

Le Revolver de Maigret

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Vintage Maigret I suspect. They all start, I guess, with an incident involving Maigret or his wife, and which turn out to be part of a much bigger story, into which Maigret is drawn. In this case we have a young man stealing his revolver, and a baronet down on his heels, actually being the father of the latter, a big suitcase containing the cadaver of a deputy moved from the father's apartment to a depot at Gare du Nord, an intriguing woman of means with a maid who tries to seduce Maigret while being questioned for information. It also involves a hurried flight to London, where Maigret feels himself out of water and unable to function in the unconventional and liberal way he has managed to provide for himself back in Paris. The whole thing comes to some kind of closure in the end, but admittedly not very convincingly, and more seriously that the reader does not really care. What does the reader care about? The same thing that he cares about in a Sherlock Holmes story, namely the charm of the 'soap', meeting a well-known character, does not matter what he does, and some well-known surroundings. High recognition factor being a very important aspect of feeling secure and comfortable. Thus it is difficult to subject the novel to any lengthier or deeper analysis, unless both the writer and his intended audience are real Maigret aficionados. Anything can be made into an acquired taste, and there is always the option of going into inconsequential detail in search of the devil.

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