perfect `had provided` is crucial: this preparation happened **before** the narrator's visit. She came pre-equipped for tears.

Maugham's irony: genuine grief is spontaneous, but she **planned** to weep. The formal phrase `provide oneself with` (rather than simple "brought") underscores this calculated preparation. The clinical tone matches the narrator's growing skepticism about her emotional authenticity.

5. Complex Tense

It was a tall, shabby building, that cannot have been painted for years, and it **had so bedraggled** an air that the houses on each side of it looked neat and clean.

This uses the **emphatic so + adjective + a/an + noun** construction:

Normal: it had a very bedraggled air

Emphatic: it had so bedraggled an air

This structure (so bedraggled an air) is equivalent to such a bedraggled air but more emphatic. The inversion of so + adjective before the article creates stronger emphasis than the normal order.

so + bedraggled + an + air

= such an extremely bedraggled air

Maugham chooses this construction to **maximize** the building's shabbiness. Simple a bedraggled air would be ordinary description, but so bedraggled an air suggests the shabbiness is so extreme that it makes neighboring buildings look pristine by contrast. The syntax mirrors the semantic intensity.

Chapter 12

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

The eloquent **phrases I had arranged, pathetic or indignant, seemed** out of place on the Avenue de Clichy.

The eloquent phrases [I had arranged], pathetic or indignant, seemed out of place

subject [relative clause] appositive modifier verb

The subject **phrases** gets **double modification** before reaching the verb **seemed**. The relative clause **I had arranged** and the appositive **pathetic or indignant** stretch the subject out.

This creates a structural awkwardness that **mirrors the content** — the prepared phrases don't fit the situation, and the sentence structure itself feels stretched and uncomfortable. Maugham uses grammar to embody meaning: the form enacts the inappropriateness it describes.

2. Parallel Structure

There were clerks and shopgirls; old fellows who might have stepped out of the pages of Honore de **Balzac; members, male and female**, of the professions which make their profit of the frailties of mankind.

There were clerks and shopgirls;

old fellows who might have stepped out...;

members, male and female, of the professions...

Semicolons link **parallel structures** that share the "There were + noun phrase" pattern, but each clause grows longer and more complex.

The effect is cinematic — like a **camera panning** across the café. Each semicolon marks a shift in focus, and the increasing length of each clause mirrors the deepening observation. The structure enacts the act of looking around and taking in more detail with each glance.

3. Relative Clause

I might have spoken of the economic position of woman, of the contract, tacit and overt, **which a man accepts by his marriage**, and of much else; but I felt that there was only one point which really signified.

the contract, tacit and overt, [which a man accepts by his marriage]

antecedent insertion [relative clause - which as object]

Which functions as the **object** in the relative clause: "a man accepts [the contract] by his marriage" → "which a man accepts by his marriage."

The insertion of **tacit and overt** between the antecedent and the relative clause creates a **layered revelation**. First we get "contract," then its dual nature ("tacit and overt"), then how it's acquired ("which a man accepts by his marriage"). The structure mirrors the complexity of marriage itself — explicit yet implicit, formal yet assumed.

4. Participial Construction

I wondered what a stranger would have taken him to be, **sitting there in his old Norfolk jacket and his unbrushed bowler**; his trousers were baggy, his hands were not clean; and his face, with the red stubble of the unshaved chin, the little eyes, and the large, aggressive nose, was uncouth and coarse.

I wondered what a stranger would have taken him to be,

[sitting there in his old Norfolk jacket and his unbrushed bowler]

present participle - simultaneous description

The present participle **sitting** creates a **frozen frame** — we see Strickland as he sits, with all the visual details captured in that moment.

This isn't just grammar; it's **cinematic technique**. The participle phrase works like a camera that holds on a subject while cataloging the details: old jacket, unbrushed hat. The structure creates a **tableau** that lets the reader study Strickland as the narrator studies him.

5. Passive Voice

It **must be remembered** that I was very young, and I looked upon him as a middle-aged man.

It must be remembered that I was very young

modal + be + past participle = deontic passive

The modal passive **must be remembered** creates **objective distance**. Instead of "Please remember that I was young" (direct appeal), it becomes "It must be remembered" (impersonal necessity).

This is the grammar of **mild embarrassment**. The narrator wants to excuse his younger self's behavior, but doesn't want to plead directly. The passive voice lets him make the request while maintaining dignity — the information "must" be considered, as if it's a logical requirement rather than a personal plea.

Chapter 13

1. Subjunctive

I think perhaps I should have made a show of the indignation I really felt, and I am sure **that Colonel MacAndrew at least would have thought well of me if I had been able to report my stout refusal to sit at the same table with a man of such character.**

This sentence layers **two counterfactuals**. The narrator expresses a double regret:

I should have made a show – I ought to have done it (but didn't)
would have thought well – he would have approved (but had no chance)
if I had been able to report – if I could have reported (but couldn't)

Should have + pp marks obligation unfulfilled. Would have + pp marks consequence unrealized. The **if** clause explains why the consequence never materialized.

The narrator regrets not showing moral indignation, while simultaneously imagining how Colonel MacAndrew would have reacted **if** he had been able to report such a principled stance. It's a **double remove** from reality — a hypothetical reaction to a hypothetical action.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

But the **fear of not being able to carry it through effectively has always made** me shy of assuming the moral attitude; and in this case the certainty that my sentiments would be lost on Strickland made it peculiarly embarrassing to utter them.

This demonstrates **complex subject-verb agreement** across a long prepositional phrase:

The fear of not being able to carry it through effectively
↓
has always made me shy

The grammatical subject is **fear** (singular), but it's followed by a long prepositional phrase. The verb **has made** must agree with **fear**, not with the closer words in the phrase.

fear (singular) → **has made** (singular)

Despite the intervening phrase **of not being able to carry it through effectively**, the grammatical core remains **fear has made**. Maugham uses this structure to capture the narrator's **psychological complexity** — wanting to take a moral stance but fearing he can't pull it off convincingly.

3. Parallel Structure

I paid for what we had drunk, and we made our way to a cheap **restaurant, crowded and gay**, where we dined with pleasure.

Here **crowded and gay** forms a **parallel pair** of adjectives modifying **restaurant**:

restaurant, crowded and gay, where...

↑

two adjectives in parallel describing the restaurant

The **and** explicitly marks **equal status** between the two descriptors. The commas set off this description as **additional information** — we could remove it and still have a complete sentence.

Gay here means "cheerful, lively" (1919 usage). **Crowded** (physical condition) and **gay** (atmosphere) are balanced to capture both the **external state and internal mood** of the restaurant. This parallel structure creates **rhythmic balance** in English prose style.

4. Relative Clause

I paid for what we had drunk, and we made our way to a cheap restaurant, crowded and gay, **where we dined with pleasure**.

The relative adverb **where** introduces a **locative relative clause**:

a cheap restaurant... where we dined with pleasure

↑

place + action that happened there

Where = "in which" — it takes the antecedent noun (restaurant) and launches a new clause describing what happened at that location.

The structural effect: instead of flat narration ("we ate at a restaurant"), Maugham **layers** the restaurant's characteristics (crowded and gay) with the experience there (dined with pleasure). The **where** clause adds **dimensionality** — we don't just know what they did, but how the place shaped the experience.

5. Participial Construction

In a little while she went out, but **in a minute returned and, passing our table**, very politely asked us to buy her something to drink.

Here **passing our table** is a **present participial phrase** showing simultaneous action:

returned and, passing our table, very politely asked

↑

while passing by, she asked

The participial phrase captures **temporal overlap** — she asked while passing. The main verbs are **returned and asked**; **passing** describes the manner or circumstance of the asking.

The commas set off **passing our table** as **additional information** about how the action unfolded. Without the participial phrase, we'd have bare sequence: "returned and asked." With it, we get **cinematic flow** — we see her movement through the space as she makes her request.

Chapter 14

1. Complex Tense

I tried to persuade myself that an obscure feeling of revolt **had been gradually coming** to a head in his slow mind, but to challenge this was the undoubted fact that he had never shown any impatience with the monotony of his life.

had been gradually coming ← past perfect continuous

had never shown ← past perfect

Past perfect continuous (had been + ~ing) captures an **ongoing process** leading up to a past moment. The narrator speculates that rebellion had been **slowly, continuously** building in Strickland's mind.

But immediately after, **had never shown** (past perfect) contradicts this theory. Both verbs share the same temporal frame (**had**), but one emphasizes **duration** while the other emphasizes **completion**. The contrast between continuous and simple perfect highlights the clash between speculation and fact.

Maugham uses tense to dramatize the narrator's internal debate — the progressive suggests gradual change, the simple perfect insists on static behavior.

2. Subjunctive

If, seized by an intolerable boredom, he had determined to be a painter merely to break with irksome ties, it would have been comprehensible, and commonplace; but commonplace is precisely what I felt he was not.

If he had determined ... it would have been comprehensible

Classic past counterfactual: "If A had happened, B would have happened" — but neither A nor B actually occurred.

Maugham's logic: If Strickland became a painter **merely from boredom**, that would have been ordinary. But he's not ordinary. Therefore, boredom was **not** his motive.

English pushes both verbs two steps back in time (**had pp** + **would have pp**) to create distance from reality. This temporal distance **is** the hint that "this didn't happen." The counterfactual structure itself delivers the argument: since he's not commonplace, this commonplace explanation must be wrong.

3. Subject-Verb Agreement

It was this: I asked myself whether there was not in his soul some deep-rooted instinct of creation, which the **circumstances of his life had obscured**, but which grew relentlessly, as a cancer may grow in the living tissues, till at last it took possession of his whole being and forced him irresistibly to action.

some deep-rooted instinct ... which the circumstances had obscured

which grew relentlessly

till it took possession

and forced him

Complex subject with cascading relative clauses. The sentence **builds forward**: **instinct** → **which had obscured** → **which grew** → **till it took** → **and forced**. Like a camera slowly zooming in, it moves from the instinct's identity to its destructive action.

English stacks information **after** the noun, creating suspense. We start with "some instinct" and gradually discover what it did. The structure mirrors the content — just as the instinct grew and took possession, the sentence grows and takes possession of our attention through accumulating clauses.

4. Parallel Structure

The cuckoo lays its egg in the strange bird's nest, and when the young one is hatched it **shoulders its foster-brothers out and breaks at last the nest that has sheltered it**.

shoulders its foster-brothers out and breaks at last the nest

Parallel verbs connected by **and**, but with temporal sequence: first **shoulders out**, then **breaks**. The phrase **at last** makes the progression explicit.

This isn't just coordination — it's **causation**. The cuckoo first displaces its competitors, then destroys the very structure that sheltered it. The parallel structure mirrors the two-stage destruction.

Maugham uses this as a metaphor for Strickland: first he pushes away his family members (**shoulders out**), then he destroys the institution of family itself (**breaks the nest**). The grammar of the metaphor becomes the grammar of Strickland's behavior.

5. Participial Construction

When I had asked him what first gave him the idea of being a painter, he was unable or unwilling to tell me.

When I had asked him ... he was unable or unwilling

Past perfect (**had asked**) vs. simple past (**was unable**). The question came **first**, his inability/refusal came **after**. The temporal layering shows cause and effect.

unable or unwilling — the narrator can't tell whether it's a matter of **capacity** or **choice**. This uncertainty captures the enigma of Strickland. Can't he explain his motivation, or won't he?

The past perfect emphasizes that the asking happened **before** the moment being described, setting up the context for Strickland's mysterious response. The tense structure mirrors the investigative process — first the question, then the puzzling non-answer.

Chapter 15

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Mrs. Strickland's sister was older than she, not unlike her, but more faded; and she had the efficient air, as though she carried the British Empire in her pocket, which the **wives of senior officers acquire** from the consciousness of belonging to a superior caste.

the wives of senior officers acquire

subject: the wives (plural)

verb: acquire (plural form)

The agreement is straightforward, but notice the **complex subject within the relative clause**. The structure is **which [the wives of senior officers] acquire** — **which** is the object, and the actual subject **the wives** controls the verb.

Why Maugham chose this long relative clause: to emphasize that this "efficient air" isn't personal quality but **class consciousness**. The syntax mirrors the meaning — it's not about individual women, but about wives as a social category.

2. Relative Clause

She hated the Guards, **whom she thought conceited**, and she could not trust herself to speak of their ladies, who were so remiss in calling.

the Guards, whom she thought conceited

object case: whom (people)

structure: she thought [whom] conceited

The structure is **think + object + complement**: **she thought them conceited** becomes **whom she thought conceited**. The **whom** is the object of **thought**, and **conceited** is the object complement.

Maugham's choice of **whom** (rather than colloquial **who**) matches the formal register — fitting for a character conscious of social hierarchy. The syntax reflects the speaker's class awareness.

3. Parallel Structure

Mrs. MacAndrew shared the common opinion of her sex that a man **is always a brute to leave a woman who is attached to him, but that a woman is much to blame if he does**.

that a man is always a brute to leave...

but that a woman is much to blame if...

parallel: that-clause + that-clause

structure: identical grammatical status

The **perfect parallelism** exposes the **double standard**. Two grammatically equal clauses present logically contradictory ideas: "man is always a brute" vs "woman is much to blame."

Maugham uses the parallel structure to highlight the contradiction — if the syntax is balanced, why isn't the logic? The grammar becomes a mirror for the hypocrisy.

4. Subjunctive

Do you mean **that you could have forgiven him if he'd left you for a woman, but not if he's left you for an idea?**

if he'd left you for a woman (past perfect)

vs

if he's left you for an idea (present perfect)

The **tense shift** is crucial:

- **had left** — past counterfactual (unreal situation)
- **has left** — present perfect (actual situation)

Maugham distinguishes between hypothetical ("if that had happened, but it didn't") and actual ("since this has happened"). The grammar separates the imagined scenario from reality.

The speaker is contrasting a counterfactual forgiveness with the actual unforgivable situation.

5. Participial Construction

She had put some order into the drawing-room by now, **her housewifely instincts having got the better of her dismay**; and it no longer bore that deserted look, like a furnished house long to let, which I had noticed on my first visit after the catastrophe.

her housewifely instincts having got the better of her dismay

absolute construction (independent participial phrase)

subject: her housewifely instincts

participle: having got

This **absolute construction** provides background explanation alongside the main action. It's like a **camera zoom-out** — the main clause shows what she did, the participial phrase shows why she could do it.

Maugham layers action and psychology in one sentence: external order reflects internal recovery. The syntax creates **dimensional depth** — we see both the tidied room and the mind that tidied it.

Chapter 16

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Whenever she went out—and **compassion for her misadventure made** her friends eager to entertain her—she bore a demeanour that was perfect.

The subject here is **compassion**, not **her friends**. "Compassion made her friends eager" — emotion drives action.

compassion for her misadventure made her friends eager to entertain her

subject: compassion

verb: made

object: her friends

object complement: eager to entertain her

Maugham could have written "her friends were eager to entertain her out of compassion." Instead, he makes **compassion** the grammatical agent. The friends aren't acting independently — they're being **moved** by an emotion. Grammar becomes psychology.

2. Relative Clause

They said that Charles Strickland had become infatuated with a French dancer, **whom he had first seen in the ballet at the Empire**, and had accompanied her to Paris.

Whom refers back to **dancer** and serves as the object of **had first seen**.

a French dancer, whom he had first seen in the ballet

= he had first seen whom (= the dancer) in the ballet

English builds information **progressively**: "a French dancer" → "whom he had first seen" → "at the Empire." Each clause adds a layer. The reader discovers the dancer's identity alongside the narrator's memory. The relative clause doesn't just modify — it **unfolds** the story.

3. Subjunctive

She changed the conversation **as though it were a matter to which she attached no importance**.

Were in **as though it were** is subjunctive — contrary to fact. She's acting **as if** it doesn't matter, but it clearly does.

as though it were a matter (subjunctive – contrary to reality)

vs

as though it was a matter (indicative – stating fact)

The subjunctive **were** grammatically flags the performance. Mrs. Strickland's perfect acting: treating her deepest wound as if it were trivial. The verb form captures the **gap** between feeling and display.

4. Complex Tense

They said that Charles Strickland **had become infatuated** with a French dancer, whom he had first seen in the ballet at the Empire, and had accompanied her to Paris.

Three consecutive past perfects: **had become**, **had first seen**, **had accompanied**. All happened before the moment of **said**.

—[had become / had seen / had accompanied]—▶ said —▶ (now)

remote past

past

The repeated past perfect doesn't just mark sequence — it marks **distance from truth**. This is hearsay, rumor, secondhand narrative. The further back the tense, the further from direct knowledge. Grammar becomes epistemology: how do we know what we know?

5. Parallel Structure

She was brave, but not too obviously; **cheerful, but not brazenly**; and she seemed more anxious to listen to the troubles of others than to discuss her own.

Three perfectly parallel adjective phrases:

brave, but not too obviously

cheerful, but not brazenly

[anxious to listen] rather than [to discuss]

Each follows the pattern: positive quality + restraint. The **rhythm** mirrors Mrs. Strickland's performance — everything measured, nothing excessive. The parallel structure doesn't just describe her behavior; it **enacts** it. Grammatical control reflects emotional control.

Chapter 17

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

It is not true that suffering ennobles the character; happiness does that sometimes, but suffering, for the most part, makes men petty and vindictive.

It is not true [that suffering ennobles the character]

↑

↑

dummy subject

real subject (that-clause)

Maugham could have written That suffering ennobles the character is not true, but he didn't. English prefers to **postpone heavy subjects**. The It holds the grammatical position while the real subject waits at the end.

More importantly, this creates **emphasis through sequencing**. "It is not true" comes first — the judgment precedes the content. We hear Maugham's definitive "No" before we even know what he's rejecting. This front-loading of negation gives the sentence its decisive tone.

The structure mirrors the rhetorical move: first the contradiction, then the explanation of what's being contradicted.

2. Parallel Structure

We were like tram-cars running on their lines from terminus to terminus, and it was possible to calculate within small limits the number of passengers they would carry.

We were like tram-cars running..., and it was possible to calculate...

↑

↑

metaphor

consequence/implication

This and isn't just additive — it's **consequential**. The first clause establishes a metaphor; the second clause unpacks what that metaphor implies.

The logic: tram-cars run on fixed lines → therefore their passenger load is predictable. The parallel structure carries a **cause-and-effect relationship** disguised as simple coordination.

And here means "and therefore" or "and consequently." Maugham gives us the metaphor, then immediately demonstrates why it's apt. The grammatical parallelism serves the **argumentative structure** — metaphor followed by its logical extension.

3. Relative Clause

She could not help bringing into her conversation the names of people she knew which would satisfy you that she had not sunk in the social scale.

the names of people [she knew] which would satisfy you

↑

↑

relative clause 1 relative clause 2

The **which** refers to **names**, not **people**. "The names would satisfy you that she hadn't fallen socially."

This creates a subtle but important distinction. It's not the people themselves, but the **act of name-dropping** — the strategic deployment of these names in conversation — that serves as social proof.

The grammar mirrors the psychology: she weaponizes the names. The **which** clause reveals her **calculated use** of social connections as conversational currency. The relative pronoun picks up the most relevant antecedent for the meaning, even if it's not the closest grammatically.

4. It-Cleft / Formal Subject

It is not true that suffering ennobles the character; happiness does that sometimes, but suffering, for the most part, makes men petty and vindictive.

Same structure as [1], but notice the **scope of negation**:

It is not true [that suffering ennobles the character]

Compare:

- **It is not true that suffering ennobles** → "The claim itself is false"
- **It is true that suffering does not ennoble** → "The opposite claim is true"

Maugham chooses the first. He's not just asserting the opposite; he's **rejecting the entire premise**. The negation has wider scope — it targets the popular belief as a whole, not just its truth value.

This creates a more confrontational tone. Instead of "Actually, suffering doesn't ennoble," we get "That whole idea about suffering? Wrong."

5. Complex Tense

I **had not seen** her for some time, and I noticed changes in her; it was not only that she was older, thinner, and more lined; I think her character had altered.

I had not seen her for some time ← remote past (background)

I noticed changes ← simple past (focal point)

The past perfect **had not seen** establishes the **duration of absence** as background. Then **noticed** brings us to the moment of recognition.

—[had not seen]—▶ noticed —▶ (now)

remote past

past

This creates **temporal perspective**. The long period of not seeing her recedes into the background, while the moment of noticing her changes comes into focus. The tense shift mirrors the psychological shift — from the extended absence to the sharp recognition of change.

Maugham uses grammar to create **narrative depth** — the way memory works, with some events as backdrop and others as focal points.

Chapter 18

1. Relative Clause

Dirk Stroeve was one of those persons **whom, according to your character, you cannot think of without derisive laughter or an embarrassed shrug of the shoulders.**

The relative pronoun **whom** is separated from its verb by the insertion **according to your character**.

Dirk Stroeve was one of those persons whom [...] you cannot think of

↑

object of "think of"

English pulls **whom** to the front of the relative clause, even though it's the object of **think of** at the end. The grammatical connection holds across the distance.

Maugham inserts **according to your character** to emphasize that this judgment **depends on the observer**. He breaks the relative clause structure to foreground this crucial condition.

2. Parallel Structure

His soul palpitating with love of art, he painted the models who hung about the stairway of Bernini in the Piazza de Spagna, undaunted by their obvious picturesqueness; and his studio was full of canvases on which were portrayed moustachioed, large-eyed peasants in peaked hats, **urchins in becoming rags, and women in bright petticoats.**

Three noun phrases in perfect parallel:

moustachioed, large-eyed peasants in peaked hats

urchins in becoming rags

women in bright petticoats

Each follows "adjective + noun + prepositional phrase." The structural repetition mirrors the **predictable pattern** of Stroeve's paintings.

Maugham uses this parallel structure to show that Stroeve's art is formulaic repetition. The grammar mimics the artistic cliché — form follows content.

3. Subject-Verb Agreement

And I think that was the **vision that had remained** with him always, dazzling his eyes so that he could not see the truth; and notwithstanding the brutality of fact, he continued to see with the eyes of the spirit an Italy of romantic brigands and picturesque ruins.

The relative pronoun **that** agrees with its singular antecedent **vision**:

the vision that had remained with him

↑

↑

singular singular verb

The key is the tense choice. **had remained** (past perfect) suggests the vision **had been persisting** over time, not just a simple past event. It emphasizes the **duration** of Stroeve's delusion.

Maugham uses the past perfect to show this wasn't a momentary vision, but a **persistent** one that had been shaping Stroeve's perception all along.

4. Complex Tense

He was constantly wounded, and yet his good-nature was such that he could not bear malice: the viper might sting him, but he never learned by experience, and **had no sooner recovered** from his pain than he tenderly placed it once more in his bosom.

had no sooner ... than is an idiom meaning "as soon as":

had no sooner recovered from his pain than he tenderly placed it

↑

↑

past perfect

simple past

English uses different tenses to show **sequence** — the past perfect (**had recovered**) precedes the simple past (**placed**).

This construction emphasizes Stroeve's **cyclical pattern**: hurt → recover → hurt again. The immediacy of **no sooner ... than** highlights his inability to learn — he doesn't even give himself time to process the experience.

5. Participial Construction

His soul palpitating with love of art, he painted the models who hung about the stairway of Bernini in the Piazza de Spagna, undaunted by their obvious picturesqueness; and his studio was full of canvases on which were portrayed moustachioed, large-eyed peasants in peaked hats, urchins in becoming rags, and women in bright petticoats.

This is an absolute construction (independent participial phrase):

His soul palpitating with love of art, he painted the models

↑

↑

subject of participle

subject of main clause

His soul is the subject of the participle, while **he** is the subject of the main clause. They're different entities, which makes this an absolute construction.

Maugham uses this structure to separate Stroeve's **inner passion** from his **actual output**. His soul palpitates with artistic love, but his paintings remain clichéd. The grammar mirrors the disconnect between aspiration and achievement.

Chapter 19

1. Complex Tense

I discovered that in Paris he **had been painting** just the same stale, obviously picturesque things that he had painted for years in Rome.

had been painting – past perfect continuous (ongoing at that point)

had painted – past perfect (completed experience)

The Korean translation flattens both to "그려왔던," but English distinguishes **temporal texture**. **Had been painting** means "was in the middle of painting when I discovered this" — the **-ing** adds immediacy, as if catching him brush in hand.

Had painted for years is simple past perfect — completed experience. Within one sentence, Maugham shifts from **past perfect continuous** → **past perfect**. English progressive isn't just "ongoing" — it's **being there in the moment**.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

Poor pantaloons, he was not an object to excite love, but the **smile in her eyes was** affectionate, and it was possible that her reserve concealed a very deep feeling.

the smile in her eyes was affectionate

↑

singular subject (smile) + singular verb (was)

The subject is **smile** (singular), not **eyes** (plural). **In her eyes** is a prepositional phrase modifying **smile**. Korean uses particles ("미소가") to mark subjects, but English relies on word order.

Maugham's choice of **the smile in her eyes** is precise — the smile isn't **on** her face but **contained within** her eyes. A smile can live in the eyes even when the mouth doesn't move.

3. Relative Clause

But when Stroeve spoke of Chardin it was not without reason, and she reminded me curiously of that pleasant housewife in her mob-cap and apron **whom the great painter has immortalised**.

that pleasant housewife ... whom the great painter has immortalised

↑

objective case relative pronoun

Whom is formal English. In speech, we'd say **who**, but Maugham chooses **whom** for **register**.

the painter immortalised [her] → whom the painter has immortalised

object

objective relative pronoun

Using **whom** elevates the prose to literary formality. It's nearly extinct in modern English, but in 1919, it marked educated writing. The choice signals that we're reading **literature**, not conversation.

4. Subjunctive

He sat me down in a chair, patting me **as though I were a cushion, pressed cigars upon me, cakes, wine.**

as though I were a cushion

↑

subjunctive past (were)

As though triggers the subjunctive. Even with first person singular, it's **were**, not **was**. The verb form itself signals **unreality** — I am not actually a cushion.

Pressed cigars upon me, cakes, wine — one verb (**pressed**) governs three objects. The comma-separated list captures Stroeve's **breathless hospitality**. The syntax mimics his flustered eagerness.

5. Parallel Structure

Her hair, brown and abundant, was plainly done, her face **was very pale, and her features were good without being distinguished.**

Her hair ... was plainly done,

her face was very pale, and

her features were good

Three clauses in **identical structure**: **subject + be verb + complement**. The parallel syntax creates a rhythm of **methodical observation**. Each clause flows at the same pace, suggesting the narrator is **systematically** taking her in.

Parallel structure isn't just listing — it's **choreographing the gaze**. The reader's eye moves as the narrator's does: hair → face → features.

Chapter 20

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Dirk Stroeve agreed to fetch me on the following evening and take me to the **café at which Strickland was** most likely to be found.

Preposition + which structure. **at which** transforms **at the café** into a relative clause.

the café [at which Strickland was most likely to be found]

= the café [where Strickland was most likely to be found]

= the café [Strickland was most likely to be found at]

at which is more formal than **where** or ending with a preposition. Maugham chooses this elevated register because the narrator maintains **observer distance**. The formal **at which** instead of casual **where** reflects the psychological distance from Strickland.

2. Subjunctive

He wore the same suit that I had seen him in five years before; it was torn and stained, threadbare, and it hung upon him loosely, **as though it had been made for someone else**.

as though + past perfect subjunctive. **had been made** expresses a counterfactual situation.

as though it had been made for someone else

(but it was actually made for him, just fits poorly)

English pushes the tense **one step back** to signal unreality. **as if it was made** would be simple speculation, but **as though it had been made** indicates a definite contrary-to-fact situation.

This structure lets Maugham **visualize** Strickland's shabbiness through grammatical contrast between appearance and reality.

3. Complex Tense

The fact that he **had never changed** suggested a sluggishness of habit which seemed to me characteristic.

Past perfect + never combination. **had never changed** indicates **continuous absence** up to a past reference point.

————[had never changed]————▶ suggested —▶ (now)

from remote past

past moment

never changed would be a simple fact, but had never changed emphasizes that this unchanging nature existed **before** the narrator's moment of observation.

Maugham uses this structure to show Strickland's **stubborn consistency** with temporal depth.

4. Participial Construction

I ordered something to drink, and waited quietly **till Strickland had finished**.

till + past perfect. had finished marks the precise **completion point** that ends the waiting.

waited quietly —————▶ [till Strickland had finished]

continuous action

completed state

English distinguishes **till he finished** from **till he had finished**. The past perfect emphasizes **completion** — not just "when he finished" but "when he had completely finished."

Maugham uses past perfect to precisely express that the narrator's waiting ended only after Strickland's **complete completion**.

5. Parallel Structure

I was interested to learn that it was the same as that at which **Strickland and I** had drunk absinthe

Parallel structure with **Strickland and I**. English courtesy puts **the other person first**.

Strickland and I (✓)

I and Strickland (X - impolite)

This is **social convention**, not grammar. Interesting irony: the narrator **resents** Strickland yet linguistically defers to him. Maugham uses this convention to show the narrator's **cultivated manners** alongside his inner complexity.

Chapter 21

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

When in luck he was able to make a tidy sum; but the **shabbiness of his clothes at last frightened** the sight-seers, and he could not find people adventurous enough to trust themselves to him.

The subject here is **the shabbiness of his clothes** — an abstract concept performing a concrete action:

the shabbiness of his clothes ← abstract concept

frightened the sight-seers ← concrete action

This is **personification** through grammar. The shabbiness itself actively frightens people. English readily makes inanimate concepts into agents of action, while Korean tends to use passive constructions ("옷차림이 겁주게 되어" — "the clothes came to frighten"). English grammar encourages this directness: abstract nouns can be powerful subjects.

2. Complex Tense

And then, all of a sudden you can't stand it any more, and you notice that all the time your feet **have been walking** in the mud.

The present perfect continuous **have been walking** captures both **duration** and **present relevance**:

all the time your feet have been walking

—————▶ notice (now)

ongoing process

Not just **walked** (finished) or **have walked** (experience), but **have been walking** — **still ongoing**. The feet were walking in mud right up to the moment of realization. The continuous aspect intensifies the despair: it wasn't a single step, but an unbroken process of degradation.

3. Relative Clause

And you find some woman, coarse and low and vulgar, some beastly creature **in whom all the horror of sex is blatant**, and you fall upon her like a wild animal.

in whom uses preposition + relative pronoun, treating the woman as a **container** for horror:

some beastly creature in whom all the horror of sex is blatant

↑

preposition + relative pronoun

English builds **climactically**: creature → beastly creature → creature in whom horror is blatant. Each modifier intensifies the revulsion. The **in whom** isn't just grammatical — it's a **spatial metaphor**. The horror doesn't just characterize her; it inhabits her, making her a vessel of disgust.

4. Parallel Structure

He ate with appetite, but was indifferent to what he ate; to him it **was only food that he devoured to still the pangs of hunger; and when no food was to be had he seemed capable of doing without**.

This creates **contrastive parallelism** showing Strickland's contradictory relationship with food:

```
ate with appetite      BUT   was indifferent to what he ate

it was only food       to still the pangs of hunger

when no food was to be had he seemed capable of doing without
```

Each clause structurally mirrors and contradicts the previous one: **ate/was**, **food/hunger**, **had/without**. The parallel structure emphasizes the paradox — he eats with appetite but without preference, treats food as mere fuel, yet can do without it entirely. The grammar embodies his **primitive pragmatism**.

5. Subjunctive

Strickland did not speak for a long time, but his eyes shone strangely, **as though he saw something that kindled his soul to ecstasy**.

as though he saw uses the subjunctive past — present tense shifted to past to signal **unreality**:

```
as though he saw something ← past form for present situation

(reality: as though he sees something)
```

The past tense creates **psychological distance** from reality. By using **saw** instead of **sees**, the grammar signals this isn't literal sight but **visionary experience**. What Strickland sees exists in the realm of artistic imagination, not physical reality. The subjunctive makes the mystical tangible through tense.

Chapter 22

1. Relative Clause

I read a page here and there, and made acquaintance with a great many authors **whom I was content to know thus desultorily**.

The relative pronoun **whom** is nearly extinct in modern English. **who** would be grammatically fine, but Maugham chose **whom**.

authors whom I was content to know

↑

objective case (object of 'know')

This is a stylistic choice — **whom** signals formal register, suggesting the narrator is a cultivated reader. The contrast with **desultorily** (carelessly, randomly) is telling: formal grammar meets casual reading habits, showing the narrator's modest self-presentation despite his literary sophistication.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

Sometimes he embarrassed his wife, and the only **time I saw her put out of countenance was** when he insisted on telling me that he had taken a purge, and went into somewhat realistic details on the subject.

Complex subject-verb agreement. The actual subject is **time**, and the verb is **was**, but they're separated by a long relative clause.

the only time [I saw her put out of countenance] was when...

↑subject

↑relative clause

↑verb

The relative clause **I saw her put out of countenance** modifies **time**. The phrase **put out of countenance** (to embarrass, disconcert) is archaic but elegant — typical of Maugham's formal register. The structure mirrors the content: just as the wife's composure was disrupted, the sentence structure disrupts the normal subject-verb proximity.

3. Parallel Structure

I read a page **here and there**, and made acquaintance with a great many authors whom I was content to know thus desultorily.

Here and there isn't just parallel structure — it's an idiom expressing **scattered, random reading**.

I read a page here and there

↑

↑

The phrase emphasizes **unsystematic** approach — not reading books cover to cover, but sampling randomly. It pairs with **desultorily** to double-emphasize the narrator's casual reading style.

Yet this apparent modesty is actually a boast: the narrator has read so widely that he can afford to be casual about it. The structure mirrors the content — scattered words describing scattered reading.

4. Complex Tense

We went one day to the picture-dealer in whose shop Stroeve thought he could show me at least two or three of Strickland's pictures, but when we arrived were told that Strickland himself **had taken** them away.

The past perfect **had taken** places Strickland's action **before** the simple past **arrived**.

—[Strickland had taken them away]—► we arrived —► (now)

remote past

past

The tense structure embeds the disappointment: they arrived hoping to see the paintings, but the past perfect signals those hopes were already dashed before they got there. The **temporal layering** creates dramatic irony — the reader feels the letdown through grammar itself.

had taken them away — the finality of the past perfect matches the finality of the empty gallery.

5. Passive Voice

We went one day to the picture-dealer in whose shop Stroeve thought he could show me at least two or three of Strickland's pictures, but when we arrived **were told** that Strickland himself had taken them away.

The passive **were told** **omits the agent** — we don't know who told them.

we arrived [and] were told that...

↑active

↑passive (agent omitted)

This creates **impersonal tone** — probably a gallery employee spoke, but Maugham focuses on the **information itself** rather than its source. The shift from active **arrived** to passive **were told** mirrors the situation: they came actively seeking, but became passive recipients of disappointing news.

The agentless passive makes the news feel like an impersonal fact rather than someone's communication.

Chapter 23

1. Subjunctive

I should have liked you better if you hadn't made that ingenuous appeal to my sympathies."

I should have liked you better if you hadn't made that appeal

↑

↑

past counterfactual

past counterfactual

English pushes the tense **two steps back** to signal unreality. `should have liked` = `would have liked` in meaning. In 19th/early 20th century English, first person often used `should`.

The irony is key: the speaker says "I would have liked you better if you hadn't appealed to my sympathies," but the implication is that the appeal actually created **distance**. The counterfactual captures this psychological complexity in a single grammatical move.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

He and his wife made a picture which the imagination gratefully dwelt upon, and the simplicity of his love for her had a deliberate grace.

the simplicity of his love for her had a deliberate grace

↑

↑

grammatical subject

singular verb

The subject is `the simplicity`, not `love`. The prepositional phrase `of his love for her` modifies `simplicity`. English requires verb agreement with the **grammatical head**, not the semantic focus.

Even when the meaning centers on "love," the grammar centers on "simplicity." This is why we get singular `had` rather than plural. English prioritizes structural relationships over semantic weight in agreement.

3. Parallel Structure

He and his wife made a picture which the imagination gratefully dwelt upon, and the simplicity of his love for her had a deliberate grace.

He and his wife made a picture ... and the simplicity ... had a grace

↑

↑

compound subject + verb

single subject + verb

Two independent clauses joined by **and** in **coordinate structure**. The first clause has a compound subject (**He and his wife**), the second a single subject (**the simplicity**).

The parallel structure creates **rhythm** — the two clauses balance each other in length and weight. Maugham shows the couple's harmony not just in content but in **sentence architecture**. The coordination mirrors the marital coordination he's describing.

4. Participial Construction

He was constantly offending Dirk Stroeve so bitterly that he flung away, **vowing he would never speak to him again**; but there was a solid force in Strickland that attracted the fat Dutchman against his will, so that he came back, fawning like a clumsy dog, though he knew that his only greeting would be the blow he dreaded.

he flung away, **vowing he would never speak to him again**

↑

present participle (simultaneous action)

The present participle **vowing** shows action **simultaneous** with **flung away**. He storms off **while** making the vow.

The participle captures the **manner** of the action rather than just sequence. It's not just that he left and then vowed — he left **in the manner of vowing**, with the vow as part of the dramatic exit.

This shows the **economy** of English participles: they compress complex emotional states into compact grammatical structures. The violence of the departure and the intensity of the vow become one fluid motion.

5. It-Cleft / Formal Subject

And the worst of it was that, though you hated Strickland, and the exhibition was horrible, **it was impossible not to laugh**.

And the worst of it was that ... it was impossible not to laugh

↑

dummy it (real subject: to laugh)

The **it** is a **placeholder** for the real subject **to laugh**. English moves the heavy subject to the end and uses **it** to hold the grammatical slot.

The **it ... to** structure creates **emphasis**: **impossible** hits first, making the impossibility feel immediate and strong. The structure builds toward the revelation that laughter was unavoidable.

This sentence is the climax of **irony**: "the worst of it was" leads to "impossible not to laugh." The grammar supports the ironic twist — what should be tragic becomes comic, and the structure makes us feel that inevitability.

Chapter 24

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Neither of us had seen Strickland for two or three weeks—I because I had been busy with friends who were spending a little while in Paris, and Stroeve because, having quarreled with him more violently than usual, he had made up his mind to have nothing more to do with him.

Neither of us takes a singular verb: **had seen**, not **have seen**. Though it refers to two people, **neither** is grammatically singular — "not one or the other."

Neither of us had seen ← singular verb

Both of us had not seen ← plural verb (different meaning)

After the dash comes the **explanation structure**: "I because... and Stroeve because..." The subjects are repeated for clarity, creating parallel reasons for the same outcome. English demands this explicit repetition where Korean flows more naturally with implied subjects.

2. Relative Clause

Suddenly I remembered that he had got his commission to paint a portrait through the baker **from whom he bought his bread**, and it struck me that there one might find his address.

from whom is preposition + relative pronoun moved to the front:

he bought his bread from the baker

↓

the baker from whom he bought his bread

In spoken English, you might hear "the baker (who) he bought his bread from," but Maugham uses the formal structure with the preposition fronted. **whom** is the objective case for people.

This construction adds formality and weight to the prose — characteristic of Maugham's literary style rather than conversational English.

3. Parallel Structure

Neither of us had seen Strickland for two or three weeks—I because I had **been busy with friends who were spending a little while in Paris, and Stroeve** because, having quarreled with him more violently than usual, he had made up his mind to have nothing more to do with him.

Perfect **parallel structure** after the dash:

I because [I had been busy with friends...]

and

Stroeve because [having quarreled..., he had made up his mind...]

Two reasons, symmetrically arranged. Notice the imbalance in length — the narrator's reason is brief and simple, Stroeve's is long and complex. This reflects their different personalities.

The repeated subjects (I... and Stroeve) create clarity and formal balance, even though the clauses themselves are unequal in complexity.

4. Subjunctive

Stroeve made **as though he were about to knock**, and then turned to me with a gesture of helplessness.

as though he were uses the subjunctive mood for hypothetical/unreal situations in the present:

he was about to knock ← actual (indicative)

he were about to knock ← hypothetical (subjunctive)

Stroeve appeared to be about to knock, but didn't follow through. The subjunctive **were** signals that the action was **incomplete** and **uncertain**.

as though + subjunctive creates distance from reality — it wasn't quite real knocking, just the appearance of it. The mood matches the hesitation.

5. Participial Construction

Neither of us had seen Strickland for two or three weeks—I because I had been busy with friends who were spending a little while in Paris, and Stroeve because, **having quarreled with him more violently than usual**, he had made up his mind to have nothing more to do with him.

having quarreled is a perfect participial phrase showing action **completed before** the main verb (**had made up his mind**):

Time sequence: quarreled → made up his mind

Expression: having quarreled, he had made up his mind

having + past participle = "after having done X." It compresses what could be a full clause: "After he had quarreled with him, he had made up his mind."

This participial construction creates elegant, compressed prose — characteristic of literary English. It shows cause and temporal sequence simultaneously.

Chapter 25

1. Subjunctive

I wish I had; but I know it when I see it, and I honour it with all my heart.

What does **had** take as its object in **I wish I had**? From context ("I wish I had genius"), **genius** or **talent** is implied.

I wish I had [genius/talent] ← subjunctive past

English **wish** **forces** the verb one tense back to signal unreality. **I wish I have** would be ungrammatical — the past tense after **wish** is mandatory, not optional.

The speaker acknowledges he lacks genius while expressing the desire for it. The tense structure embeds the contradiction: wanting what you don't have.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

She was panting now, and in her face was a **terror which was** inexplicable.

In **terror which was inexplicable**, note the **subject-verb agreement** across the relative clause:

terror (singular) → which was (singular)

The relative pronoun **which** takes its number from its antecedent **terror**. If it were **terrors which were inexplicable**, the verb would be **were**.

English **mechanically enforces** this agreement — the singular antecedent dictates the singular verb in the relative clause. There's no flexibility here.

3. Passive Voice

Her manner was quite normal again, and no one could have told that so shortly before she **had been shaken** by such a great emotion.

had been shaken is **past perfect passive**:

had been shaken = had been + pp (passive)

Temporal structure:

—[had been shaken]—► could have told —► (now)

remote past

past

The shaking happened **before** the moment when "no one could have told." The past perfect establishes this temporal layering.

Passive because: she didn't shake the emotion — the emotion shook her. She's the recipient of the action.

4. Parallel Structure

Dirk was **going home to dinner, and I proposed to find a doctor and bring him to see Strickland; but when we got down into the street, fresh after the stuffy attic, the Dutchman begged me to go immediately to his studio.**

This sentence layers **parallel verb structures**:

Dirk was going home

I proposed to find... and bring...

we got down

the Dutchman begged me to go

In **proposed to find a doctor and bring him**, the structure is **to find** and **(to) bring** — the second **to** is ellipted but grammatically present.

English demands **structural parallelism**. **proposed to find and bringing** would be impossible — both verbs must take the same form after **proposed**.

Maugham chains short action phrases to create momentum.

5. Relative Clause

He had something in mind **which he would not tell me**, but he insisted that it was very necessary for me to accompany him.

In **something which he would not tell me**, the relative clause takes **which** as **direct object**:

He had something in mind

↓

which = something (object)

he would not tell me [which]

The relative pronoun **which** functions as the object of **tell**. Unpacked: **He would not tell me something**.

would not here expresses **volition**, not simple future — he refuses to tell, rather than simply won't tell in the future.

Chapter 26

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

It was not exactly spirituality that was obvious, though the **screen of the flesh seemed** almost transparent, because there was in his face an outrageous sensuality; but, though it sounds nonsense, it seemed as though his sensuality were curiously spiritual.

the screen of the flesh seemed almost transparent

subject: the screen of the flesh

verb: seemed

complement: almost transparent

Maugham could have written "his soul seemed visible" or "he looked spiritual." Instead, he makes **the screen of the flesh** the grammatical subject. This isn't just poetic language — it's a structural choice.

By putting **the screen of the flesh** in subject position, he conceptualizes the body as a **barrier that can become transparent**. The flesh isn't just described; it becomes the grammatical agent of seeming. The sentence structure mirrors the philosophical idea: the boundary between material and spiritual is dissolving.

The complex subject **the screen of the flesh** forces us to think of the body as a **medium** rather than just matter.

2. Relative Clause

I thought of Marsyas, **whom the god flayed because he had dared to rival him in song**.

Marsyas, whom the god flayed because he had dared to rival him

↑

relative pronoun whom (objective case)

= the god flayed Marsyas

The Korean translation uses passive voice ("가죽이 벗겨진"), making Marsyas feel like a victim. But Maugham's English is active: **the god flayed**. The focus is on the divine action, not the mortal suffering.

whom as objective case shows that Marsyas is the **recipient** of the god's violence. The relative clause structure puts the god's agency front and center.

because he had dared to rival him — the past perfect **had dared** places the challenge **before** the punishment in time. The temporal sequence (challenge → punishment) is grammatically encoded.

3. Parallel Structure

It needed a good deal of firmness and still more patience to induce him to come, but he was really too ill to offer any effective resistance **to Stroeve's entreaties and to my determination.**

to Stroeve's entreaties and to my determination

parallel structure: to A and to B

Maugham could have written "to Stroeve's entreaties and my determination," dropping the second **to**. But he repeats it: **to ... and to ...**. This **parallel repetition** emphasizes the equal weight of both forces acting on Strickland.

The structure also reveals a contrast: **entreaties** (plural) vs **determination** (singular). Stroeve made multiple pleas; the narrator had **one firm resolve**. The parallel grammar highlights how different approaches converged on the same goal.

The repetition of **to** makes each element feel like a **separate force** rather than just a list.

4. Subjunctive

It was not exactly spirituality that was obvious, though the screen of the flesh seemed almost transparent, because there was in his face an outrageous sensuality; but, though it sounds nonsense, it seemed **as though his sensuality were curiously spiritual.**

as though his sensuality were curiously spiritual

subjunctive mood: were (not was)

The subjunctive **were** signals that this is **contrary to reality**. If Maugham had written **as though his sensuality was spiritual**, it would suggest a factual appearance. **were** makes it feel **unreal, impossible**.

This matches his earlier phrase: **though it sounds nonsense**. The combination of sensuality and spirituality is logically contradictory. The subjunctive mood grammatically encodes this impossibility — it **seemed** this way, but couldn't actually **be** this way.

The subjunctive creates distance between appearance and reality, which is exactly what the narrator is trying to capture about Strickland's paradoxical nature.

5. Participial Construction

He was still too weak to paint, and he sat in the studio, silent, **occupied with God** knows what dreams, or reading.

silent, occupied with God knows what dreams

↑

past participle (adjectival use)

= he was occupied with dreams

This is a **reduced relative clause**: (he was) silent, (he was) occupied with dreams. The past participle **occupied** functions adjectivally, describing Strickland's state.

silent and **occupied** are parallel, showing **two simultaneous conditions**: he's not speaking, but his mind is completely absorbed. The participle captures the paradox of external stillness and internal activity.

God knows what dreams is an idiomatic way of saying "unknowable dreams." The narrator emphasizes his inability to penetrate Strickland's consciousness. **occupied** suggests **total absorption**, while **God knows what** suggests **complete mystery** — the contrast is built into the grammar.

Chapter 27

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

He looked woebegone and yet ridiculous, like a **man who has fallen** into the water with all his clothes on, and, being rescued from death, frightened still, feels that he only looks a fool.

The relative pronoun **who** refers back to **man**, but notice the **tense layering**:

He looked like a man who has fallen

past viewpoint ← described with present perfect

Why **has fallen** (present perfect) instead of **fell** (simple past)? Because the narrator is describing **Stroeve as he appears right now**. "A man whose falling is still relevant" — like someone still wearing wet clothes, the state of bewilderment hasn't ended.

Even within relative clauses, tense operates **independently**. **who fell** would make it a past event; **who has fallen** makes it a condition still affecting the present moment.

2. Parallel Structure

I was furious with Strickland, and was indignant with myself, because Dirk Stroeve cut such an absurd figure that I felt inclined to laugh.

Two **was** clauses joined by **and** in parallel structure, but this isn't simple listing:

I was furious with Strickland, ← target: Strickland

and was indignant with myself, ← target: myself

because Dirk Stroeve cut such an absurd figure

The parallel emphasizes the **shift in target**: **with Strickland** vs **with myself**. The anger pivots.

Notice how the **because** clause provides the reason for **both emotions**. Stroeve looks absurd → angry at Strickland + angry at myself for wanting to laugh. The parallel structure reveals emotional **conflict** — anger pointing in two directions simultaneously.

3. Relative Clause

He stood like a schoolboy **with whom a master is finding fault**.

with whom is preposition + relative pronoun. Modern English often uses **who... with**, but literary style maintains this form:

a schoolboy with whom a master is finding fault

= a schoolboy (who) a master is finding fault with

Why **with whom** instead of the more casual version? **Formality** and **rhythm**. **finding fault with** is an idiom, but fronting the preposition creates better sentence balance.

Also notice **is finding** (present continuous) rather than **finds** (simple present). Not habitual fault-finding, but "currently being scolded." It captures Stroeve's state **in that moment**.

4. Participial Construction

He looked woebegone and yet ridiculous, like a man who has fallen into the water with all his clothes on, and, **being rescued from death, frightened still**, feels that he only looks a fool.

being rescued and **frightened still** are consecutive participial phrases. Notice the temporal sequence:

has fallen → being rescued → frightened still → feels

completed in progress resulting state current emotion

being rescued is **passive progressive** — "in the process of being rescued," not yet completely safe. **frightened still** uses past participle adjectivally — "still in a state of fear."

These two participial phrases flow into **feels**, expressing the **ongoing bewilderment** even after being pulled from the water. The participial construction captures emotional **continuity** — the rescue is physical, but the psychological state persists.

5. Non-finite Verb

I smiled, for his appearance, so rotund and yet so startled, could never fail **to excite a smile**, and then as I came nearer

fail to + infinitive means "not manage to," but here it's a **double negative**:

could never fail to excite a smile

= could never not cause a smile

= always causes a smile

Why this complex construction instead of simply "always made me smile"? It emphasizes **inevitability**. Stroeve's appearance is so absurd that laughter is **inescapable**.

never fail to is an intensifying idiom — "without exception, every time." The double negative creates stronger emphasis than a simple positive statement would. It's not just that his appearance is funny; it's that **resistance is futile**.

Chapter 28

1. Complex Tense

I knew he was of abstemious habit or I should have thought he **had been drinking**.

I knew he was abstemious OR I should have thought he had been drinking

condition clause result clause (past counterfactual)

had been drinking is past perfect continuous. Not just "he drank" but "he had been in the process of drinking (up to that point)."

The nuance: the narrator would have interpreted the man's behavior as that of someone who **had been drinking continuously**—not just someone who had a drink, but someone in an ongoing state of intoxication.

should have thought is the counterfactual result: "I would have thought this, but I didn't because I knew better." The tense structure creates the logical chain: knowledge prevented assumption.

2. Subjunctive

I was afraid something was going to happen, and **I wished I hadn't spoken**.

I wished I hadn't spoken

↓

present regret + past counterfactual

wish + past perfect expresses regret about something that already happened. "I wish it hadn't happened, but it did."

The emotional weight of **wish** is stronger than a simple judgment. It's not just "I shouldn't have spoken" (a rational assessment) but "I wish I hadn't spoken" (an emotional longing for a different past).

The tense does the work: **hadn't spoken** places the action in an unreachable past, while **wished** anchors the regret in the moment of realization.

3. Subject-Verb Agreement

I changed my mind: it was not **liquor that had driven** him to this obvious desperation.

it was not liquor that had driven him

cleft sentence past perfect in relative clause

it was not A that B is a cleft sentence for emphasis: "It wasn't A that did B" (implying something else did).

The key is **had driven** rather than **drove**. The past perfect signals that whatever drove him to desperation happened **before** the state of desperation the narrator observes.

cause → desperation → narrator's observation

(had driven) (obvious) (I changed my mind)

The grammar enforces the temporal logic: the driving force preceded the visible result.

4. Parallel Structure

I supposed that for some **reason or other**—and Heaven knows what ingenuity men exercise to torment themselves—Dirk had got it into his head that his wife cared for Strickland, and with his genius for blundering he might quite well have offended her so that, to anger him, perhaps, she had taken pains to foster his suspicion.

This sentence demonstrates Maugham's **sentence-building** technique. Multiple clauses hang from a single **supposed**:

I supposed that:

- for some reason (Dirk had got it into his head)
- and with his genius (he might have offended her)
- so that (she had taken pains to foster his suspicion)

"reason or other" is idiomatic: "some reason or another." The **or other** suggests vague, unspecified alternatives.

The long sentence mirrors the narrator's **chain of reasoning**. Rather than breaking it into separate thoughts, Maugham keeps it as one complex structure to show how one supposition leads to the next in the mind's process of deduction.

5. Participial Construction

It was about ten o' clock at night; I had been dining by myself at a restaurant, and **having returned to my small apartment**, was sitting in my parlour, reading I heard the cracked tinkling of the bell, and, going into the corridor, opened the door.

having returned to my small apartment, was sitting in my parlour

perfect participle phrase main clause

having + pp is a perfect participle showing **completed action before** the main verb. Not just "returning" but "having completed the return."

The temporal sequence:

1. dining by myself (completed)
2. having returned (completed)
3. was sitting (ongoing when...)
4. heard the bell (interruption)

The perfect participle creates a clean narrative flow, showing how one completed action sets the stage for the next. English uses participial phrases to compress time and action into efficient, flowing sentences.

Chapter 29

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

After all, it constantly happens that a **man when he's married falls** in love with somebody else; when he gets over it he returns to his wife, and she takes him back, and everyone thinks it very natural.

a man when he's married falls in love

subject: a man

modifier: when he's married (embedded time clause)

verb: falls

English presents the subject **a man** first, then **interrupts** it with **when he's married** before reaching the verb. This embedding creates temporal layering within the subject itself.

Why not just **a married man**? The **when** clause emphasizes the **moment** of being married, not just the state. It's not "a man who happens to be married" but "a man at the point when he's married." The interruption gives the subject a temporal dimension.

2. Subjunctive

When she's alone and humiliated and broken **it would be dreadful if she had nowhere to go.**

it would be dreadful if she had nowhere to go

main clause: it would be dreadful (conditional)

if clause: if she had nowhere to go (past subjunctive)

English **pushes the tense backward** to signal unreality:

she has nowhere to go (real) → she had nowhere to go (hypothetical)

it will be dreadful (real) → it would be dreadful (hypothetical)

The past tense doesn't refer to past time—it refers to **distance from reality**. This is how English grammar encodes the hypothetical: by temporal displacement.

3. Parallel Structure

You see, I've always **been jealous, but I trained myself never to show it; I was jealous of every man she knew; I was jealous of you.**

I've always been jealous, but I trained myself never to show it;

I was jealous of every man she knew;

I was jealous of you.

Three clauses linked by semicolons create a **rhythmic escalation**. The first establishes the general condition, the second specifies the scope, the third delivers the **direct hit**.

I was jealous of every man → I was jealous of you

The narrowing from "every man" to "you" intensifies the confession. The parallel structure provides the framework for this climactic progression.

4. Complex Tense

He **had not expected** Strickland to take him up on the spot and make his preparations to go there and then; above all, he had not expected his wife's decision to go with him.

He had not expected Strickland to take him up

He had not expected his wife's decision

The past perfect expresses **layered unexpectedness**. Unlike simple past **did not expect**, the past perfect emphasizes a **sustained state of non-expectation** leading up to that moment.

The repetition of **had not expected** creates parallel shocks, with **above all** marking the wife's decision as the greater surprise. The tense suggests these weren't just momentary failures to predict—they were ongoing blind spots.

5. Participial Construction

He was evidently in no state **to be left alone**.

He was in no state to be left alone

subject: He

state: was in no state

infinitive: to be left alone (passive)

to be left is a passive infinitive—he's not the one doing the leaving, he's the one **being left**. The grammar emphasizes his helplessness.

in no state to ~ means "not in a condition to handle ~." When combined with the passive to be left, it suggests he couldn't cope with **being abandoned**. The passive construction makes him the recipient of others' actions, not an agent himself.

Chapter 30

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

But the **bed I made up for myself was** sufficiently uncomfortable to give me a wakeful night, and I thought a good deal of what the unlucky Dutchman had told me.

Complex subject, simple agreement

But the bed [I made up for myself] was sufficiently uncomfortable

subject [relative clause] verb(singular)

Seven words separate **bed** from **was**, but the agreement holds firm. The relative clause **I made up for myself** could distract, but Maugham keeps the structural relationship clear: singular subject → singular verb.

English demands **structural consistency** regardless of length. The core grammatical relationship must survive even when the sentence grows complex.

2. Parallel Structure

It **is an emotion made up of the satisfaction in security, pride of property, the pleasure of being desired, the gratification of a household, and it is only by an amiable vanity that women ascribe to it spiritual value.**

Parallel structure builds emotional layers

It is an emotion made up of:

- the satisfaction in security
- pride of property
- the pleasure of being desired
- the gratification of a household

Four noun phrases in perfect parallel. The repetition creates rhythm — each element gets equal grammatical weight, suggesting they're equally important components.

The continuation **and it is only by...** extends the parallel: first **it is** (what the emotion consists of) vs. second **it is** (what women's attribution of spiritual value really is). Structure mirrors meaning.

3. Complex Tense

I do not suppose she **had ever really cared** for her husband, and what I had taken for love was no more than the feminine

response to caresses and comfort which in the minds of most women passes for it.

Past perfect creates psychological distance

she had ever really cared ← remote past (her true feelings)

I had taken for love ← remote past (my misunderstanding)

passes ← present (general truth)

The narrator is speaking from **now**, but pushes the realizations into the past perfect. Not "what I thought was love" but "what I had been taking for love" — suggesting a longer period of misunderstanding.

The past perfect creates **temporal layering**: the narrator's current insight is grammatically separated from his past delusion. Tense becomes psychological distance.

4. Participial Construction

She raised his head to give him food, and it was heavy against her hand; **when she had fed him** she wiped his sensual mouth and his red beard.

Past perfect signals completion and sequence

when she had fed him ← action fully completed first

she wiped ← subsequent action

when she had fed him isn't just "after feeding him" — it's "after she had **completely finished** feeding him." The past perfect emphasizes the thoroughness of completion.

This grammatical precision mirrors the woman's **methodical care**. Each action is fully completed before the next begins. The tense structure reflects the careful, deliberate nature of her nursing.

5. Non-finite Verb

But the bed I made up for myself was sufficiently uncomfortable **to give me a wakeful night**, and I thought a good deal of what the unlucky Dutchman had told me.

To-infinitive of result

was sufficiently uncomfortable to give me a wakeful night

degree of discomfort resulting consequence

This isn't purpose ("in order to keep me awake") but **result** ("so uncomfortable that it kept me awake"). The **sufficiently ... to** structure links degree with consequence.

The grammar mirrors the physical experience: the bed's discomfort was **measured** by its effect on sleep. The to-infinitive quantifies the discomfort through its result.

Chapter 31

1. Subjunctive

He might have excited sympathy if he had grown worn and thin.

might have excited – he could have gotten sympathy (but didn't)

if he had grown – if he had become worn (but he hadn't)

This is the classic past counterfactual. "If A had happened, B might have happened" — but neither A nor B actually occurred.

English pushes both verbs one step further into the past (**had pp** + **might have pp**) to signal unreality. Distance in tense = distance from actual reality.

What Maugham implies: Strickland did **not** grow worn and thin. Therefore, he got no sympathy. The tense structure makes this contrast razor-sharp.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

He spluttered out words of apology for any **wrong he had committed** towards her; he told her he loved her devotedly and begged her to return to him.

any wrong [he had committed towards her]

↑

relative clause modifying "wrong"

Wrong is a noun ("wrongdoing"). **He had committed** is a relative clause modifying this noun. The relative pronoun **which** is omitted: any wrong (which) he had committed.

The past perfect **had committed** places the wrongdoing clearly **before** the moment of apology (**spluttered**). English forces this temporal sequence through verb form.

3. Parallel Structure

You could wander along the canal till you came to broad green fields, with windmills here and there, in which **cattle, black and white**, grazed lazily.

cattle, black and white, grazed

↑_____↑

inserted adjective phrase

Black and white is an adjective phrase modifying cattle. Set off by commas, it's **inserted** as a non-restrictive modifier.

The commas create a **pause** that draws attention to the cattle's coloring. This insertion technique lets Maugham paint the pastoral scene while giving special emphasis to this visual detail.

The pause mimics how the eye might linger on the black-and-white pattern of the cattle in the green field.

4. Complex Tense

The streets were wide and empty; for two hundred years the place **had been dying**, but the houses had the homely stateliness of their time.

for two hundred years the place had been dying

past perfect continuous

Past perfect continuous (had been + -ing). This shows an **ongoing process** that had been continuing from some point in the past up to another past moment.

It's a **double past**: had been (past perfect) + -ing (continuous). Like a camera traveling back in time to reveal "even then, it had already been dying for a long time."

The verb choice **dying** is crucial — it captures the slow, continuous loss of vitality, not a sudden death.

5. Relative Clause

He had often spoken to me of the silent town, somewhere up in the north of Holland, **where his parents still lived**.

the silent town, somewhere up in the north of Holland,

↓

where his parents still lived

↑

relative adverb where = in which

Where is a relative adverb, equivalent to **in which**, connecting back to the place antecedent (town).

Note **still lived** — simple past, but **still** adds the sense of continuity. From the narrator's past perspective, the parents were "still there" at that time, suggesting they had been there for a long while and remained there.

Chapter 32

1. Subjunctive

I was disgusted with him, and **if I had had an opportunity should have been glad to tell him so, but I saw no object in seeking him out for the purpose.**

if I had had an opportunity → should have been glad

past perfect condition → conditional perfect

The double **had** breaks down as: first **had** = conditional marker, second **had** = past participle of "have." "If I **had possessed** an opportunity."

But notice **should have been** instead of **would have been**. This is 19th-century English — first person often took **should** in conditionals. It carries a sense of personal inclination: "I should have been glad" = "it would have been my inclination."

English pushes tense **two steps back** (past perfect + conditional perfect) to signal unreality. The further from present tense, the further from actual reality.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

I knew from what I had heard that she was a woman of violent passions; and that injurious **blow that she had given Dirk, the man who had loved her so devotedly, betrayed** a sudden temper and a horrid cruelty.

that injurious blow [that she had given Dirk, the man who had loved her] betrayed...

subject [relative clause + appositive] verb

The core is **blow betrayed**, but Maugham **neests** a relative clause (**that she had given Dirk**) and an appositive (**the man who had loved her**) inside the subject.

English allows this **embedding within the subject** to build dramatic weight. By the time we reach **betrayed**, we've absorbed the full context of the blow — who gave it, to whom, and what that person meant to her. The syntax mirrors the emotional complexity.

3. Parallel Structure

I do not know why I had expected her to be somehow changed; she wore the same gray dress that she **wore so often, neat and becoming**, and her brow was as candid, her eyes as untroubled, as when I had been used to see her occupied with her household duties in the studio.

she wore the same gray dress that she wore so often,

↓

[neat and becoming]

Neat and becoming modifies dress from after — a post-positioned adjective phrase. This creates the sense of **additional observation**: "gray dress, and it was neat and becoming."

English allows this **afterthought structure** where the adjectives feel like a second glance, an added detail. It's more observational than "neat and becoming gray dress" would be — as if the narrator notices the dress first, then registers its qualities.

4. Relative Clause

He was not a man with whom it was worth while wasting politeness.

He was not a man [with whom it was worth while wasting politeness]

↑

preposition + relative pronoun

The original structure: it was worth while wasting politeness with him. In the relative clause, the preposition **with** fronts with the relative pronoun: with whom.

This is **formal register**. Colloquially, we'd say "a man who it was worth while wasting politeness with" — ending with the preposition. But Maugham maintains literary formality. The with whom construction signals educated discourse, a certain social class of speaker.

5. Participial Construction

I do not know why I had expected her to be somehow changed; she wore the same gray dress that she wore so often, neat and becoming, and her brow was as candid, her eyes as untroubled, as when I had been used to see her occupied with her household duties in the studio.

her brow was as candid, her eyes as untroubled, as when I had been used to see her occupied

↑

past participle (adjectival)

Occupied functions as an **adjective** here: "in a state of being occupied." The structure see her occupied = "see her in an occupied state."

This is the **perception verb pattern**: see + object + adjective/participle. English treats it as witnessing a **state**, not an action. See her occupied vs see her occupying herself — the first focuses on the state, the second on the activity.

The perception verb construction allows English to capture **states of being** as direct objects of observation.

Chapter 33

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

I thought it probable enough that Blanche Stroeve would not continue to find life with Strickland tolerable, but **one of the falsest of proverbs is** that you must lie on the bed that you have made.

one of the falsest of proverbs is that...

subject: one (of the falsest of proverbs)

verb: is (singular)

complement: that-clause

In English, **one of + superlative + plural noun** takes singular agreement. "One among many proverbs" but the verb is **is**. This grammatical rule forces precision: we're talking about **one specific thing**, not the group.

Why Maugham chose this structure: **one of the falsest** is a strong judgment. Not just "a false proverb" but "among the very falsest." The superlative + singular verb combination grammatically reinforces his certainty.

2. Parallel Structure

Stroeve had always **been excitable, but now he was beside himself**; there was no reasoning with him.

Stroeve had always been excitable, ← past perfect (background/duration)

but now he was beside himself ← simple past (present situation)

The tense shift creates the contrast. **had been** establishes the background state "up until this moment," while **was** captures "at this specific moment." The **but now** marks the temporal pivot.

Maugham uses tense as a dramatic tool: past perfect for the established pattern, simple past for the crisis moment. English makes this contrast **grammatically mandatory** — you can't avoid choosing between **had been** and **was**.

3. Non-finite Verb

I thought it probable enough that Blanche Stroeve would not continue **to find life with Strickland tolerable**, but one of the falsest of proverbs is that you must lie on the bed that you have made.

continue to find life with Strickland tolerable

verb: continue

object: to find... (infinitive phrase)

└ find's object: life

└ find's complement: tolerable

continue + to-infinitive means "keep on doing." But notice the embedded structure: **find + object + adjective** means "consider something to be."

Maugham frames this as a matter of **perception**, not objective reality. The question isn't whether life with Strickland **is** tolerable, but whether Blanche will continue to **find it** tolerable. The infinitive structure makes this a question of ongoing subjective judgment.

4. Relative Clause

He has no ill-feeling towards you on account of anything **that has happened**.

anything that has happened

antecedent: anything

relative pronoun: that

relative clause: has happened

anything that is more comprehensive than listing specific events. It covers **everything**, whatever it might be. The indefinite pronoun **anything** avoids naming particulars while encompassing all possibilities.

has happened is present perfect — not just past events, but events that **connect to the present moment**. Maugham chooses present perfect because these events still have relevance now, still affect the current situation between the characters.

5. Complex Tense

I could only repeat that by no word, by no hinted gesture, **had she given** an indication of her feelings.

by no word, by no hinted gesture, had she given...

↑

inverted auxiliary

normal order: she had given no indication by no word, by no hinted gesture

This is negative inversion. When negative phrases (**by no word**) front the sentence, English requires subject-auxiliary inversion. It's not optional — the grammar forces **had she** instead of **she had**.

Why Maugham chose inversion: **emphasis**. Normal word order would be plain statement. Inversion makes it dramatic, highlighting the absolute completeness of her concealment. The past perfect + inversion combination reinforces the narrator's certainty about what didn't happen.

Chapter 34

1. Parallel Structure

But though I was no less convinced than Stroeve that the connection between **Strickland and Blanche** would end disastrously, I did not expect the issue to take the tragic form it did.

though I was convinced... → I did not expect...

The parallel structure creates **structural irony**: same subject, same verb pattern, opposite content. **I was convinced** vs **I did not expect** — the grammar mirrors the contradiction in the narrator's mind.

"Strickland and Blanche" is also parallel — not two separate people, but **the relationship itself** as a single unit. English uses the conjunction to fuse them grammatically, making the connection (and its doom) the real subject.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

The sun-baked streets seemed to give back the **heat that had beat** down on them during the day, and the passers-by dragged their feet along them wearily.

the heat that had beat down on them

The relative pronoun **that** takes **heat** as its antecedent, and the verb is **had beat**. Technically, the past participle of **beat** is **beaten**, so it should be **had beaten**. But Maugham uses **had beat**.

This was acceptable usage in 1919. The simplified form creates **sound echo**: "heat that had beat" — the repeated [i:t] sound mimics the repetitive hammering of the sun. Grammar serves rhythm.

3. Inversion

By my side was the empty bowl in which the concierge had brought me my café au lait and the fragment of croissant which I had not had appetite enough to eat.

Normal order: The empty bowl was by my side

Inverted order: By my side was the empty bowl

The locative phrase **By my side** fronts, triggering subject-verb inversion. This isn't just stylistic flourish — it mirrors how the narrator's **gaze moves through space**: from his immediate vicinity outward to the objects.

Normal order would prioritize the bowl; inverted order prioritizes the **spatial relationship**. The syntax follows the eye.

4. Participial Construction

Occupied with other things, I had ceased to think of him and his affairs.

[Occupied with other things], I had ceased to think...

Participial phrase ← reason/cause

The past participle **Occupied** fronts to show **causation**. It compresses **Because I was occupied with other things** into a tight participial phrase. This isn't just economy — it's **rhythm**.

The compressed structure mirrors the narrator's mental state: distracted, not dwelling on explanations. The participle gets the reason out of the way quickly so the main clause (forgetting Strickland) can land with impact.

5. Relative Clause

By my side was the empty bowl **in which the concierge had brought me my café au lait and the fragment of croissant** which I had not had appetite enough to eat.

the empty bowl [in which the concierge had brought me my café au lait]

and

the fragment of croissant [which I had not had appetite enough to eat]

Two relative clauses in parallel, but different grammatical roles:

- **in which** = prepositional relative (location: "in the bowl")
- **which** = direct object relative ("the croissant that I hadn't eaten")

The structure creates **contrast through completion**: the empty bowl (coffee finished) vs. the fragment (croissant unfinished). The relative clauses highlight this asymmetry — one appetite satisfied, one not.

Chapter 35

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

We heard voices in the **room in which she lay**, and presently the nurse returned to say that the patient refused to see anyone.

We heard voices in the room [in which she lay]

↑

relative clause modifying room

This is a formal relative clause where the preposition **in** is fronted before **which**. The original structure was **she lay in the room** → **the room in which she lay**.

The alternative **the room which she lay in** (with stranded preposition) would be more casual. Maugham chooses the formal **in which** structure to match the gravity of the situation.

The fronted preposition creates a sense of **enclosure** — she is contained **in** this room, and the formal structure mirrors the solemnity of her condition.

2. Parallel Structure

We had **told her that if she refused to see Dirk the nurse was to ask if she would see me, but this** she refused also.

told her that [if she refused to see Dirk]

[the nurse was to ask if she would see me]

but this she refused also

This is a nested conditional structure within reported speech. The **that** clause contains: conditional protasis (**if she refused**) + main clause (**the nurse was to ask**) + embedded conditional (**if she would see me**).

The structure mirrors the **layered contingency** of their plan: primary refusal → secondary offer → secondary refusal.

but this she refused also uses object fronting (**this she refused** instead of **she refused this**) to emphasize the disappointment. The inversion gives weight to **this** — the entirety of their careful planning.

3. Participial Construction

The nurse looked at him with her calm, kind eyes, which had seen all the horror and pain of the world, and yet, **filled with the vision of a world without sin**, remained serene.

eyes, which had seen all the horror and pain,

and yet, [filled with the vision], remained serene

↑

past participle modifying the subject

filled with the vision is a past participle phrase modifying **eyes** (metonymically, the nurse). It's reduced from **she was filled with**.

The participle creates a **contrast**: **had seen** (active experience of horror) vs **filled with** (passive state of being filled with vision). The nurse embodies a paradox.

Maugham's point: her eyes hold **contradiction** — they have witnessed all worldly suffering yet remain filled with otherworldly hope. The past participle captures this static, paradoxical state that coexists with her active experience.

4. Complex Tense

I tried to imagine what **had happened** to drive the poor creature to that dreadful step.

I tried to imagine what [had happened] to drive...

↑

past perfect – prior to tried

The past perfect **had happened** establishes a **temporal layer** before the simple past **tried**. It signals that whatever drove her to suicide occurred before the narrator's attempt to understand it.

[events unfold] → [I tried to imagine] → (now)

had happened

tried

Maugham uses past perfect to suggest that her suicide attempt wasn't triggered by a single event, but by an **accumulation** of prior experiences. The tense implies a buildup of causes stretching back into the more distant past.

5. Non-finite Verb

I took him to the Louvre, and he pretended **to look at pictures**, but I saw that his thoughts were constantly with his wife.

he pretended [to look at pictures]

↑

to look at pictures is an infinitive of purpose, but with **pretend**, it becomes a **fake purpose**. He's not actually trying to look at pictures; he's trying to appear as if he's looking at pictures.

The infinitive structure reveals the **double intention**: the surface intention (to look) vs. the real intention (to appear to look). The **to** infinitive carries the pretense.

Maugham's point: Dirk is going through the motions of normal activity while his mind is entirely elsewhere. The infinitive structure mirrors this split between outward action and inner preoccupation.

Chapter 36

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Stroeve went twice a day to the hospital to enquire after his wife, who still declined to see him; and came away at first relieved and hopeful because he was told that she seemed to be growing better, and then in despair because, the **complication which the doctor had feared having ensued, recovery was** impossible.

The most complex part here is **the complication which the doctor had feared having ensued**.

the complication [which the doctor had feared] having ensued

└ relative clause: that the doctor had feared

└ subject: the complication

└ perfect participle: having happened

Having ensued is a perfect participle showing **causation** — "because it had already happened." This is an absolute construction: the complication having occurred, recovery became impossible.

Maugham could have written "the complication ensued, so recovery was impossible." But the participial structure emphasizes the **inevitability** — the feared thing didn't just happen; it had already sealed her fate.

2. Subjunctive

The poor woman lay quite still, refusing to speak, with her eyes intent, **as though she watched for the coming of death**.

As though she watched uses the **subjunctive past** — past tense for a present situation. Why?

as though she watched ← subjunctive (uncertain, seems like)

as if she watches ← indicative (actually happening)

The subjunctive creates **psychological distance**. We don't know if she's literally watching for death, but that's how it **appears**. The past tense signals unreality or uncertainty.

This is literary precision. **As if she watches** would be factual — she's definitely doing it. **As though she watched** is impressionistic — that's the impression she gives. The subjunctive captures the mysterious quality of someone approaching death.

3. Participial Construction

The poor woman lay quite still, **refusing to speak, with her eyes intent**, as though she watched for the coming of death.

This sentence layers **multiple participial constructions**:

The poor woman lay quite still,

├ refusing to speak, ← present participle (simultaneous action)

├ with her eyes intent, ← with + adjective (state)

└ as though she watched... ← comparison (additional description)

Lay is the main verb; everything else modifies that central image. **Refusing** shows intentional action, **with her eyes intent** shows physical state, **as though she watched** shows the impression she gives.

Three different **layers of description** compressed into one sentence. This is English literary syntax at work — building a complex portrait through grammatical layering rather than separate sentences.

4. Parallel Structure

It could now **be only the question of a day or two; and when, late one evening, Strove came to see me I knew it was to tell me she was dead.**

Notice the **semicolon + conjunction** combination:

It could now be only the question of a day or two;

and when... Strove came to see me

I knew it was to tell me she was dead.

The semicolon typically joins independent clauses, but here it's followed by **and when**. This creates a **temporal progression**:

First clause: general situation ("a matter of days")

Second clause: specific moment ("when he came")

The semicolon maintains **suspense** while **and when** introduces the **decisive moment**. Grammar creates narrative tension — the pause before the inevitable news.

5. It-Cleft / Formal Subject

It was awful to see her lovely skin all wounded.

It was awful to see is an **extraposition** structure:

It was awful [to see her lovely skin all wounded]

└ dummy subject └ real subject (infinitive phrase)

Compare the alternatives:

- To see her lovely skin all wounded was awful ← direct
- It was awful to see her lovely skin all wounded ← emotion-first

By leading with **It was awful**, Maugham puts the **emotional impact** first, then reveals the **cause**. The grammar follows **psychological order** — we feel the shock before we process the reason. This mirrors how traumatic sights actually affect us: emotion first, understanding second.

Chapter 37

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

The **circumstances of Blanche Stroeve's death necessitated** all manner of dreadful formalities, but at last we were allowed to bury her.

Complex subject governs the verb structure.

[The circumstances of Blanche Stroeve's death] necessitated [all manner of dreadful formalities]

complex subject

verb

object

English makes **the cause itself the subject**. Not "we had to go through procedures because of her death" but "the circumstances necessitated procedures." The death becomes an active agent.

This structure creates **objective tone** in English literature. The event seems to generate its own consequences, rather than affecting people who must respond. Maugham's detached observer voice is embedded in the grammar itself.

2. Subjunctive

He wanted to know **where we wished to be set down**.

Here **wished** is **not subjunctive** — it's simply a polite form of "wanted."

where we wished to be set down

where we wanted to be dropped off

English lacks honorific grammar, so it uses **word choice** for politeness. **wish** is more formal than **want**, less elaborate than **would like**.

Note the **passive infinitive** **to be set down**. Instead of "drop us off," it's "we wished to be dropped off" — the passive voice softens the request by focusing on the passengers' experience rather than commanding the driver's action. English politeness often works through such grammatical indirection.

3. Parallel Structure

We **went at a foot-pace, but on the way back we trotted, and there was something to my mind singularly horrible in the way the driver of the hearse whipped up his horses**.

Contrastive parallel structure with **but** as the pivot.

We went at a foot-pace, going: slow, solemn

but contrast

on the way back we trotted, returning: quick, casual

and there was something... emotional response

English creates contrast through **structural symmetry**. Same pattern (We went / we trotted) with only the speed changed. The parallel grammar makes the contrast sharper.

The final clause and there was something singularly horrible captures the **emotional shock** this contrast created. Funeral solemnity vs. casual haste — the jarring shift registers as horror in the narrator's mind.

4. Complex Tense

Dirk **had not been** to the studio since the wretched morning on which they had taken Blanche to the hospital.

Past perfect creates temporal layers.

—[had taken Blanche to the hospital]—▶ had not been —▶ (now)

remote past (that wretched morning)

past perfect

The past perfect establishes **that morning** as a reference point. Everything since then is measured against it. **Had taken** sets the boundary; **had not been** shows the continuing state since that boundary.

Since commonly pairs with past perfect to mean "from that point until now." The tense structure shows how Dirk's trauma **divided his life** — before and after that morning. Grammar mirrors psychological rupture.

5. Participial Construction

Slackening his pace for a moment, he leaned over and spoke.

Present participle expresses simultaneous action.

Slackening his pace for a moment, ← while slowing down (simultaneous)

he leaned over and spoke. ← main actions

The present participle emphasizes **simultaneity**. Slowing down to speak is one fluid motion, not separate events. The grammar mirrors the natural flow of the action.

Note that **for a moment** sits within the participial phrase. The structure captures the **continuous flow**: brief deceleration → leaning over → speaking. Like slow-motion film, the grammar breaks down the movement into its components while maintaining the sense of unified action.

Chapter 38

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

The **ridicule he had endured for years seemed** now to weigh him down, and the final blow of Blanche's treachery had robbed him of the resiliency which had made him take it so gaily.

Complex subject with embedded relative clause

The ridicule [he had endured for years] seemed now to weigh him down

subject [relative clause] verb phrase

The subject **ridicule** is separated from its verb **seemed** by the relative clause **he had endured for years**. Despite the intervening material, the **subject-verb agreement** remains intact: singular **ridicule** takes singular **seemed**.

This structure tests the reader's ability to track the main grammatical spine through embedded modification. Maugham uses it to pack backstory (**for years**) into the subject itself, making the sentence feel weighted—like the ridicule it describes.

2. Parallel Structure

He told me he had **made up his mind to go away, though not to Italy, as I had suggested, but to Holland**.

Parallel structure with contrastive emphasis

though not to Italy, as I had suggested, but to Holland

↓

↓

↓

negative

parenthetical

positive

The **not A, but B** structure creates sharp contrast: **to Italy** vs **to Holland** (both prepositional phrases in parallel). The parenthetical **as I had suggested** interrupts the flow, making the rejection more pointed.

Maugham embeds the narrator's involvement (**I had suggested**) right into the contrast structure. This isn't just "not Italy, but Holland"—it's "not what I suggested, but his own choice." The syntax mirrors the emotional dynamic: suggestion, interruption, rejection.

3. Participial Construction

They pinched and saved so that I should have enough to live on, and **when my first picture was exhibited they came to Amsterdam to see it**, my father and mother and my sister, and my mother cried when she looked at it."

Passive voice in temporal clause

when my first picture was exhibited

temporal clause passive past

The active version would be `when they exhibited my first picture`, but Maugham chooses passive to **center the painting** rather than the exhibitors. This isn't about who did the exhibiting—it's about the moment the painting entered public view.

The passive voice here reflects Dirk's perspective as an artist: the painting becomes the subject of its own story. It's a subtle shift that makes the artwork, not the art world machinery, the focus of this pivotal memory.

4. Subjunctive

"The dear soul thought she was doing a wonderful thing for me when she made me an artist, but **perhaps, after all, it would have been better for me if my father's will had prevailed and I were now but an honest carpenter.**"

Mixed conditionals: past perfect + present subjunctive

it would have been better if my father's will had prevailed and I were now but an honest carpenter

↓

↓

↓

past perfect conditional

past perfect condition

present subjunctive

This is a **mixed conditional** structure. The past perfect condition (`had prevailed`) leads to both a past perfect result (`would have been better`) and a present subjunctive state (`I were now`).

Dirk is imagining how a past choice would have led to a different present reality. The grammar mirrors the psychology: he's not just regretting the past decision, but mourning the present life he doesn't have. The `were` (not `was`) maintains the subjunctive mood, keeping this firmly in the realm of the unreal.

5. Non-finite Verb

The ridicule he had endured for years seemed now **to weigh him down**, and the final blow of Blanche's treachery had robbed him of the resiliency which had made him take it so gaily.

Seem + to-infinitive with adverbial insertion

The ridicule seemed now to weigh him down

subject seem adv to-infinitive

The structure is `seem + to-infinitive`, but Maugham inserts `now` between `seemed` and `to weigh`. This creates emphasis: not just that the ridicule weighed him down, but that it does so **now**, in contrast to before.

Seem + to-infinitive is English's way of expressing **tentative observation**. Instead of stating directly "The ridicule weighed him down," the narrator steps back with "seemed to." This maintains the observational distance typical of Maugham's narrative voice—watching, not judging.

Chapter 39

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

The bedroom looked as though she had just left it: the brushes were neatly placed on the toilet-table, one on each side of the comb; someone had smoothed down the bed on which she had spent her last night in the studio; and her **nightdress in a little case lay** on the pillow.

her nightdress in a little case lay on the pillow

subject (core) verb

The core subject is **nightdress** (singular), so the verb is **lay** (singular). The prepositional phrase **in a little case** is just modification—it doesn't affect agreement.

Why this structure? Maugham stretches the subject with the long modifier to create a sense of **suspended time**. The bedroom is frozen in the moment she left. The delayed verb **lay** lands softly, like the nightdress itself settling on the pillow.

English forces you to identify the grammatical core through all the modification. Korean flows more naturally: "작은 케이스에 든 잠옷이" doesn't create the same structural tension.

2. Subjunctive

I could have wished that Strickland had used some other phrase to indicate his refusal.

I could have wished that Strickland had used some other phrase

double counterfactual counterfactual

This is **layered unreality**. Simple "I wish" expresses desire contrary to fact. But **could have wished** adds another layer: "I might have been able to wish (but even that was pointless)."

The double remove from reality captures the narrator's **helplessness**. He can't change Strickland's cruel words, and he can't even properly wish they were different. The grammar embeds resignation.

Maugham uses the most distant possible tense to show how far removed the narrator feels from any power to change what happened.

3. Parallel Structure

He dragged himself up the stairs; his feet **seemed unwilling to carry him; and outside the door he lingered for a long time, trying to summon up courage to go in.**

He dragged himself up the stairs;

his feet seemed unwilling to carry him;

and outside the door he lingered for a long time

Three clauses linked by semicolons create a **halting rhythm**. Each clause is grammatically independent but emotionally connected.

Why semicolons instead of commas or periods? Commas would rush the sequence; periods would fragment it. Semicolons give each action its own **hesitant beat**, matching Dirk's reluctant movement.

The parallel structure mirrors his physical and emotional state: body dragging, feet unwilling, courage failing. Grammar becomes the soundtrack of reluctance.

4. Passive Voice

On a rack were the plates that she had used for dinner on the night of her quarrel with Strickland, and they **had been carefully washed**.

they had been carefully washed

past perfect passive

The **past perfect passive** creates temporal depth. Not just "they were washed," but "they had been washed" before the moment of discovery.

Time layers:

washing → had been washed → narrator finds them → now

The past perfect emphasizes that someone (Blanche) carefully washed these dishes after her last dinner, and that care persists as evidence. The adverb **carefully** becomes poignant—her final act of domestic order.

Maugham uses the most complex tense-voice combination to show how **past care** haunts the present moment.

5. Participial Construction

She had done her marketing from day to day, buying only what was strictly needful, **so that nothing was left over from one day to the next**.

so that nothing was left over from one day to the next

past participle (adjectival)

Left over functions as an **adjectival past participle** describing a state: "remaining unused." Not the action of leaving, but the condition of being left.

This captures Blanche's **disciplined economy**. She didn't just avoid waste—she prevented any **spillover** from one day to the next. The participle **left over** suggests things that might linger, accumulate, create disorder.

Maugham's word choice reveals character: Blanche lived with precise boundaries. Nothing was allowed to **overflow** its proper time and place.

Chapter 40

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

It was characteristic of him to display geniality with anyone who showed a disinclination to meet him, and the **coolness of my greeting can have left** him in little doubt of that.

can have left expresses **inference about the past** from a present perspective.

can have left him in little doubt

= probably left him with little doubt

This differs from **would have left** (counterfactual). **can have** means "it's reasonable to assume this happened." The narrator is looking back and **deducing** what must have occurred.

"I greeted him coldly, so he probably figured it out" — present-moment reasoning about a past event. Maugham chooses **can have** over **must have** to suggest **reasonable inference** rather than absolute certainty.

2. Participial Construction

For the next month, occupied with my own affairs, I saw no one connected with this lamentable business, and my mind ceased to be occupied with it.

occupied with my own affairs is a **past participle phrase** indicating reason or state.

For the next month, [occupied with my own affairs], I saw no one

= Being busy with my affairs, I saw no one

The past participle describes the subject's **state** while providing **causation**. It's a reduced form of **Being occupied with...**

Set off by commas at the sentence opening, this is the classic participial construction for background information. Maugham uses this structure to compress cause-and-effect into an economical phrase while maintaining clarity.

3. Parallel Structure

For the next month, occupied with my own affairs, I **saw no one connected with this lamentable business, and my mind ceased to be occupied with it.**

This sentence uses **parallel structure** to trace the narrator's psychological shift.

I saw no one connected with this business

and

my mind ceased to be occupied with it

"Didn't see → stopped thinking" — external action leading to internal state. The parallel **and** construction mirrors the natural progression.

Note the repetition of **occupied**: "occupied with my affairs" → "occupied with it." This **lexical echo** emphasizes the contrast: busy with my own matters, but no longer preoccupied with that affair.

4. It-Cleft / Formal Subject

Nodding, for **it would have been childish to cut him**, I walked on quickly; but in a minute I felt a hand on my shoulder.

it would have been childish to cut him uses **it** as a **dummy subject**.

it would have been childish [to cut him]

= [to cut him] would have been childish

English moves the heavy subject (**to cut him**) to the end and uses **it** as a placeholder for **sentence balance**. This avoids the top-heavy structure of putting the infinitive phrase first.

would have been is past counterfactual — "if I had cut him, it would have been childish." The implication: I didn't cut him. The narrator is rationalizing his polite behavior.

5. Relative Clause

It was characteristic of him to display geniality with anyone **who showed a disinclination to meet him**, and the coolness of my greeting can have left him in little doubt of that.

anyone who showed a disinclination uses **who** to introduce a **restrictive relative clause**.

anyone [who showed a disinclination to meet him]

= people who showed reluctance to meet him

The relative clause immediately follows and **defines** the antecedent **anyone**. This creates a specific subset: not just anyone, but anyone who showed reluctance.

This captures Strickland's **paradoxical nature**: the more someone avoids him, the more genial he becomes. The relative clause efficiently packages this complex psychological observation.

Chapter 41

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

He recognises in himself an artistic satisfaction in the contemplation of evil which a little startles him; but sincerity forces him to confess that the **disapproval he feels for certain actions is** not nearly so strong as his curiosity in their reasons.

He recognises [that] the disapproval he feels for certain actions is not nearly so strong...

↑subject

↑verb

The relative clause **he feels for certain actions** modifies the subject **disapproval**. In English, long modifying phrases can separate subject from verb, creating potential agreement confusion.

disapproval (singular) → **is** (singular verb) — even though **actions** (plural) sits right before the verb. The grammatical subject governs agreement, not the nearest noun.

Why Maugham structures it this way: the sentence **enacts** the psychological complexity it describes. The confession that curiosity outweighs disapproval gets tangled up in its own syntax, mirroring the narrator's conflicted feelings about his moral curiosity.

2. Relative Clause

Unconsciously, perhaps, we treasure the power we have over people by their regard for our opinion of them, and we hate those **upon whom we have no such influence**.

we hate those [people] upon whom we have no such influence

↑antecedent

↑relative pronoun (object of preposition)

upon whom — preposition + relative pronoun fronted for formality. Modern English might say **who we have no influence on**, but Maugham chooses the formal register.

The preposition **upon** is moved to the front with its object **whom**. This creates a more elevated, literary tone than the colloquial alternative with the preposition stranded at the end.

those upon whom — when **those** refers to people, it takes **who/whom**, not **which**. Here **whom** is correct as the object of the preposition **upon**.

3. Subjunctive

His life was strangely divorced from material things, and it was **as though his body at times wreaked a fearful revenge on his spirit**.

it was as though his body wreaked revenge

↑subjunctive past (contrary to present reality)

as though + subjunctive past — "as if it were the case (but it isn't)." The past tense **wreaked** doesn't indicate past time here, but **unreality**.

If Maugham had written **wreaks** (present), it would suggest the body literally takes revenge. The subjunctive **wreaked** creates metaphorical distance — this is how it **seems**, not literal fact.

The subjunctive mood transforms a potentially crude mind-body dualism into poetic metaphor. Grammar creates the "as if" quality that makes the image literary rather than literal.

4. Parallel Structure

But neither **here nor elsewhere** do I pretend to give his exact words; his vocabulary was small, and he had no gift for framing sentences, so that one had to piece his meaning together out of interjections, the expression of his face, gestures and hackneyed phrases.

neither here nor elsewhere do I pretend

A nor B ↑inversion

neither A nor B creates emphatic negation. When **neither** begins the sentence, it triggers **inversion**: **do I pretend** instead of **I do not pretend**.

The parallel structure **here nor elsewhere** covers all possible locations — not just "I don't do this," but "I don't do this anywhere, ever." The **neither... nor** construction makes the negation absolute.

The inversion adds formality and emphasis. Maugham uses this structure to make a strong disclaimer about the accuracy of his reporting — he's being scrupulously honest about the limits of his narrative method.

5. Passive Voice

Her tranquillity was like the sullen calm that broods over an island which **has been swept** by a hurricane.

which has been swept by a hurricane

↑present perfect passive

has been swept — present perfect passive. Not just "was swept by a hurricane" (past event), but "has been swept" (past event with present relevance).

Compare:

- **was swept** — it happened then (finished past)
- **has been swept** — it happened, and the effects persist now

The island doesn't just have a history of being hurricane-struck; it **bears the marks** of that devastation in its present calm. The perfect aspect connects past trauma to present tranquility.

Maugham's choice reveals that Ata's peace isn't simple serenity — it's the **aftermath** of devastation, a calm that carries the memory of the storm.

Chapter 42

1. Complex Tense

It was the result of the six years during which he **had been painting**.

The past perfect continuous **had been painting** captures **six years of ongoing process**.

—[had been painting for 6 years]—▶ was —▶ (now)

past perfect continuous

past

If Maugham had written **had painted** (past perfect), it would suggest completion. But **had been painting** emphasizes the **continuous accumulation** — not just what he produced, but how the process itself shaped the result.

The tense makes the paintings feel like **sediment of time** rather than mere finished products. The six years didn't just pass; they **deposited themselves** into the work.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

Most of them have found their way into museums, and the rest are the treasured possessions of wealthy amateurs.

When **Most of them** is the subject, the verb takes **plural form** **have found**.

Most of them (plural concept) → have found

Most of it (singular concept) → has found

The **them** refers back to Strickland's paintings. By choosing **Most of them have** rather than **Most of his work has**, Maugham treats the paintings as **individual entities** rather than a collective mass.

This grammatical choice reflects how we're meant to see Strickland's output — not as an undifferentiated body of work, but as **discrete pieces**, each finding its own destination.

3. Parallel Structure

In social intercourse he gives you the surface that he wishes the world to accept, and you can only gain a true knowledge of him by inferences from little actions, of which he **is unconscious, and from fleeting expressions, which cross his face unknown to him**.

This sentence uses **parallel structure** to present two sources of inference:

from little actions, of which he is unconscious

and

from fleeting expressions, which cross his face unknown to him

Both relative clauses emphasize **unconsciousness**: `unconscious` / `unknown to him`. The structural symmetry reinforces Maugham's point about hidden truth.

The parallelism creates balance between the **two channels** through which authentic knowledge seeps out — actions and expressions, both beyond the person's conscious control.

4. Subjunctive

It was **as though he found in the chaos of the universe a new pattern**, and were attempting clumsily, with anguish of soul, to set it down.

After `as though`, we get `found` (simple past) and `were attempting` (past continuous). This is the **past subjunctive**.

`as though he found` (as if he discovered)

`and were attempting` (and was trying)

English pushes the tense **one step back** to create distance from reality. Notice `were attempting` — even though the subject is `he` (third person singular), the subjunctive uses `were` for all persons.

This "ungrammatical" `were` signals **unreality**. Maugham isn't stating facts about Strickland's process, but evoking the **impression** his paintings gave.

5. Relative Clause

I felt nothing of the peculiar thrill **which it is the property of art to give**.

This relative clause has **complex structure**:

the thrill which [it is the property of art to give]

↑

dummy it = to give the thrill

Original: `It is the property of art to give the thrill`

Relativized: `the thrill which it is the property of art to give`

The dummy `it` construction emphasizes that giving this thrill is **art's essential nature**. Maugham could have written "the thrill that art gives," but chose this weightier form to suggest something **inherent to art itself**.

Chapter 43

1. Relative Clause

An effective story might also have been made by bringing him into contact with some old painter **whom the pressure of want or the desire for commercial success had made false to the genius of his youth**, and who, seeing in Strickland the possibilities which himself had wasted, influenced him to forsake all and follow the divine tyranny of art.

The relative pronoun **whom** is buried in a complex structure:

some old painter whom [the pressure of want or the desire for commercial success] had made false

Here **whom** is the object of **had made** in the pattern **make + object + adjective**. "Pressure and desire had made him false to his genius."

The long relative clause does heavy lifting: it doesn't just identify the painter, it **characterizes** him. Maugham could have written "some corrupted old painter," but the relative clause makes us **witness** the corruption happening. The syntax mirrors the content — just as the painter was weighed down by pressures, the sentence is weighed down by the long modifying clause.

This sets up the ironic contrast: the old painter who **lost** his genius would help Strickland **find** his.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

The **years during which he was struggling to acquire proficiency in a difficult art were** monotonous, and I do not know that there was anything significant in the shifts to which he was put to earn enough money to keep him.

This shows **subject-verb agreement** across a long interrupting clause:

The years [during which he was struggling to acquire proficiency in a difficult art] were monotonous

The true subject is **The years** (plural), so the verb must be **were**. But the long relative clause creates distance and potential confusion — words like **art** and **proficiency** (singular) sit closer to the verb.

Maugham's choice to separate subject and verb this way **mirrors the content**. Just as Strickland's years of struggle felt endless and monotonous, the sentence makes us wait through the long struggle-description before we get to the point: **were monotonous**.

The syntax **enacts** the meaning: we experience the drawn-out nature of those years through the drawn-out sentence structure.

3. Parallel Structure

I **think I should have emphasised his patience with the unsuitable mate, and the compassion which made him unwilling to throw off the yoke that oppressed him**.

This shows **elliptical parallelism** where the repeated verb phrase is omitted:

I should have emphasised his patience...

and [should have emphasised] the compassion...

The second **should have emphasised** is understood but not stated. This creates **rhythmic balance** while avoiding repetition.

Notice the **structural symmetry**:

- his patience with the unsuitable mate
- the compassion which made him unwilling...

Both are noun phrases, but one uses a prepositional phrase (**with...**) and the other a relative clause (**which...**). This **varied parallelism** keeps the rhythm while avoiding monotony.

Maugham presents Strickland's **two hidden virtues** in balanced clauses, suggesting they're equally important to understanding his character.

4. Participial Construction

I think I should have shown a strong vocation in boyhood, **crushed by the will of his father or sacrificed to the necessity of earning a living**; I should have pictured him impatient of the restraints of life; and in the struggle between his passion for art and the duties of his station I could have aroused sympathy for him.

The past participles **crushed** and **sacrificed** create **compressed drama**:

a strong vocation in boyhood, [crushed by the will of his father] or [sacrificed to the necessity of earning a living]

These participles modify **vocation** — the calling itself was **acted upon**. Notice the different prepositions: **crushed by** (external force pressing down) vs **sacrificed to** (offered up to something).

The **passive voice** in both participles emphasizes that the vocation was the **victim**. Not "his father crushed his vocation" but "vocation crushed by his father" — the focus stays on what was lost.

This **compressed syntax** mirrors the content: just as the vocation was compressed and destroyed by external forces, the grammar compresses a whole tragic backstory into two participial phrases. The brevity makes the loss feel more poignant.

5. Passive Voice

An effective story **might also have been made** by bringing him into contact with some old painter whom the pressure of want or the desire for commercial success had made false to the genius of his youth, and who, seeing in Strickland the possibilities which himself had wasted, influenced him to forsake all and follow the divine tyranny of art.

This stacks **modal + perfect + passive** for maximum hypothetical distance:

might also have been made

= might + have been + made

= possibility + completion + passive

Each layer adds **unreality**:

- **might** = possibility, not certainty
- **have been** = past completion, not present
- **made** = passive, the story as object not agent

Maugham could have written "I might have made a story" (active), but he chose passive. This keeps focus on **the story itself** rather than the storyteller.

The **triple hypothetical** (**might + have + been**) creates maximum distance from reality. This isn't just "I could make a story" — it's "a story could have been made (but wasn't, in a past that's now closed)." The grammar **enacts** the wistful, counterfactual mood of the whole passage.

Chapter 44

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

He made one laugh sometimes by speaking the truth, but this is a **form of humour which gains** its force only by its unusualness; it would cease to amuse if it were commonly practised.

The relative pronoun **which** refers back to **form of humour**, and notice the **verb agreement**:

a form of humour which gains its force

singular noun singular verb

English enforces **number agreement** even inside relative clauses. If it were **forms**, the verb would be **gain**.

Why Maugham chose **form** (singular): He's pinpointing **one specific type** of humor—truth-telling. **Forms** would scatter the focus across multiple humor types.

2. Subjunctive

There is so much in his character which is strange that I feel **it would complete the picture if his views were outrageous**.

This is the past subjunctive: **if his views were outrageous**

it would complete ... if his views were outrageous

conditional main past subjunctive condition

English **pushes the tense into the past** to signal unreality. Using **were** instead of **are** immediately suggests "but they're not actually outrageous."

Maugham's hint: Strickland's views are surprisingly **reasonable**. The subjunctive tense delivers this revelation before he states it directly.

3. Parallel Structure

A certain importance **attaches to the views on art of painters, and this is the natural place for me to set down what I know of Strickland's opinions of the great artists of the past**.

Two clauses connected by **and** create **parallel structure**:

A certain importance attaches to the views...

and

this is the natural place for me to set down...

The structural balance creates logical connection. First clause: general principle (painters' views matter). Second clause: specific application (so I'll record Strickland's views).

The **and** carries the weight of **"therefore"** through parallel construction rather than explicit causation.

4. Participial Construction

I made somewhat copious notes at the time, **intending to write something about him**, but I have lost them, and have now only the recollection of an emotion.

The present participle **intending** expresses **purpose**:

I made notes, intending to write something

main clause purpose expressed through participle

The participle captures both **simultaneity** and **intention**. More concise than **in order to write**, it conveys the **immediate intent** at the moment of note-taking.

There's irony here: the intention existed in the past but was never fulfilled. The contrast between "intending" and "lost them" suggests life's futility.

5. Non-finite Verb

He made one laugh sometimes by speaking the truth, but this is a form of humour which gains its force only by its unusualness; it would cease **to amuse if it were commonly practised**.

The infinitive **to amuse** after **cease** expresses **cessation of action**:

it would cease to amuse

verb cease + infinitive (stopping an ongoing action)

Cease to emphasizes the **interruption of something in progress**. Similar to **stop amusing** but **cease** is more formal and suggests **natural termination**.

Maugham's choice: Rather than **lose its amusement**, he uses **cease to amuse** to show humor as something **actively working, then stopping**. Humor is personified as a living force.

Chapter 45

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

It would seem that my **visit to this remote island should immediately revive** my interest in Strickland, but the work I was engaged in occupied my attention to the exclusion of something that was irrelevant, and it was not till I had been there some days that I even remembered his connection with it.

It would seem that [my visit to this remote island] should immediately revive my interest

↑

subject (noun phrase)

The entire noun phrase **my visit to this remote island** functions as the subject of **should revive**. English allows complex noun phrases to carry grammatical weight as subjects, creating a logical structure: **the visit** (as an abstract entity) should revive interest.

The **It would seem that X should Y** pattern expresses logical expectation. Maugham makes "the visit" the agent of revival, not "I" — the visit itself carries the obligation to rekindle interest.

2. Parallel Structure

It is thither that after many wanderings Charles Strickland came, and it is there that he painted the pictures on which his fame most securely rests.

It is thither that ... Charles Strickland came

It is there that ... he painted the pictures

Perfect parallel cleft sentences. The **It is X that Y** structure repeats exactly, creating rhythmic emphasis. This isn't just stylistic — the repetition suggests **inevitability**.

Note the subtle difference: **thither** (to that place) emphasizes **arrival**, while **there** (at that place) emphasizes **creation**. The parallel structure balances these two aspects of Strickland's relationship with the island — destination and workshop.

Cleft sentences focus attention on the fronted element. Here, Maugham makes the **place** the star of both clauses, not Strickland.

3. Subjunctive

It would not surprise you if, as you came near seeking for an opening in the reef, it vanished suddenly from your view, and nothing met your gaze but the blue loneliness of the Pacific.

It would not surprise you if ... it vanished suddenly

↑

subjunctive past

would not surprise pairs with subjunctive **vanished** to express a hypothetical present scenario. If Maugham had written **vanishes** (indicative), it would suggest real possibility. **vanished** (subjunctive) signals **imaginative distance**.

The sentence paints a fantastical scene — the island disappearing like a mirage. The subjunctive mood grammatically supports this **otherworldly quality**. English uses tense to modulate reality levels.

4. Relative Clause

Tahiti is a lofty green island, with deep folds of a darker green, **in which you divine silent valleys**; there is mystery in their sombre depths, down which murmur and splash cool streams, and you feel that in those umbrageous places life from immemorial times has been led according to immemorial ways.

deep folds of a darker green, in which you divine silent valleys

↑

prepositional relative

in which connects the spatial relationship precisely: **inside the folds**, you sense valleys. The preposition **in** is crucial — it's not just **which you divine** but specifically **in which you divine**.

divine here means "intuit, sense" rather than simply "see." The relative clause captures a process of **perceptual inference** — you don't see the valleys directly, you divine their presence within the folds.

English uses prepositional relatives to map spatial and logical relationships with precision.

5. Passive Voice

Tahiti is a lofty green island, with deep folds of a darker green, in which you divine silent valleys; there is mystery in their sombre depths, down which murmur and splash cool streams, and you feel that in those umbrageous places life from immemorial times **has been led** according to immemorial ways.

life from immemorial times has been led according to immemorial ways

↑

present perfect passive

has been led focuses on **how life has been conducted** rather than who conducted it. The passive voice suggests life in Tahiti hasn't been actively directed by human will, but has been **guided by ancient patterns**.

The symmetry is elegant: **from immemorial times** (temporal) balances **according to immemorial ways** (methodological). Both reach back to the same primordial source.

Present perfect passive suggests continuity — this isn't just how life was led once, but how it **has been led** and continues to be led.

Chapter 46

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

I do not consider that the cigars and whisky he consumed at my expense (he always refused cocktails, since he was practically a teetotaler), and the few **dollars, borrowed with a civil air of conferring a favour upon me, that passed from my pocket to his, were** in any way equivalent to the entertainment he afforded me.

The subject here is compound: **cigars and whisky** + **few dollars**. But long modifying phrases interrupt the flow:

```
I do not consider that [the cigars and whisky (he consumed)]  
  
and [the few dollars, borrowed..., that passed...]  
  
were equivalent...
```

Without case markers, English keeps you guessing about the subject until **were** confirms it's plural. Maugham deliberately stretches this out — the sentence **enacts** the narrator's calculating mind, itemizing expenses one by one before reaching the verdict that they weren't "equivalent" to the entertainment received.

The structure mirrors the mental process: tallying up costs, then weighing them against value.

2. Relative Clause

There are men **whom a merciful Providence has undoubtedly ordained to a single life, but who from wilfulness or through circumstances they could not cope with have flown in the face of its decrees.**

Here **whom** and **who** refer to the same **men** but create a grammatical contrast:

```
There are men [whom Providence has ordained to single life]  
  
but [who have flown in the face of its decrees]
```

whom = object case — "Providence ordained (them)"

who = subject case — "(they) have flown in the face"

The case shift embodies the thematic shift: **fate vs. agency**. Those who were passive objects of Providence's design (**whom**) become active subjects of rebellion (**who**). The grammar enacts the transformation from destiny's target to willful agent.

3. Passive Voice

They are as fond of gossip in Tahiti as in an English village, and one or two enquiries I had made for pictures by Strickland **had been quickly spread.**

Past perfect passive: **had been spread** — completed before the point of reference.

I had made enquiries (past) – I made the enquiries

had been spread (past perfect passive) – already spread by then

The temporal logic is inverted: enquiries came first chronologically, but grammatically the spreading is "more past." This is the elegance of past perfect — **effect precedes cause** in the grammar.

The **had been** emphasizes that by the time the narrator realized it, the spreading was already a done deal. The tense captures the speed of Tahitian gossip networks.

4. Subjunctive

I should be sorry if my conscience, insisting on a rigid attention to the matter in hand, forced me to dismiss him in a couple of lines.

This is **present subjunctive**: **should be sorry if... forced**

I should be sorry – I would regret it

if my conscience forced – if conscience were to force

It's a hypothetical about the present situation, so no past perfect needed. The **should** adds a layer of politeness to what is essentially a **polite refusal**.

Maugham's real message: "It would be regrettable if conscience forced me to be brief... but fortunately, I'm going to ignore conscience and write at length about this character anyway." The **should** creates mock-regret while announcing his intention to indulge.

5. Parallel Structure

It **was a matter upon which he was reticent, and with persons of his kind a direct question is never very discreet.**

Two clauses joined by **and** create a **contrast structure**:

It was a matter [upon which he was reticent]

and

[with persons of his kind a direct question is never discreet]

First clause: his personal reticence

Second clause: general principle about "his kind"

The parallel moves from **specific to universal**: "He was guarded about this" + "One should always be guarded with such people." The structure enacts a logical progression from individual case to general rule, justifying the narrator's cautious approach through both personal observation and social wisdom.

3. Parallel Structure

Captain Nichols noticed Strickland for his size and his singular appearance among the crowd that waited for the doors to open; they waited listlessly, some walking to and fro, some **leaning against the wall, and others seated on the curb with their feet in the gutter**; and when they filed into the office he heard the monk who read his papers address him in English.

some walking to and fro,

some leaning against the wall,

and others seated on the curb with their feet in the gutter

Three parallel participial phrases: **some + -ing**, **some + -ing**, **others + -ed**. The last one uses past participle (**seated**) because it describes a state rather than an action.

The parallel structure creates a panoramic effect — multiple simultaneous actions captured in one sweep. Instead of breaking into separate sentences, Maugham keeps it as one flowing observation.

The rhythm builds: short phrase, longer phrase, longest phrase with additional detail (**with their feet in the gutter**). This mirrors how the eye might scan a crowd, lingering on the most vivid detail.

4. Passive Voice

I do not know how he had come upon the notion of going to the South Seas, though I remember that his imagination **had long been haunted** by an island, all green and sunny, encircled by a sea more blue than is found in Northern latitudes.

his imagination had long been haunted by an island

↑

↑

past perfect

passive voice

Past perfect passive: **had been + past participle**. This indicates a state that began in the past and continued up to the reference point. **Long** emphasizes the duration.

Haunt typically takes passive voice in English — we say "the house is haunted," not "the ghost haunts." Here, the imagination is the thing being haunted by the island image.

The perfect aspect suggests this wasn't a sudden obsession but a gradual, persistent influence. The island image had been working on Strickland's mind for an extended period before this moment in the narrative.

5. Complex Tense

There was a strike at Marseilles at the time, and Strickland, having come to the end of his resources, **had apparently found** it impossible to earn the small sum he needed to keep body and soul together.

Strickland... had apparently found it impossible to earn

↑

↑

past perfect

formal object it

The past perfect **had found** places Strickland's difficulty **before** the strike mentioned in the same sentence. The temporal layering is: 1) Strickland's resources ran out (**had found**) → 2) strike occurred (**was a strike**) → 3) narrative present.

Find it impossible to~ uses formal object **it** with the real object being the infinitive phrase **to earn the small sum**. **Apparently** signals the narrator's inference rather than direct knowledge.

This tense choice shows cause and effect: Strickland's desperation preceded and perhaps motivated his presence at the shipping office during the strike.

Chapter 48

1. Relative Clause

I looked at it again, and I said: 'Who would have thought that the overseer of my plantation on the peninsula, **to whom I lent two hundred francs**, had genius?

In **to whom I lent**, **whom** is the indirect object of **lent**. The original sentence was "I lent two hundred francs **to him**" — when relativized, **him** becomes **whom** and the preposition **to** comes along.

I lent two hundred francs to him

↓ (relativization)

to whom I lent two hundred francs

English drags its prepositions around. You could write **whom I lent two hundred francs to** (preposition stranded), but **to whom** keeps the formal register intact. The preposition-fronting signals literary style.

2. Parallel Structure

I saw him, the sea gray under the **mistral and foam**-flecked, watching the vanishing coast of France, which he was destined never to see again; and I thought there was something gallant in his bearing and dauntless in his soul.

Here **mistral and foam-flecked** is **not** parallel structure. The actual pattern is:

the sea [gray under the mistral] and [foam-flecked]

↑

↑

adjective phrase

adjective

Both **gray under the mistral** and **foam-flecked** modify **sea**. It's the sea that is both gray (under the wind) and flecked with foam.

Maugham's technique: He captures the sea's **color** (**gray**) and **texture** (**foam-flecked**) simultaneously, making the reader feel that moment's seascape in full dimension.

3. Subject-Verb Agreement

Somehow I could not get into my story, and after trying once or twice I had to give it up; I started from the beginning in the usual way, and made up my mind I could only tell what I knew of Strickland's life in the **order in which I learnt** the facts.

In **in which I learnt**, the relative pronoun **which** refers back to **order**. The original was "I learnt the facts **in that order**" — relativized:

I learnt the facts in that order

↓

the order in which I learnt the facts

This is Maugham declaring his **narrative strategy**. Instead of artistic reconstruction, he'll follow the chronology of his own discovery. The **in which** structure emphasizes that the telling will mirror the learning — raw temporal sequence, not crafted plot.

4. Subjunctive

He looked **as if he hadn't had a meal for a week**, and I hadn't the heart to refuse him.

as if he hadn't had a meal uses **past perfect subjunctive**. Present reality gets expressed in past perfect to signal "counterfactual possibility."

Reality: He looks hungry

Counterfactual: as if he hadn't had a meal

English pushes the tense **one step further back** to create distance from reality. The **hadn't had** (past perfect) suggests not just hunger, but **sustained** deprivation — he looks like someone who's been without food for an extended time.

5. Inversion

He did not mention the money he owed me, but he said: '**Here is a picture** of your plantation that I've painted for you.'

Here is a picture uses **locative inversion**. Normal order would be "A picture is here," but fronting **Here** triggers subject-verb inversion.

A picture is here → Here is a picture

S V Adv V S

The inversion creates a **presentational** effect — like a magician's "ta-da!" It's the grammar of revealing, of offering something for attention.

In context, Strickland avoids mentioning his debt but presents his painting. The inverted structure mirrors his deflection — dodging one topic while dramatically presenting another.

Chapter 49

1. Subjunctive

Tall and extremely stout, she would have been of imposing presence if the great good-nature of her face had not made it impossible for her to express anything but kindness.

would have been – it would have been (but was it?)

if ... had not made – if it hadn't made (but it did)

This is the past counterfactual. English pushes the tense **one step further into the past** (had pp + would have pp) to signal unreality. A tense removed from the present = a reality removed from the actual.

What Maugham is painting: the contrast between her **physical conditions** (tall, stout) and her **spiritual quality** (good-nature). The subjunctive delivers this irony — her body suggests one thing, her face another.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

After Strickland's death certain of his effects were sold by auction in the market-place at Papeete, and she went to it herself because there was among the truck an American **stove she wanted**.

there was [among the truck] an American stove [she wanted]

↑

relative clause (object)

The relative pronoun **that/which** is omitted from "stove she wanted." In English, when the relative pronoun serves as the **object**, omission is natural: "the book I read" = "the book that I read."

But when it's the subject, omission is impossible: "the man who came" (✓), "the man came" (X).

Why Maugham omits it: smoother flow. "stove she wanted" reads more naturally than "stove that she wanted."

3. Parallel Structure

The daughter of a **native and an English sea-captain** settled in Tahiti, when I knew her she was a woman of fifty, who looked older, and of enormous proportions.

The daughter of [a native] and [an English sea-captain]

↑

↑

parallel

parallel

The articles **a** and **an** are repeated for each element. In parallel structure, English requires **grammatical equality**: "a native" and "an English sea-captain" are both singular noun phrases.

If Maugham had written "native and English sea-captain," **native** might read as an adjective.

Why repeat the articles? To emphasize that these are **two separate individuals**. Her identity emerges from the **meeting** of two cultures.

4. Participial Construction

When the Chinese laundryman refused to wash for him without payment she had sent his things **to be washed with hers**.

she had sent his things [to be washed] with hers

↑

passive infinitive

"to be washed" is a passive infinitive expressing purpose and result. The pattern **send + object + to be pp** means "send something so that it will be [verb]ed."

"I sent the car to be repaired" = the car goes somewhere, and repair happens to it there.

The grammar shows the **process**: she initiates the sending, the washing happens elsewhere. The passive infinitive captures both the **purpose** (so that they would be washed) and the **result** (they end up washed).

5. Non-finite Verb

When the Chinese laundryman refused **to wash for him without payment** she had sent his things to be washed with hers.

refused [to wash for him] without payment

↑

infinitive of purpose

"to wash" serves as the object of **refuse**. The pattern **refuse + to do** is fixed in English: "I refuse to go."

"for him" means "on his behalf." "wash for someone" = "do someone's laundry." If it were "wash him," it would mean "bathe him."

The structure shows the laundryman's **conditional refusal**: "without payment" is the condition, "to wash for him" is the refused action.

Chapter 50

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

They are strangers in their birthplace, and the leafy **lanes they have known from childhood or the populous streets in which they have played, remain** but a place of passage.

A complex subject separated from its verb creates an agreement challenge.

They are strangers...

and [the leafy lanes... or the populous streets...] remain...

The subject consists of two nouns joined by **or**: **lanes** and **streets**. Each carries a relative clause: **lanes they have known** + **streets in which they have played**.

Even with **or**, both elements are conceptually present, so the plural verb **remain** is correct. If truly singular, it would be **remains**.

Why Maugham chose this long subject: He lists **specific childhood memories** before delivering the blow — they "remain but a place of passage." The structure mirrors the emotional arc: detailed attachment → stark dismissal.

2. Subjunctive

Here is the home he sought, and he will settle amid scenes that he has never seen before, among men he has never known, **as though they were familiar to him from his birth**.

as though they were familiar — past subjunctive.

Reality: they were NOT familiar (strangers)

Expression: as though they were familiar (as if they were)

When hypothesizing contrary to present fact, English pushes the tense back one step. "They are unfamiliar now" → "as though they **were** familiar."

The subjunctive creates **psychological distance** from reality. Maugham's point: someone who finds their true home feels familiar **even among strangers**. The grammar captures this paradox — objectively foreign, subjectively familiar.

3. Inversion

Here is the home he sought, and he will settle amid scenes that he has never seen before, among men he has never known, as though they were familiar to him from his birth.

Here is — locative inversion for dramatic emphasis.

Normal order: The home he sought is here.

Inverted order: Here is the home he sought.

Inversion creates a **moment of revelation**. The speaker's attention moves from place to object: "**Here** is what you've been seeking."

Why Maugham chose this structure: Chapter 50 is philosophical reflection on finding one's true home. Starting with **Here is** creates a dramatic **moment of arrival**, of discovery. The syntax mirrors the emotional climax.

4. Passive Voice

I ran across him in the street and congratulated him on the knighthood with which his eminent services during the war **had been rewarded**.

had been rewarded — past perfect passive.

Timeline: wartime services → knighthood awarded → I met him

Grammar: eminent services → had been rewarded → congratulated

The congratulation (**congratulated**) is simple past, but the rewarding happened earlier, hence past perfect (**had been rewarded**). Plus passive voice — he **received** the honor, didn't give it.

The past perfect passive = "something completed earlier by someone else." Maugham's stylistic choice: formal, ceremonial tone befitting the **official nature** of knighthood.

5. Parallel Structure

I should **think he earned ten thousand a year, and his knighthood was but the first of the honours which must inevitably fall to his lot**.

Two independent clauses joined by **and** create **balanced contrast**.

I should think [he earned ten thousand a year]

and

[his knighthood was but the first of the honours...]

First clause: present success (salary)

Second clause: future prospects (more honors)

The parallel structure creates **rhythmic balance** — similar length and complexity in both clauses. The word **but** is key: "the knighthood was **merely** the first." It sounds modest but actually means "greater honors await." Maugham's way of depicting this character's **trajectory of success**.

Here **but** means "only" or "merely," not "however." It's an adverb that emphasizes **limitation**.

Without **but**, the sentence would simply state a fact: "I had learned six words." With **but**, it becomes "I had learned **only** six words"—emphasizing inadequacy. Maugham uses this to highlight the narrator's linguistic helplessness, making the foreign argument sound even more incomprehensible and dramatic.

4. Non-finite Verb

Strickland used **to come here now and then to have a square meal or to play chess with one of the boys**.

Strickland used to come here now and then

↓

to have a square meal ← ↵

├ infinitives of purpose

to play chess ← ↵

The infinitives **to have** and **to play** express **purpose**—why Strickland came. They answer the implicit question "What for?"

The parallel structure (**to have... or to play**) presents two equal motivations for his visits. This creates a casual, realistic portrait: sometimes he came for food, sometimes for chess, sometimes probably both. The **or** suggests these weren't planned visits but spontaneous ones driven by immediate needs.

5. It-Cleft / Formal Subject

She has a bit of property down by Taravao, just before you come to the peninsula, and with copra at the price **it is now you could live quite comfortably**.

with copra at the price it is now you could live quite comfortably

↑

↑

relative clause omitted 'that'

The full structure is **at the price (that) it is now**. The relative pronoun **that** is omitted, and **it** refers back to **copra**.

This is colloquial syntax—the kind of compressed relative clause we use in casual speech. Instead of the more formal "at the price at which copra is selling now," Tiaré uses this streamlined version. It fits her character as someone speaking naturally, not formally.

Chapter 52

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

Then Ata had a baby, and the old **woman who came up to help her through her trouble stayed** on.

A complex subject structure: **the old woman** is the main subject, modified by the relative clause **who came up to help her through her trouble**.

the old woman [who came up to help her through her trouble] stayed on

subject relative clause (modifying subject) verb

English allows the subject to expand with trailing modification, while Korean front-loads the description. Maugham uses this structure to capture both arrival and permanence in one grammatical sweep — the helper who became a stayer.

2. Parallel Structure

It **was a bungalow of unpainted wood, consisting of two small rooms, and outside was a small shed that served as a kitchen.**

Three-layered parallel structure:

It was a bungalow of unpainted wood,

consisting of two small rooms,

and outside was a small shed that served as a kitchen

First: main clause, second: participial phrase, third: coordinated main clause with **and**. The structures vary grammatically while maintaining parallel rhythm. Maugham guides the eye from inside to outside, from structure to function, through this grammatical choreography.

3. Inversion

There was a tree just behind which bore alligator pears, and all **about were the cocoa-nuts** which gave the land its revenue.

Locative inversion with **all about** fronted:

all about were the cocoa-nuts

↓

the cocoa-nuts were all about (normal order)

The inversion emphasizes the spatial setting. Notice the symmetry: **There was a tree just behind** vs **all about were the cocoa-nuts** — one tree behind, many coconuts all around. The inverted structure highlights this spatial contrast between the singular and the surrounding abundance.

4. Relative Clause

There was a tree just behind which bore alligator pears, and all about were the cocoa-nuts **which gave the land its revenue**.

which as subject relative pronoun referring back to **the cocoa-nuts**:

the cocoa-nuts which gave the land its revenue

↑

↑

antecedent

relative pronoun (subject)

Note that **gave** is simple past — this describes the situation during Strickland's time there. The coconuts **were** the revenue source then. The tense anchors us in that specific period of his life.

5. Passive Voice

Sometimes there would be a feast in the neighbourhood, and a pig **would be killed**.

would + be + pp structure expressing **habitual past action in passive voice**:

would be killed = used to be killed (habitual past + passive)

The Korean translation shifts to active voice ("they would kill pigs"), but Maugham keeps the pig's perspective — it **would be killed**. The **would** indicates repeated past situations, while the passive focuses on what happened to the pig rather than who did it. This structure captures the routine nature of village life — occasional feasts, occasional sacrifice.

Chapter 53

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

I live on an atoll, a low island, it is a strip of land surrounding a lagoon, and its beauty is the beauty of the sea and sky and the varied colour of the lagoon and the grace of the cocoa-nut trees; but the **place where Strickland lived had** the beauty of the Garden of Eden.

In complex subjects with relative clauses, the verb agrees with the **head noun**, not the clause.

the place [where Strickland lived] had...

↑

↑

head noun

singular verb

No matter how long the relative clause gets, the agreement is with **place** (singular). If it were **places where...**, we'd need **have**. The relative clause is just decoration — the grammatical skeleton is **place had**.

Maugham's choice of **had** after the long relative clause keeps the reader anchored to the core structure, preventing grammatical drift in a complex sentence.

2. Parallel Structure

He **smiled maliciously at Tiaré, and with lamentations she told us again the story of how at the sale of Strickland's effects she had neglected the pictures, but bought an American stove for twenty-seven francs.**

This sentence **breaks** parallel structure deliberately. Standard parallelism would expect:

He smiled... and she told us...

But Maugham writes:

He smiled... and [with lamentations] she told us...

↑

↑

simple action

adverbial + complex clause

The asymmetry is the point. His malicious smile is sharp and brief. Her response sprawls: **with lamentations... the story of how... she had neglected... but bought...**

The **structure itself** shows the contrast — his economical malice vs. her elaborate regret. Grammar becomes characterization.

3. Inversion

The broad road was shaded by pepper-trees, and **on each side were the plantations**, cocoa-nut and vanilla.

When a locative phrase leads, subject-verb inversion follows:

Normal: The plantations were on each side

Inverted: On each side were the plantations

English has strong Subject-Verb-Object expectations, so inversion creates **spatial emphasis**. The reader's eye follows the road, then discovers the plantations.

Maugham's choice mirrors the physical experience: you're walking down the broad road, looking left and right, and *there* are the plantations. Normal word order would feel more abstract, less embodied.

The inversion makes grammar follow geography.

4. Complex Tense

I **had not intended** to stay more than an hour, but he insisted that I should spend the night.

The past perfect **had not intended** establishes a **temporal baseline** before the main events:

—[had not intended]—→ arrival —→ he insisted —→ (now)

remote past

past

past

The sequence matters: the narrator formed his intention to stay briefly **before** arriving, **before** meeting the host's insistence. English forces this temporal precision through verb form.

Without the past perfect, the timing would be ambiguous. Maugham uses it to set up the contrast: pre-formed plan vs. actual circumstance. The tense structure mirrors the narrative surprise.

5. Participial Construction

When I was building my house in the Paumotus I had slept out for weeks on a harder bed than that, with nothing to shelter me but wild shrubs; and as for vermin, my tough skin should be proof against their malice.

The past continuous **was building** creates an **extended temporal frame** for the main action:

When I was building my house... I had slept out for weeks

↑

↑

ongoing background

experience during that time

This differs from **When I built** (completed event). The continuous tense suggests the house-building was a **process lasting weeks**, during which the narrator endured harsh conditions.

Maugham's point: if he could sleep rough for weeks while building, one night in these conditions is nothing. The tense choice supports his dismissal of the host's concerns about comfort.

Chapter 54

1. Relative Clause

A man **whom he had deeply wronged** told me that he felt a great pity for him."

The relative pronoun **whom** is in the objective case. It moves from its natural position: **he had deeply wronged whom** → **whom he had deeply wronged**.

A man [whom he had deeply wronged] told me
subject [relative clause: obj of wronged] verb

Maugham chooses **whom** over **who** because within the relative clause, it functions as the object of **wronged** (he wronged **him**). This careful attention to case maintains the formal register of the prose.

The structure mirrors how Korean naturally places modifiers before nouns, but English achieves this through **fronting** the relative pronoun.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

He left it on his marriage, and settled down on a small property he had near Quimper to live for the rest of his days in peace; but the **failure of an attorney left** him suddenly penniless, and neither he nor his wife was willing to live in penury where they had enjoyed consideration.

Complex subject-verb agreement in action:

neither he nor his wife was willing
A nor B singular verb

Neither A nor B takes a verb that agrees with the **nearest noun**. Here, **his wife** (singular) governs **was**.

Also note: **failure of an attorney left him** — the subject is **failure** (singular), not **attorney**. The prepositional phrase **of an attorney** modifies **failure** but doesn't affect verb agreement.

English enforces **formal agreement** over semantic logic. Though the meaning involves two people, the grammar treats **neither...nor** as singular.

3. Parallel Structure

Here, on this remote island, he **seemed to have aroused none of the detestation with which he was regarded at home, but compassion rather; and his vagaries were accepted with tolerance.**

This sentence builds **contrastive parallelism**:

none of the detestation ... but compassion rather

A (negative) but B (positive)

None of X, but Y rather means "not X, but rather Y." The word **rather** intensifies the contrast.

The semicolon connects two **coordinate** statements of equal weight. It's stronger than a comma, weaker than a period — perfect for related but complete thoughts.

English makes logical relationships **structurally explicit** through **but...rather** and the semicolon. The grammar itself creates the argumentative framework.

4. It-Cleft / Formal Subject

Every day I was up at dawn, clearing, planting, working on my house, and at night when I threw myself on my bed **it was to sleep like a log till morning.**

This is an **emphatic cleft construction**:

it was to sleep like a log till morning

it was [the real subject/complement]

Original meaning: **to sleep like a log was what happened**

Cleft version: **it was to sleep like a log...**

Maugham uses **it was** to **emphasize the result**. When he threw himself on the bed, the inevitable consequence was deep, log-like sleep.

The structure highlights the **necessity** of that profound rest after hard physical labor. It's not just "I slept" — it's "what happened was this complete, unconscious sleep."

5. Passive Voice

Without that we **should have been lost.**"

This is the **past counterfactual**:

Without that we should have been lost

= If we had not had that, we should have been lost

Should have been equals **would have been** here. In older English, **should** was used for first person conditionals.

English pushes tense **one step further into the past** (had + pp, should have + pp) to signal unreality. The temporal distance creates psychological distance from actual events.

The implication: they **did** have "that," and they **were not** lost. It's a retrospective expression of gratitude for having avoided danger.

Chapter 55

1. Subject-Verb Agreement

The **girl who had brought him was** by this time sitting on the verandah, and here was lying an old woman, with her back to the wall, making native cigarettes.

This sentence has two subjects: **The girl who had brought him** and **an old woman**. The second introduces itself through inversion: **here was lying an old woman**.

The girl ... was sitting (normal order)

here was lying an old woman (inverted)

The inversion creates a **cinematic pan**: first we see the girl sitting, then **here was lying** swivels the camera to reveal a new figure. It's a visual transition technique.

The relative clause **who had brought him** identifies which girl, using past perfect **had brought** to show this action preceded her sitting on the verandah.

2. Parallel Structure

He felt always the furious hatred that must seize a man condemned when he compared himself with the **doctor, sane and healthy**, who had the inestimable privilege of life.

Here **sane and healthy** are **parallel adjectives** modifying **doctor**. The commas make this **non-restrictive modification**—additional information rather than essential identification.

the doctor, sane and healthy, who had...

↑ ↑

noun parallel adjectives (extra info)

The commas create **contrastive emphasis**. They visually separate the leper Strickland from the doctor who is "sane and healthy." The spacing on the page mirrors the gulf between them.

The relative clause **who had the inestimable privilege of life** extends this, amplifying what the doctor possesses that Strickland has lost.

3. Subjunctive

When Tané left me I told him I would send some medicine that might be of service; but my hope was small that Strickland would consent to take it, and even smaller **that, if he did, it would do him good**.

This is **nested conditional reasoning**. In `if he did`, the auxiliary `did` substitutes for the entire verb phrase `would consent to take it`.

if he did (= if he consented to take it)

it would do him good

The doctor expresses **layered doubt**: 1) Would Strickland accept the medicine? 2) Even if he did, would it help? The phrase `even smaller that` creates **graduated despair**—the second possibility is slimmer than the already slim first one.

The `did` is a **pro-verb**, standing in for the complex action mentioned earlier. English uses this substitution to avoid repetition while maintaining the conditional structure.

4. Passive Voice

The bush was encroaching, and it looked as though very soon the primeval forest would regain possession of that strip of land which **had been snatched** from it at the cost of so much labour.

The past perfect passive `had been snatched` creates **double temporal distance**. It's passive (the land was acted upon) and past perfect (earlier than the moment of observation).

[remote past] had been snatched → [past] looked → [present]

when land was cleared

narrator observing

The passive voice gives us **the land's perspective**—it was the victim of human action. The phrase `at the cost of so much labour` emphasizes how hard-won this clearing was, making the forest's reconquest more poignant.

The structure mirrors the theme: human effort (active labor) versus natural reclamation (passive return). The grammar embodies the story.

5. Participial Construction

When he had seen her he was taken into another room and given dinner—raw fish, fried bananas, and chicken—que sais-je, the typical dinner of the indigène—and while he was eating it he saw a young girl being driven away from the door in tears.

This sentence chains **past participles** in passive constructions: `was taken`, `given dinner`, `being driven away`. All show actions done **to** people, not **by** them.

he was taken into another room

(and) given dinner ← 'and' omitted

he saw a girl being driven away

The passive chain emphasizes **Tané's powerlessness**. He's not an agent but someone things happen to. The final image—a young girl being driven away in tears—uses **progressive passive** to capture the scene in motion.

The structure mirrors the content: people being acted upon, moved around, expelled. The grammar of helplessness.

Chapter 57

1. Complex Tense

AT that moment we were interrupted by the appearance of Madame Coutras, who **had been paying** visits.

Past perfect continuous (had been paying) shows **ongoing action up to a past moment**.

—[had been paying visits]—▶ appeared —▶ (now)

was in the process of visiting appeared

The Korean translation "다녀온" sounds like a completed action, but the original means "was in the ongoing process of visiting." The continuous aspect (-ing) emphasizes the **duration and habitual nature** of the activity.

Maugham chose **had been paying** over simple **had paid** to characterize Madame Coutras as someone who **actively maintains** her social rounds, not just someone who made a single visit.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

She had not yielded for an instant to the enervating charm of the tropics, but contrariwise was more active, more worldly, more decided than **anyone in a temperate clime would have thought** it possible to be.

Complex subject structure: **anyone** is the main subject, **in a temperate clime** is the modifying phrase.

anyone [in a temperate clime] would have thought it possible to be

subject [modifier] verb phrase

English **structurally separates** the subject from its modifier, while Korean flows naturally as "온대 기후에 사는 누구라도." The **would have thought** is past counterfactual — "would have expected" (but couldn't have imagined the reality).

Maugham's point: Madame Coutras's vitality **exceeds normal expectations**. The conditional tense grammatically expresses how she surpasses what **anyone would have thought** possible.

3. Parallel Structure

Working silently, knowing that it was his last chance, I fancied that here he must have said **all that he knew of life and all that he divined**.

Parallel structure: **all that he knew** + **all that he divined** creates perfect symmetry.

all that he knew of life and all that he divined

[relative clause 1: knowledge] [relative clause 2: intuition]

The **structural repetition** `all that he + verb` creates rhythm and emphasis. The contrast between `knew` (rational knowledge) and `divined` (intuitive insight) suggests Strickland's art combined **both intellect and instinct**.

The parallel grammar reinforces the meaning: his final work was complete because it contained **everything** — both what he had learned and what he had sensed.

4. Subjunctive

Because he painted the trees I see about me every day, the cocoa-nuts, the banyans, the flamboyants, the alligator-pears, I have seen them ever since differently, **as though there were in them a spirit and a mystery which I am ever on the point of seizing and which forever escapes me**.

`as though there were` is subjunctive past, expressing imagination contrary to present reality.

`as though there were in them a spirit and a mystery`

`as if ~existed` (but they're just trees)

English **grammatically encodes** the unreality through verb form: `were` instead of `are` immediately signals "this is not actual fact." The subjunctive creates distance from literal truth.

Dr. Coutras doesn't literally believe trees have spirits. But since seeing Strickland's paintings, he **feels as if** they do. The subjunctive captures this subtle distinction between rational knowledge and aesthetic experience.

5. Participial Construction

He was willing to die, **for he had fulfilled his purpose**.

Here `for` is a **coordinating conjunction** meaning "because." It provides post-positioned explanation.

He was willing to die, for he had fulfilled his purpose.

result reason

Unlike `because`, `for` is more **literary and reflective**. It presents the reason as an **afterthought or meditation** rather than a direct causal link.

Maugham chose `for` over `because` to give the sentence a **contemplative quality**. This isn't just cause-and-effect; it's a **philosophical conclusion** about Strickland's life. The conjunction matches the gravity of the statement.

Chapter 58

1. Relative Clause

According to the gracious custom of the island, presents were given me by the persons **with whom I had been thrown in contact**—baskets made of the leaves of the cocoa-nut tree, mats of pandanus, fans; and Tiaré gave me three little pearls and three jars of guava-jelly made with her own plump hands.

whom is the object of the preposition **with**. Modern English often uses **who**, but Maugham maintains formal register.

the persons [with whom I had been thrown in contact]

└ prepositional phrase modifying the entire relative clause

"thrown in contact" is passive and metaphorical. Not "I contacted them" but "fate threw me into contact" — suggesting chance encounters. The past perfect **had been thrown** places these meetings in a time layer **before** the gift-giving moment.

Temporal layers: meetings → receiving gifts → narrative present.

2. Subject-Verb Agreement

Gone were the Morris papers and gone the severe cretonnes, gone were the Arundel prints that had adorned the walls of her drawing-room in Ashley Gardens; the room blazed with fantastic colour, and I wondered if she knew that those varied **hues, which fashion had imposed upon her, were** due to the dreams of a poor painter in a South Sea island.

Gone were is inversion for emphasis. Normal order would be "The Morris papers were gone," but fronting **gone** creates dramatic impact.

Gone were [the Morris papers]

Gone [the severe cretonnes]

Gone were [the Arundel prints that had adorned...]

Three repetitions of "Gone" create rhythm. The subject-verb agreement follows: **papers were**, **cretonnes (were)**, **prints were**. The relative clause **which fashion had imposed** is parenthetical, separate from the main verb **were**.

This inversion serves **dramatic transformation** — emphasizing the complete erasure of the old aesthetic.

3. Parallel Structure

Her face, **thin and not much lined**, was of the sort that ages gracefully, so that you thought in youth she must have been a much handsomer woman than in fact she was.

thin and not much lined shows two adjectival phrases joined by **and** in parallel structure.

Her face, [thin] and [not much lined], was...

└ adjective

└ negation + past participle

"lined" is a past participle functioning as an adjective ("wrinkled"). The negation "not much" softens it to "not heavily wrinkled."

This parallel structure creates **progressive description**: first "thin," then "not much lined" — two qualities combining to paint a face that "ages gracefully."

The coordination builds the portrait piece by piece.

4. Passive Voice

If you haven't read his book your education **has been shamefully neglected**, and you must repair the omission at once.

has been neglected is present perfect passive: **have/has + been + past participle**.

your education [has been] [shamefully neglected]

pres. perf. adverb + past part.

The present perfect suggests ongoing neglect up to now. Simple past **was neglected** would imply a finished state, leaving the present unclear.

shamefully adds moral judgment — not just "lacking" but "disgracefully lacking." The speaker's strong opinion colors the assessment.

The present perfect's **continuity** implies this neglect persists and needs immediate remedy ("you must repair").

5. Participial Construction

When I was ushered into the drawing-room I found that Mrs. Strickland had a visitor, and when I discovered who he was, I guessed that I had been asked to come at just that time not without intention.

When I was ushered uses passive voice in a temporal clause. **usher** means "to escort formally."

When [I was ushered into the drawing-room]

└ passive: someone escorted me

The active would be "When someone ushered me," but the passive focuses on **the experience of being escorted** rather than the escort.

ushered carries formal connotations — not just "entered" but "was formally conducted in." This suggests upper-class domestic protocol.

The passive voice here emphasizes the narrator's **reception** rather than agency, fitting the social context of a formal visit.