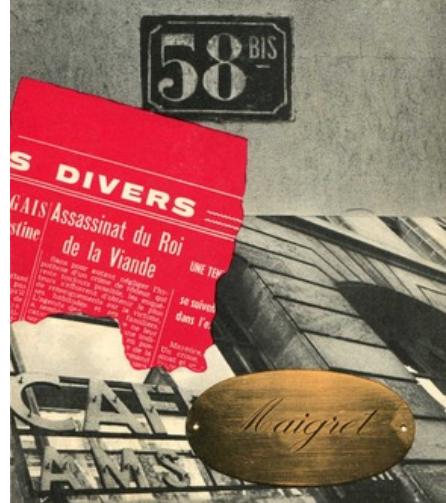




Maigret's failure

Simenon



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Georges Simenon (Author) , Daphne Woodward (Translator)

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Maigret is not infallible. Had prejudice forced him into failure in the Fumal case? He had been unable to mask his antipathy for the bloated meat-merchant when he called on him, with a recommendation from the Minister of the Interior, to seek police protection. It had made it no better to discover he had been at school with this tough, malicious Midas. He had hated Fattie Fumal, even then. Everybody had: it seemed everybody still did.

When in spite of precautions, Fumal is brutally murdered in his own home, Maigret has to examine his conscience. Could he have done more? And now... which of Fumal's dubious, drunken entourage had acted as executioner for the rest?

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From Reader Review Maigret's Failure for online ebook

John Frankham says

Another fine Maigret, here almost a locked house mystery, with a host of well-observed characters from a range of class and background. Compelling.

The GR blurb:

'Maigret is not infallible. Had prejudice forced him into failure in the Fumal case? He had been unable to mask his antipathy for the bloated meat-merchant when he called on him, with a recommendation from the Minister of the Interior, to seek police protection. It had made it no better to discover he had been at school with this tough, malicious Midas. He had hated Fattie Fumal, even then. Everybody had: it seemed everybody still did.'

When in spite of precautions, Fumal is brutally murdered in his own home, Maigret has to examine his conscience. Could he have done more? And now... which of Fumal's dubious, drunken entourage had acted as executioner for the rest?

Joan - xstitchfan says

I take exception with the title of this book. I would suggest renaming it "The Bad Man's Karma". The main victim in the book, Mr. Fumal, contacts the police believing someone is going to kill him. He admits that no one likes him - including his wife, his mistress, all of his employees, and everyone he's ever met in business. When he is murdered, Maigret doesn't know who to suspect. We think of the "CSI effect" or "DNA effect" as very recent developments that put pressure on police to solve cases immediately. First published in 1956, this book shows local newspapers are just as unrealistic when viewing the realities of police work. The daily headlines blame the police for not closing the cases now. Maigret feels low much of the book because of 2 unsolved cases. This is another great Simenon book that kept me awake reading far into the night!

Jeffrey says

I adore these fabulous 1950's era French mysteries - Simenon is a subtle and fabulous stylist and Maigret is a really masterful creation - what I think is amazing is the detail that he fills these novels with but - compared to our contemporary mystery offerings - many of these books are under 200-pages but have fabulous plots and supple psychological insights! Camilleri seems to me to be a true to the marvellous Simenon!

John says

I have given this book 4 stars despite the fact that the plot is a bit weak and the ending definitely unsatisfactory.

Simenon was such a great writer that even his not so good books are difficult to put down.

The victim in this book hardly appears while alive but the reader will detest him so much that he will readily understand why anyone would want to kill him. Even Maigret himself feels this.

All the characters and locations are marvelously described. Brilliant !!

I thoroughly enjoyed it as I do nearly all Maigret stories.

Gary says

After a break from Simenon, suddenly reading so many Creasy novels, comparing them fully escapes me for now. Maigret seems confused and distraught, but Gideon is always, almost always, on top of his game. Psychologically, Maigret is more realistic, and Simenon's plots stay closer to the earth, but Gideon's life is more fun.

Meredith says

When a childhood nemesis resurfaces as a meat magnate demanding police protection for alleged death threats, Chief Inspector Maigret is reluctant to take the case despite a direct order from a high ranking government official. Maigret predicts the man will be trouble, but even the inspector is surprised when he is murdered less than 48 hours later.

This case is reminiscent of *Maigret and the Wine Merchant* in that the murder victim was a despicable man who delighted in ruining his business competition, driving his competitors to suicide, making his employees miserable, degrading women, and reducing his wife to an alcoholic with no will to live. Rather than mourning, those who knew him feel a sense of relief or even happiness to learn of his death. As voiced by the dead man's personal secretary, the killer "*did everyone a favour*" (page 152). The man is that big of a sadistic sleazeball.

Maigret himself "*never felt so little desire to find the murderer. Admittedly he was curious to know who had finally decided to do away with Fumal, who had reached the end of his or her tether and staked everything. But would he hold it against them? Wasn't it more likely he'd feel a pang of anguish when he put the handcuffs on?*" (page 68) Due to his personal knowledge of the victim, Maigret has no sympathy for the dead man and instead pities everyone whom he left in his wake, and the case stirs his desire to be "*the mender of destinies*" (62) rather than the hammer of justice.

This is also a rare instance in which the perpetrator is one step ahead of Maigret and is able to evade arrest ... at least temporarily.

Angelica says

Es la primera historia que leo de Simenon y me gusto. Es interesante ver que este detective policiaco, Maigret, no es como Poirot o Sherlock, es un detective un poco más realista que se enfoca en la psicología de

los sospechosos y no tanto en el espacio donde ocurrieron los hechos. La historia que nos cuenta esta novela es sobre la desaparición de una mujer Británica y las amenazas que le llegan a un comerciante importante de Francia. Solo dire esto ya que es mejor leer un libro sin saber mucho sobre su trama.

No le he colocado 5 estrellas ya que hay un hecho en este libro que al principio parecía importante, pero a la mitad del libro queda olvidado y cuando se descubre que pasó no es de gran importancia para la historia. 100% recomendado si te gustan las historias policiacas.

Richard says

Maigret seems out of his stride in this case. Already harangued by the press about the inability to find a visiting middle aged tourist from England he has the unfortunate task of meeting a lad from his school. Where once he was a boy for ridicule he has risen to a successful businessman in the meat trade.

The son of the village butcher has made his money at the expense of others often destroying people and leaving them financially bankrupt and seeking suicide as a way out. Fumal has even wormed his way into the lives of government ministers who support him to seek out Maigret when in life if threatened by several anonymous letters.

Maigret seems to be half hearted in his approach to the man with thoughts of the deceitful boy he was and the nasty man he has become. Although he responds appropriately his commitment remains superficial and he is seemingly caught out when Fumal is found murdered. Maigret is seen to be even less inclined to lead the investigation into the death since everyone seems to be justified in wanting him dead and the Chief Inspector in his heart feeling he should shake the murderer's hand rather than handcuff them.

He goes through the motions, countless statements are taken. It seems like a closed house murder based on opportunity and revenge. Maigret has many suspects but at times seems to lack the drive to reach the conclusion he feels his mind has reached.

Finally it comes to him in a dream, the simplicity of it all but his conscious self seems to even wrestle this truth away.

Hence the title. Where does Maigret's failure lie in this case? Is it a blot on his career or a solution he came to too late to satisfy the media? Great reading and brilliant insight into the mind of the fallible detective.

Bev Taylor says

an englishwoman on a group tour with an agency walks out of her hotel and disappears - leaving a pile of bottles behind

a man walks into his office, someone from his childhood, and asks for police protection after receiving threatening letters. the trouble is that maigret dislikes him

fumal has made a fortune and is known as the butcher because of his affiliation with the trade. he has no friends and seems to take a positive delight in disliking and humiliating them

that evening he is found dead of a gunshot wound and nobody is as they seem. also the people he has collected around him in the mansion seem to be from his past and hold grudges of their own

both mysteries place his dept in an unwelcome light which is not helped when one is not solved for many years and in the second the culprit just disappears

just one point - no way would the media would be allowed into the house, especially as it was a crime scene

a quick romp thru 160 pages

3.75 stars

bev

Stephen says

Plein de détails savoureux comme d'habitude mais la trame du récit n'a rien d'extraordinaire.

Andrea Hickman Walker says

I really enjoyed this. It was not quite the mystery I was expecting - there was far less emphasis on the investigation and the clues and so on. I'm not sure if that's usual with this series, since this is the first I've read, but I will learn, since I enjoyed it enough that I will look into getting hold of the others. I was a little frustrated by the ending - it wasn't clear to me how Maigret had solved it (though the events at the end of the book meant that anyone could have drawn the correct conclusions), and I was annoyed that we didn't get to know what brilliant insight he'd had in his dream.

Jrobertus says

Maigret is approached by a wealthy butcher, Fumal, who in fact grew up in the same town as he had. The man is arrogant and unpleasant but is politically connected and wants protection; he has received written death threats. M dispatches some police to watch his palatial residence but the butcher is dead the next day. M is tormented by doubts about his culpability. Did his dislike of the brute lead him to underestimate the threat? And who dunnit? The man had MANY enemies among the meat trade as he ruthlessly drove competitors from business, and his mistreatment of his alcoholic wife could understandably lead her to murder. And what is the role of Mr. Joseph who lives in the attic or Fumal's humiliated secretary Louise? Well there's a lot to consider.

Steven says

This is not a Maigret mystery from Simenon's top drawer, but it is entertaining nonetheless. It concerns itself with the murder of a childhood acquaintance of Maigret, a man named Fumal, who has built a financial empire selling meat. He is cunning, ruthless, and totally without friends, so there are plenty of people who could be fingered in the crime. Fumal has come to Maigret seeking protection from someone who is sending him threatening letters; Maigret's "failure," as it were, is not to take Fumal terribly seriously because of his serious dislike of the man. In the end, Maigret employs his superlative insight to deduce the identity of the killer. This is one of the tidier Maigret mysteries, and thus that much less interesting than the messy ones.

4cats says

When a well known business man visits Maigret worried about death threats, Maigret allows the past to cloud his judgment.

Tony Fitzpatrick says

Three failures - failure to track down a missing British tourist lost in Paris, failure to protect a corrupt and foul businessman who comes to the police for protection and ends up being murdered, and failure to apprehend the murderer when he solves the crime. Maigret is of course being rather hard on himself. The tourist is a silly diversion from the main plot of this novel which consists of a murder investigation. Hot shot "Paris King of the butchers" (who knew Maigret as a boy) is referred to the police by the interior minister for protection after he has been receiving death threats. Turns out he wrote them himself, but nevertheless, he is found dead the following day. Maigret, who remembers the man as a class bully and prat, is disinclined to help and arranges only perfunctory security for him. Maigret blames himself for his death, and after he finally solves the crime the perpetrator runs off and stays on the run for five years. All very unsatisfactory. I suspect Simenon wanted to show that even Maigret wasn't totally invincible. The British tourist is discovered in Australia having run off with someone she met in Paris - no foul play involved. Amusing story, but no great shakes.
