



## Dark Star Safari: Overland from Cairo to Cape Town

Paul Theroux

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In the travel-writing tradition that made Paul Theroux's reputation, Dark Star Safari is a rich and insightful book whose itinerary is Africa, from Cairo to Cape Town: down the Nile, through Sudan and Ethiopia, to Kenya, Uganda, and ultimately to the tip of South Africa. Going by train, dugout canoe, "chicken bus," and cattle truck, Theroux passes through some of the most beautiful — and often life-threatening — landscapes on earth.

This is travel as discovery and also, in part, a sentimental journey. Almost forty years ago, Theroux first went to Africa as a teacher in the Malawi bush. Now he stops at his old school, sees former students, revisits his African friends. He finds astonishing, devastating changes wherever he goes. "Africa is materially more decrepit than it was when I first knew it," he writes, "hungrier, poorer, less educated, more pessimistic, more corrupt, and you can't tell the politicians from the witch doctors. Not that Africa is one place. It is an assortment of motley republics and seedy chiefdoms. I got sick, I got stranded, but I was never bored. In fact, my trip was a delight and a revelation." Seeing firsthand what is happening across Africa, Theroux is as obsessively curious and wittily observant as always, and his readers will find themselves on an epic and enlightening journey. Dark Star Safari is one of his bravest and best books.



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