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Maigret Et La Vieille Dame (Lectures Cle En Francais Facile - Level 2)



Synopsis

Le troisième roman de Simenon, enfin adapté. Pour tous les amateurs de roman policier et du Commissaire Maigret. Qui pouvait vouloir tuer la vieille Valentine Besson, dont la servante, Rose, est morte d'avoir bu un verre d'eau destiné à sa patronne, et contenant des somnifères ? Maigret, appelé à faire la lumière sur ce meurtre, soupçonne un moment Arlette, la fille de Valentine, qui semble avoir une vie privée assez trouble avec son mari, Théo. Mais la cupidité ne peut être le mobile : la vieille dame ne possédait plus que des copies de bijoux, répliques de la fabuleuse collection jadis constituée par son mari. Sur ces entrefaites, Valentine abat d'un coup de revolver un " radeur " qui n'est autre que le frère de Rose. Pour Maigret, qui vient de découvrir une émeraude authentique, les pièces du puzzle commencent à s'assembler... Dans une atmosphère de vacances balnéaires, ce sont de bien sombres mystères qui vont peu à peu être dévoilés par le sagace enquêteur.

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Customer Reviews

Love these CLE Maigret readers. We use them in an advanced French adult class, and everyone enjoys them. Maigret provides continuity for the stories. There are always some insightful facts about French culture or the times when these were written. There is use of the passe simple, passe compose and other verb tenses. There is about 1200 vocabulary in this level. The questions at the end spark class discussion and are used for homework. Wish this publishing company would publish a lot of Maigret easy readers as they are a hit with our class.

"Maigret Mystified" is the British translation of "L'Ombre Chinoise." The French title literally means "the Chinese shadow" but in this case figuratively refers to shadows viewed through windows. Indeed the first chapter is titled "The Shadow Against the Window," which sets the tone for the book, one of muted and confusing images. In this murder mystery set among the flats circling the Place de Vosges in the Marais district of Paris, even the personality of Senior Inspector Jules Maigret is unusually stolid and low-key, and his murder investigation can most generously be described as flat-footed. Take, for example, Maigret's failure for two days to even think of searching for the murder weapon, a gun. Substituting for a sense of action and energy in this novel are finely-drawn portraits of representatives from the many social layers that the French label the bourgeoisie. The author Georges Simenon and his protagonist Maigret appear to admire the demimondaine mistress of the murdered man, for she is depicted as emotionally honest and satisfied with her fate in life. Otherwise, those connected to or affected by the murder lead lives made desperate by unhappiness, petty jealousies, and a desire for greater wealth. In all of his work, Simenon is brilliant at depicting the complexities of French social structure. One wishes in "Maigret Mystified" that he had paid equal attention to crafting a compelling mystery story.

the book arrived on time, as described.

I didn't see the other versions available for this book, and ended up buying the wrong thing for a class. Was still useful though.

Although not commonly heard of nowadays (in the English speaking world at least) Georges Simenon was a very prolific writer of the detective genre, most famous for his Maigret series (with well over a hundred books stretching from 1931 all the way to 1972!!). Maigret is basically a French response to detectives like Sherlock Holmes. Not as interested in physical evidence and the rational, he seeks to understand the characters behind the cases and their often tragic lives. Maigret has an aspect of humanism and warmth throughout the books, especially for those less fortunate in French society. His cases present an element of uncertainty that is natural when dealing with people and are thus much more realistic than Sherlock Holmes type stories (although less satisfying "logically"). This particular book describes Maigret's wrestling with some American gangsters that come to Paris for unknown reasons and then amongst other things, kidnap his unpleasant/pathetic colleague Lognon. The whole book follows a culture clash as the gangsters and the people Maigret

talks to about the case, such as Poccho the dodgy Sicilian-born US expat, are much more direct and familiar, and are used to resisting police. There is also an element of pride as everyone tells Maigret not to bother - these aren't your French amateurs but real American gangsters who don't much about. But of course he shows them! The Maigret novels may not be profound literature but they are extremely well written, compassionate and involving detective stories. This one is like a clash of genres with the 1920s gangster book and the Maigret empathetic-but-tough-French-detective-book coming together.

Inspector Maigret and the Killers (1952) was obviously written for the French audience with no concern for a future American translation. It seems that Simenon did his research for this novel by watching old Warner Brothers' gangster films of the 1930s and '40s. For in it, we are introduced to two St. Louis (Mafia) hoods following a third to Paris to wipe him out. It's a transatlantic gang war with Maigret being constantly advised to "let it go," because all American gangsters are so ruthless, blood thirsty, and cunningly evil that they are beyond his ability to comprehend or apprehend. The Inspector resents this attitude and goes after the swarthy assassins whose last names end in vowels. Along the way, Simenon makes it clear he believes these professional killers are a dime a dozen in America, an alleged breeding ground for hooliganism. Although the premise is a bit overwrought, it's a decent mystery with a good amount of suspense and kind of a hoot to read, especially the shoot out between cops and one of the gangsters on the streets of Paris. It's another winner in the Maigret series.

Murder in a quiet Paris square... This is one of the earliest Maigrets, in which the Inspector gradually uncovers a genteel underworld of old jealousies and stifled hatreds in the mystifying case of M. Couchet, shot dead in the office of his pharmaceutical firm.

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