

Editor: Marvin Malone; Art Editor: Ernest Stranger  
US-ISSN:0043-9401. Copyright © 1977, The Wormwood  
Review Press; P.O. Box 8840; Stockton CA 95204 USA



#### HERCULE POIROT AND MAIGRET AND MISS NEW JERSEY CITY

"The problem is," she said. after I had plied her with as many Martinis as she could, I thought, take without passing out, "that I'm into something new." "Groups?" I asked, reminding her that I wanted to get in before the night was out. "No," she said, draining my glass, "not that sort of thing at all. I've been reading, you see." My ardor plummeted; I knew too well that such references to reading meant death to action. "Just so," I said, heading for the door. "What I've been reading," she went on, not noticing my hand on the doorknob, "I've been reading detective things, and my favorites are Agatha Christie and Simenon, but I'm damned, I'm absolutely damned, if I can pronounce the names of those frog detectives." "Frog detectives?" I said weakly. "Well," she said, "one's supposed to be Belgian, actually, but they're both really Frenchies." My inner "Aha!" light went on, and I said casually, "You mean Air-Kewl Pwa-roe and May-gray, my love." Of course, I supplied the touches that made the difference, sounding the first "r" far back and the second with a resonant flip. She looked at me as at someone new. "Do it again," she said. I did it again. She reached for the bottle of Teachers and drank directly from it, wiping her mouth with her hand and staring at me. "Again," she said, and again I did. "It was only last night," she said, "that I was telling myself I'd give my all, my absolute all, to a man who knew things like that." And she did, ah, she did. And later, much later, when the waiter in the corner cafe brought my steak, I told him, "There's always a use, my friend, for the little you know," but he only muttered to himself and picked his nose.