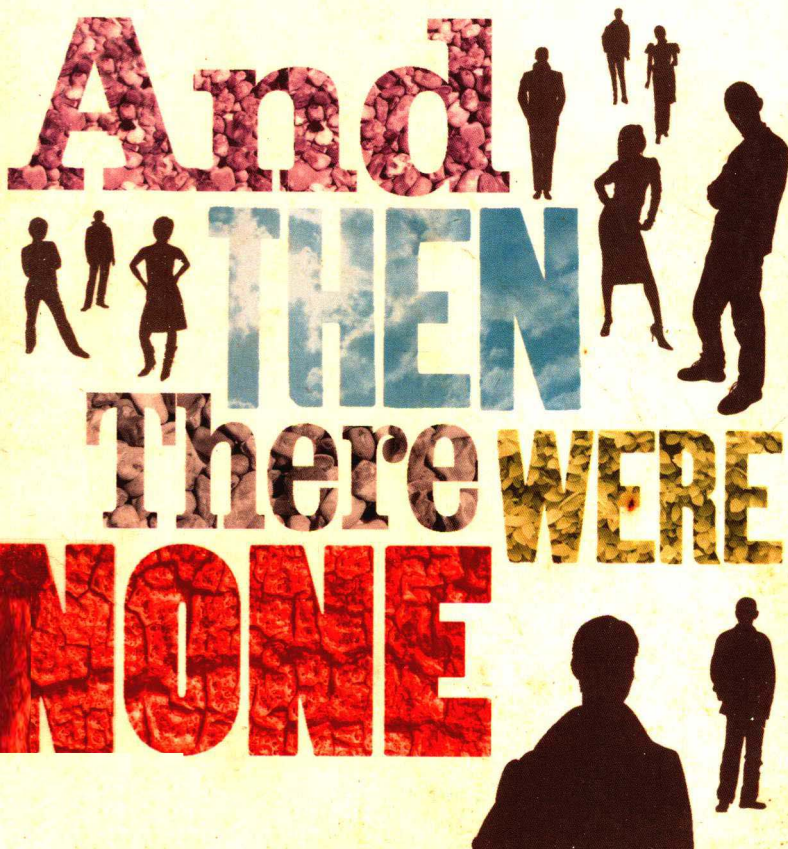


Agatha
Christie

And
THEN
There WERE
NONE

The image features several black silhouettes of people in various poses, scattered around the text. There are silhouettes of men and women, some standing alone and others in small groups, positioned above and below the words 'And', 'THEN', 'There WERE', and 'NONE'.

And Then There Were None

Agatha Christie is known throughout the world as the Queen of Crime. Her books have sold over a billion copies in English with another billion in 100 foreign countries. She is the most widely published author of all time and in any language, outsold only by the Bible and Shakespeare. She is the author of 80 crime novels and short story collections, 19 plays, and six novels written under the name of Mary Westmacott.

Agatha Christie's first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, was written towards the end of the First World War, in which she served as a VAD. In it she created Hercule Poirot, the little Belgian detective who was destined to become the most popular detective in crime fiction since Sherlock Holmes. It was eventually published by The Bodley Head in 1920.

In 1926, after averaging a book a year, Agatha Christie wrote her masterpiece. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* was the first of her books to be published by Collins and marked the beginning of an author-publisher relationship which lasted for 50 years and well over 70 books. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* was also the first of Agatha Christie's books to be dramatised – under the name *Alibi* – and to have a successful run in London's West End. *The Mousetrap*, her most famous play of all, opened in 1952 and is the longest-running play in history.

Agatha Christie was made a Dame in 1971. She died in 1976, since when a number of books have been published posthumously: the bestselling novel *Sleeping Murder* appeared later that year, followed by her autobiography and the short story collections *Miss Marple's Final Cases*, *Problem at Pollensa Bay* and *While the Light Lasts*. In 1998 *Black Coffee* was the first of her plays to be novelised by another author, Charles Osborne.

The Agatha Christie Collection

The Man In The Brown Surt
The Secret of Chimneys
The Seven Dials Mystery
The Mysterious Mr Quin
The Sittaford Mystery
The Hound of Death
The Listerdale Mystery
Why Didn't They Ask Evans?
Parker Pyne Investigates
Murder Is Easy
And Then There Were None
Towards Zero
Death Comes as the End
Sparkling Cyanide
Crooked House
They Came to Baghdad
Destination Unknown
Spider's Web *
The Unexpected Guest *
Ordeal by Innocence
The Pale Horse
Endless Night
Passenger To Frankfurt
Problem at Pollensa Bay
While the Light Lasts

Poirot

The Mysterious Affair at Styles
The Murder on the Links
Poirot Investigates
The Murder of Roger Ackroyd
The Big Four
The Mystery of the Blue Train
Black Coffee *
Peril at End House
Lord Edgware Dies
Murder on the Orient Express
Three-Act Tragedy
Death in the Clouds
The ABC Murders
Murder in Mesopotamia
Cards on the Table
Murder in the Mews
Dumb Witness
Death on the Nile
Appointment With Death
Hercule Poirot's Christmas
Sad Cypress
One, Two, Buckle My Shoe
Evil Under the Sun
Five Little Pigs

* novelised by Charles Osborne

The Hollow
The Labours of Hercules
Taken at the Flood
Mrs McGinty's Dead
After the Funeral
Hickory Dickory Dock
Dead Man's Folly
Cat Among the Pigeons
The Adventure of the Christmas Pudding
The Clocks
Third Girl
Hallowe'en Party
Elephants Can Remember
Poirot's Early Cases
Curtain: Poirot's Last Case

Marple

The Murder at the Vicarage
The Thirteen Problems
The Body in the Library
The Moving Finger
A Murder is Announced
They Do It With Mirrors
A Pocket Full of Rye
The 4.50 from Paddington
The Mirror Crack'd from Side to Side
A Caribbean Mystery
At Bertram's Hotel
Nemesis
Sleeping Murder
Miss Marple's Final Cases

Tommy & Tuppence

The Secret Adversary
Partners in Crime
N or M?
By the Pricking of My Thumbs
Postern of Fate

Published as Mary Westmacott

Giant's Bread
Unfinished Portrait
Absent in the Spring
The Rose and the Yew Tree
A Daughter's a Daughter
The Burden

Memoirs

An Autobiography
Come, Tell Me How You Live

Play Collections

The Mousetrap and Selected Plays
Witness for the Prosecution and
Selected Plays

Agatha Christie

**And Then There
Were None**

HARPER

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To Carlo and Mary
This is their book, dedicated to them
with much affection.

Author's Note

I had written this book because it was so difficult to do that the idea had fascinated me. Ten people had to die without it becoming ridiculous or the murderer being obvious. I wrote the book after a tremendous amount of planning, and I was pleased with what I had made of it. It was clear, straightforward, baffling, and yet had a perfectly reasonable explanation; in fact it had to have an epilogue in order to explain it. It was well received and reviewed, but the person who was really pleased with it was myself, for I knew better than any critic how difficult it had been.

Agatha Christie

from *An Autobiography*

Ten little soldier boys went out to dine;
One choked his little self and then there were Nine.

Nine little soldier boys sat up very late;
One overslept himself and then there were Eight.

Eight little soldier boys travelling in Devon;
One said he'd stay there and then there were Seven.

Seven little soldier boys chopping up sticks;
One chopped himself in halves and then there were Six.

Six little soldier boys playing with a hive;
A bumble bee stung one and then there were Five.

Five little soldier boys going in for law;
One got in Chancery and then there were Four.

Four little soldier boys going out to sea;
A red herring swallowed one and then there were Three.

Three little soldier boys walking in the Zoo;
A big bear hugged one and then there were Two.

Two little soldier boys sitting in the sun;
One got frizzled up and then there was One.

One little soldier boy left all alone;
He went and hanged himself

And then there were None.

Frank Green, 1869

Chapter 1

I

In the corner of a first-class smoking carriage, Mr Justice Wargrave, lately retired from the bench, puffed at a cigar and ran an interested eye through the political news in *The Times*.

He laid the paper down and glanced out of the window. They were running now through Somerset. He glanced at his watch – another two hours to go.

He went over in his mind all that had appeared in the papers about Soldier Island. There had been its original purchase by an American millionaire who was crazy about yachting – and an account of the luxurious modern house he had built on this little island off the Devon coast. The unfortunate fact that the new third wife of the American millionaire was a bad sailor had led to the subsequent putting up of the house and island for sale. Various glowing advertisements of it had appeared in the papers. Then came the first bald

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statement that it had been bought – by a Mr Owen. After that the rumours of the gossip writers had started. Soldier Island had really been bought by Miss Gabrielle Turl, the Hollywood film star! She wanted to spend some months there free from all publicity! *Busy Bee* had hinted delicately that it was to be an abode for Royalty??! *Mr Merryweather* had had it whispered to him that it had been bought for a honeymoon – Young Lord L— had surrendered to Cupid at last! *Jonas* knew for a *fact* that it had been purchased by the Admiralty with a view to carrying out some very hush-hush experiments!

Definitely, Soldier Island was news!

From his pocket Mr Justice Wargrave drew out a letter. The handwriting was practically illegible but words here and there stood out with unexpected clarity. *Dearest Lawrence . . . such years since I heard anything of you . . . must come to Soldier Island . . . the most enchanting place . . . so much to talk over . . . old days . . . communion with nature . . . bask in sunshine . . . 12.40 from Paddington . . . meet you at Oakbridge . . .* and his correspondent signed herself with a flourish his *ever Constance Culmington*.

Mr Justice Wargrave cast back in his mind to remember when exactly he had last seen Lady Constance Culmington. It must be seven – no, eight years ago. She had then been going to Italy to bask in the sun

and be at one with Nature and the *contadini*. Later, he had heard, she had proceeded to Syria where she proposed to bask in a yet stronger sun and live at one with Nature and the *bedouin*.

Constance Culmington, he reflected to himself, was exactly the sort of woman who *would* buy an island and surround herself with mystery! Nodding his head in gentle approval of his logic, Mr Justice Wargrave allowed his head to nod . . .

He slept . . .

II

Vera Claythorne, in a third-class carriage with five other travellers in it, leaned her head back and shut her eyes. How hot it was travelling by train today! It would be nice to get to the sea! Really a great piece of luck getting this job. When you wanted a holiday post it nearly always meant looking after a swarm of children – secretarial holiday posts were much more difficult to get. Even the agency hadn't held out much hope.

And then the letter had come.

'I have received your name from the Skilled Women's Agency together with their recommendation. I understand they know you personally. I shall be glad to pay you the

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salary you ask and shall expect you to take up your duties on August 8th. The train is the 12.40 from Paddington and you will be met at Oakbridge station. I enclose five £1 notes for expenses.

Yours truly,

Una Nancy Owen.'

And at the top was the stamped address, *Soldier Island, Sticklehaven, Devon . . .*

Soldier Island! Why, there had been nothing else in the papers lately! All sorts of hints and interesting rumours. Though probably they were mostly untrue. But the house had certainly been built by a millionaire and was said to be absolutely the last word in luxury.

Vera Claythorne, tired by a recent strenuous term at school, thought to herself, 'Being a games mistress in a third-class school isn't much of a catch . . . If only I could get a job at some *decent* school.'

And then, with a cold feeling round her heart, she thought: 'But I'm lucky to have even this. After all, people don't like a Coroner's Inquest, even if the Coroner *did* acquit me of all blame!'

He had even complimented her on her presence of mind and courage, she remembered. For an inquest it couldn't have gone better. And Mrs Hamilton had been kindness itself to her – only Hugo – *but she wouldn't think of Hugo!*

Suddenly, in spite of the heat in the carriage she shivered and wished she wasn't going to the sea. A picture rose clearly before her mind. *Cyril's head, bobbing up and down, swimming to the rock . . .* Up and down – up and down . . . And herself, swimming in easy practised strokes after him – cleaving her way through the water but knowing, only too surely, that she wouldn't be in time . . .

The sea – its deep warm blue – mornings spent lying out on the sands – Hugo – Hugo who had said he loved her . . .

She must *not* think of Hugo . . .

She opened her eyes and frowned across at the man opposite her. A tall man with a brown face, light eyes set rather close together and an arrogant, almost cruel mouth.

She thought to herself:

I bet he's been to some interesting parts of the world and seen some interesting things . . .

III

Philip Lombard, summing up the girl opposite in a mere flash of his quick moving eyes thought to himself:

'Quite attractive – a bit schoolmistressy perhaps.'

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A cool customer, he should imagine – and one who could hold her own – in love or war. He'd rather like to take her on . . .

He frowned. No, cut out all that kind of stuff. This was business. He'd got to keep his mind on the job.

What exactly was up, he wondered? That little Jew had been damned mysterious.

'Take it or leave it, Captain Lombard.'

He had said thoughtfully:

'A hundred guineas, eh?'

He had said it in a casual way as though a hundred guineas was nothing to him. *A hundred guineas* when he was literally down to his last square meal! He had fancied, though, that the little Jew had not been deceived – that was the damnable part about Jews, you couldn't deceive them about money – they *knew*!

He said in the same casual tone:

'And you can't give me any further information?'

Mr Isaac Morris had shaken his little bald head very positively.

'No, Captain Lombard, the matter rests there. It is understood by my client that your reputation is that of a good man in a tight place. I am empowered to hand you one hundred guineas in return for which you will travel to Sticklehaven, Devon. The nearest station is Oakbridge, you will be met there and motored to Sticklehaven where a motor launch will convey you