



Maigret and the Hundred Gibbets

Georges Simenon , Tony White (Translator)

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Maigret was in high spirits on a visit to Brussels. For fun he started to trail a down-at-heel man he had seen packeting up thousand-franc notes and posting them as 'Printed Matter.' But the jaunt turned sour at Bremen, when the quarry took out a gun and shot himself: and Maigret knew he was to blame. In the end it was in a crazy slum at Liege, Simenon's birthplace, that the inspector heard a story so macabre, so sick, so sordid that it made remorse irrelevant.

Maigret and the Hundred Gibbets Details

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From Reader Review *Maigret and the Hundred Gibbets* for online ebook

Tfitoby says

An early Maigret that doesn't disappoint. Simenon himself was a bit of an enigma and the way he writes Maigret in these early books probably tells you a lot more about how Simenon saw himself than it does about the man who would go on to star in over 70 detective novels. And no more so than this highly enjoyable read.

This is probably as much of a psychological study as Simenon could make his Maigret novels; unlike his other work, his roman durs, Jules Maigret inhabits the lighter side of Simenon's literature and whilst there's always somebody meeting a grizzly end and people behaving in a seemingly reprehensible manner these books are more often found to be almost light-hearted and populated by oddball characters, the least of which is the charming, often aloof, always drinking and eating something delicious, Chief Inspector Maigret.

All the usual ingredients are to be found in this book but it's the 30 page denouement that elevates this above the also rans and the swiftly written lesser Maigrets in my opinion. The confession of *The Companions of the Apocalypse* mirrors the reported events of the death of one of Georges Simenon's boyhood acquaintances and armed with this knowledge it feels almost like a confession from the great writer. And as close a one as you're likely to get from a man who consistently lied about himself, even in his own memoirs. I think the catharsis he enjoyed from writing this story is a major factor in the quality of the psychological insight to be found, especially so early in the series/his career.

Ivonne Rovira says

The Hanged Man of Saint-Pholien (also published as *Maigret and the Hundred Gibbets*) begins with Detective Chief Inspector Jules Maigret following a French suspect in Germany, one who commits suicide within the first few pages. Maigret immediately realizes that, without meaning to, he has caused a certain Louis Genet to shoot himself in the mouth.

This terrible turn of event leads Maigret to try to discover more about this Louis Genet — who turns out to be traveling under an assumed name. As Maigret tries to find out this man's real identity, he stumbles onto a bigger — and older — crime. To say more would be to ruin the mystery, but let me say that, of the four Georges Simenon novels I've read, this is the most unusual and the best. The novel really shows Maigret as the unique officer of the law that he is. Highly recommended.

Laura says

Au terme d'une mission accomplie à Bruxelles, Maigret, intrigué par un individu suspect aperçu dans un petit café de la ville, le suit jusqu'à son arrivée à Brême où l'inconnu, qui s'appelle Jeunet, se suicide en constatant qu'on a substitué à sa valise une autre toute semblable. Maigret, qui avait procédé à cette substitution pendant le voyage en train, s'aperçoit que la valise de Jeunet contient de vieux vêtements tachés de sang.

4* Pietr the Latvian (Maigret, #1)
3* The Carter of 'La Providence' (Maigret, #2)
3* The Late Monsieur Gallet (Maigret, #3)
4* The Hanged Man of Saint-Pholien (Maigret, #4)
3* A Man's Head (Maigret #5)
4* The Yellow Dog (Maigret #6)
4* The Night at the Crossroads (Maigret #7)
2* A Crime in Holland (Maigret #8)
3* The Dancer at the Gai-Moulin (Maigret #10)
3* The Two-Penny Bar (Maigret, #11)
4* Lock No. 1 (Maigret, #18)
4* The Cellars of the Majestic (Maigret, #20)
3* Inspector Cadaver (Maigret, #25)
4* Maigret's Holiday (Maigret, #28)
4* La première enquête de Maigret (Maigret, #30)
4* My Friend Maigret (Maigret #31)
4* Maigret at the Coroner's (Maigret #32)
3* The Friend of Madame Maigret (Maigret #34)
3* Maigret and the Burglar's Wife (Maigret, #38)
TR The Grand Banks Café (Maigret, #9)
TR The Shadow Puppet (Inspector Maigret #12)
TR The Saint-Fiacre Affair (Inspector Maigret #13)
TR The Flemish House (Maigret, #14)
TR The Misty Harbour (Maigret, #15)
TR The Madman of Bergerac (Inspector Maigret #16)
TR Liberty Bar (Maigret, #17)
TR Maigret (Maigret, #19)
TR The Judge's House (Maigret, #21)
TR Cécile is Dead (Maigret, #22)
TR Signed, Picpus (Maigret, #23)
TR Félicie (Maigret, #24)
TR Maigret Se Fache (Maigret, #26)
TR Maigret à New York (Maigret, #27)
TR Il morto di Maigret (Maigret, #29)
TR Maigret et la Vieille Dame (Maigret, #33)
TR Le memorie di Maigret (Maigret #35)
TR Maigret in Montmartre (Maigret #36)
TR Maigret Rents a Room (Maigret #37)
TR Maigret and the Gangsters (Maigret #39)
TR Maigret's Revolver (Maigret #40)

Gaetano says

Questo romanzo, il quarto della serie del commissario Maigret, è stata una lettura molto coinvolgente ed amara. Simenon, con uno stile quasi dimesso, ci precipita nel grigiore della provincia olandese, con ambientazioni povere, squallide, così lontane dai fasti dei viali parigini.

Anche i personaggi sono falsi, ambigui, nervosi e l'inchiesta del commissario procede con fatica in questo clima teso e misterioso, a volte quasi da dramma psicologico più che da romanzo giallo.

Fortemente condizionata da una esperienza autobiografica di Simenon, con inquietanti analogie, la storia parla di una giovinezza ormai andata, lasciando indietro romantici ideali e folli vendette.

Il finale trasuda dell'umanità di Maigret, che va oltre le regole, ma che gli fa sentire il peso degli avvenimenti al punto da dire:

Dieci casi come questo e do le dimissioni... Perché sarebbe la prova che lassù c'è un Dio galantuomo che si incarica di fare il poliziotto...

David Highton says

Maigret follows a suspicious character to Bremen and witnesses his suicide - he determines to find out why, and the back story takes him across Belgium and France. Quite a strong psychological strain runs through this book, with Maigret's doggedness putting on the pressure.

Rachel says

Maigret no. 4 - very enjoyable despite unlikely subject matter. I felt I can see the development of the Maigret character having recently read no. 1.

Rafa Sánchez says

Otra magistral muestra de dominio del género por Simenon. Maigret es un gran tipo, el policía que sufre con los delincuentes.

Lynne says

A poignant and moving examination of suicide and youthful idealism again showing there is much more to Georges Simenon's Maigret series than simple detective stories. Excellent.

F.R. says

On a train journey, Inspector Maigret spies a shifty, nervous young man guarding a battered old suitcase with odd intensity. Maigret judges the man suspicious and so follows him, then at an opportune moment let's a strange curiosity gets the better of him and switches the man's suitcase for a lookalike. Later though he witnesses the man open the new case and be so horrified by what he finds – or what he doesn't find – that he immediately blows his brains out. But when Maigret opens the real case, he finds that it contains nothing

valuable at all, just a stained old suit.

Maigret begins to investigate. But this isn't a case where the Inspector is called in to meet a strange new crime, but one loaded with guilt as Maigret tries to find out just how responsible he is for this death.

This isn't so much a whodunit then, as 'a what the hell is going on' crime novel. The Inspector swiftly comes across a group of men who are connected to the deceased and are obviously covering up. But what are they covering up? And why is it so important that Maigret now finds his life in danger?

Obviously this is the kind of mystery which only exists in crime fiction. No police force, on either side of The Channel, is going to hold their hands up to ever having a case like this. But the lack of realism, or the fact that it's all building up to a stagey revelation scene, doesn't impact how hard this novel hits. Yes, there's a huge amount of artifice, but it feels like there's a real humanity at stake here. So by the end we're not just looking at the denouement (as we sometimes do with Ms Sayers or Ms Christie) for how cleverly the author has deployed the red herrings, but actually feeling real human emotions and a surfeit of compassion.

It's crime fiction, but it's not crime fiction just about death – it's about regrets and escaping your past and making sure that your kids are raised properly. It's about people, and it's all the more powerful for it.

Columbus says

3.5 stars

This is my favorite Maigret thus far. I really enjoyed this one and it really deserved a 3 and a half stars from me. This is the 4th book in the series and I have about 71 more to go.

Nancy Oakes says

The more Maigret novels I read, the more I believe I've made a good choice in reading the entire series. I am only through book four and I'm already craving the next one.

This time I'm linking my thoughts on this book directly to my reading journal where I talk about it in conjunction with the other two I've just recently finished, The Carter of 'La Providence' and The Late Monsieur Gallet.

<http://www.crimesegments.com/2017/09/...>

Simenon is a master of human nature, and considering I read mainly to discover what makes people tick, well, I'm in my element here.

FangirlNation says

In The Hanged Man of Saint-Pholien by Georges Simenon, Detective Chief Inspector Maigret is on a train when he sees a man acting curiously. So Maigret follows the man to Brussels, where he gets a room

adjoining the first man's room in a cheap motel. Spying through the keyhole, Maigret sees the man put a gun to his mouth and pull the trigger.

Read the rest of this review and other fun, geeky articles at Fangirl Nation

Rage says

as I read through this, I found myself appreciating the psychological quality of the narrative. I found the ending of the story somehow simultaneously maudlin and surprisingly satisfactory. it's very dramatic - as are the scenes where Maigret dashes through Paris, trying to get to newspaper archives before someone else gets there first to rip out the pages. Simenon creates situations that he can describe in lovely, curious ways.

Nick Jones says

I like the Maigret stories. I like Maigret: he has none of the annoying eccentricities of many literary detectives: he is just a cop going about his business in a thoughtful and conscientious way. I'm not sure that he is a more complex character than, for instance, Sherlock Holmes, and, perhaps, like Holmes, he is no more than an accumulation of clear but simple characteristics (his physical bulk, the pipe, etc), but, at least for me, these characteristics come together to form a more realistic human being. But, more importantly, while Holmes seems happiest identifying different types of cigarette ash or following lines of logical deduction (often from stupidly ludicrous premises), Maigret observes people and measures their character...I think this creates a vastly more interesting literature than sifting through inanimate clues. And I like the atmosphere of the Maigret novels: Paris at night, often in the rain or cold: these are books that we have to picture in black and white. And they tend to be little more than 120 pages, a very sensible length for a detective novel. This is one of the early stories – and the first eleven Maigret stories were published in 1931: they came fast and furious, the format quickly set, an imaginative world unrolled. There is a certain variation on the usual police procedural narrative: Maigret has just finished a case in Brussels and is returning to Paris when he notices a poorly dressed man at the station stuffing an envelope with bank notes; suspecting that mischief is afoot, but partly out of vanity, Maigret follows the man and, being intrigued by the man's shabby suitcase, he swaps it for an identical one; the man, on finding his case has been stolen, kills himself. Maigret's investigation, which is not an official police investigation, to find the identity of the man and the reasons for his actions, is partly the usual detective's search for the 'truth', but it is also motivated by Maigret's sense of guilt and the means to make amends for his crime. As is usual in detective narratives, the story moves forward with Maigret's investigation, but also 'backwards' into the past as the story behind the initial events is revealed. As is often the case, if we stop to think about the investigation, things fall together with a certain ease – but the movement of the narrative tends to stop us thinking about such things. At times, with the reiteration of plot points, it seems a little clumsy – and, as is often the case, there are long explanations at the end when the narrative behind the narrative is revealed...I know these are the whole point of the detective novel, the criminal events that need to be exposed, but I always find them a little dull, a bit of an anti-climax. And the exposed story is one about students acting as though they were superior beings, being convinced of their intellectual and moral superiority over the common person, a sort of pop Nietzsche, and this leading to murder and catastrophe. This creates an opposition with the normality of Maigret and the Law: to challenge normality leads to immorality: there's a conservative heart to the story. And the original French title is much better than the English one, although it became the convention to name Maigret in the titles. But it's a fun book and I enjoyed the atmosphere, although maybe not one of the best.

Lady Delacour says

This is my 4th George Simenon book.
Each book just gets better.
Narrator Gareth Armstrong has a great voice.
His female voices are always interesting.
Clean except for one word of Foul Language.

Orinoco Womble (tidy bag and all) says

My least favorite Maigret so far. As far as I know this one was never filmed, and I can see why. It hurts to give Simenon one star, but this book was uneven. Maybe Simenon was experimenting with the "romans durs" that he would later write, but this novel seems to fall between the two stools of the police procedural Maigret and the "roman dur"--in the most unsatisfactory manner.

I do like the fact that Maigret is not the perfect supercop of modern PP fiction: he makes mistakes, gets the wrong ideas, and sometimes his deductions are wild. The beginning was promising: Maigret decides to have a little fun with a shabby little man he suspects of being up to no good, so he follows him around and exchanges suitcases with him to see what he's carrying. When the suspect discovers he's lost his stuff, he commits suicide, leaving the Inspector confused and feeling he has indirectly killed the man. He proceeds to try to find out what caused it, and that's where the book gets odd. Maigret spends the rest of the novel harping around between France and Belgium, always one step behind events. The ending is pure "tell not show" and the actual "story" behind the little nebbish's death is most rocambolesque (to use the French word) and in my view, unsatisfactory and unpleasant.

Nadia says

Second sad story in a row. I guess you can pity criminals here too. Only I'm not sure they are even criminals but they were sufficiently punished by life for their crime. This is the story about four sad men half of which went crazy from unbearable guilt.
Maigret here is always late until he comes on time.

Kartikey Shandilya says

3.5/5

Jim says

Georges Simenon is the antidote to all those fussy little mysteries where everything is so clear-cut, and all

the detective has to do is waltz between a few suspects until he or she finds the guilty party in a final dash of brilliance. No, there is a kind of Gallic fog about Simenon's Inspector Maigret. Maigret is French to a fault. We start out **Maigret and the Hundred Gibbets** with a few very discordant facts, and very little idea of whether a crime was committed or, if so, the nature of that crime:

A poor unemployed workingman travels to Bremen with a cheap suitcase.

On a hunch, Maigret follows him and, at the station, out of a sense of playfulness, trades suitcases (he has an identical one).

When he finds out that the suitcases have been exchanged, the workingman commits suicide by shooting himself in the mouth with a revolver.

What was in the traded suitcase? Nothing but an old suit with bloodstains on it.

There are four or five men who seem to come together at odd times when Maigret is around; and they are obviously very put out with Maigret's involvement. What does this French cop know? Is he on to us?

And so it goes until Maigret discovers the facts of the case by a process known in French as *débrouiller* or "cutting through the fog." This case, like so many of Maigret's, is clearly wrapped in some obscuring mists. It is Maigret's stolidity and persistence which sees him through the smoke, despite two murder attempts on him, and outlasting his adversaries (when he doesn't even know why they are his adversaries).

I love reading Simenon's mysteries, and this is one of his good early ones.

John Defrog says

I was excited when Penguin started reprinting all of George Simenon's Maigret novels, but the first in the series, *Pietr the Latvian*, indicated that the early Maigret novels were somewhat unpolished compared to the later novels where Maigret had matured as a character. I needn't have worried – this fourth novel is classic Maigret, where the focus is more on the psychology of the characters than pulp detective action. The story begins when Maigret follows a man acting suspiciously and inadvertently causes him to commit suicide in a hotel room in Brussels. Determined to find out why, Maigret investigates and soon finds himself hounded by Joseph Van Damme, a successful businessman with no obvious connection to the case yet a little too interested in what Maigret does or doesn't know. It's an interesting and concise story, but the main appeal for me is in watching Maigret work – his doggedness, and his Columbo-like ability to both annoy his suspects and play dumb to the point that they underestimate him.
