



Maigret's Memoirs

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Inspector Maigret was born in central France to a family with a long tradition of tenant farming. His father, who broke with this tradition, became a manager of a large estate. Maigret, having more mobility than his father, went on to school, entering the field of medicine. He dropped out long before graduation and went to Paris seeking work.

Through a brief encounter with an acquaintance, Maigret was able to join the Surete, the Paris Police Force. He began his career as a uniformed police officer on a bicycle and gradually worked his way through the system, eventually achieving the position of inspector in the Quai des Orfevres.

Mr. Sim--or Simenon, as he later called himself--came into Maigret's life during his early years as an inspector. Simenon was a young writer who needed background material for a novel, and Maigret was given the responsibility of showing him around the various departments and giving him any information needed. When the novel was finally published, Maigret found that the central character was very much like himself and the case was similar to one he had recently solved. This novel became the first of many books written by Simenon about Maigret, and a very close personal relationship developed between the two men.

Simenon has written this fictionalized autobiography so deftly that the reader begins to see the character of Maigret as the author. This perhaps intentional blurring of the personalities of the two men gives the book a dimension that is rarely seen in the police procedural genre.

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