

Agatha Christie

Death on the Nile

BESTSELLER
contemporary



free Audiobook



Agatha Christie

Death on the Nile

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Contents



CHAPTER ONE	<i>Dreams of Egypt</i>	9
CHAPTER TWO	<i>The Cataract Hotel</i>	19
CHAPTER THREE	<i>The sun and the moon</i>	28
CHAPTER FOUR	<i>The temple at Abu Simbel</i>	37
CHAPTER FIVE	<i>Night on the river</i>	46
CHAPTER SIX	<i>The murder</i>	58
CHAPTER SEVEN	<i>The bundle from the Nile</i>	67
CHAPTER EIGHT	<i>Someone is lying</i>	75
CHAPTER NINE	<i>Secrets</i>	87
CHAPTER TEN	<i>A matter of life and death</i>	96
CHAPTER ELEVEN	<i>The thieves</i>	105
CHAPTER TWELVE	<i>Farewell to Egypt</i>	115

DOSSIERS	Agatha Christie	4
	Egypt	54
	The Wall Street Crash of 1929	83

ACTIVITIES	Before you read	8, 18, 27, 36, 45, 57, 66, 74, 86, 95, 104, 114
	The text and beyond	16, 25, 34, 43, 52, 64, 72, 81, 93, 102, 112, 122
	After reading	124

PRELIMINARY This icon indicates Preliminary-style activities

T: GRADE 6 This icon indicates Trinity-style activities

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THE STORY IS FULLY RECORDED.



Agatha Christie

Dame¹ Agatha Christie is the best-selling novelist of all time. Her books have sold over two billion copies and are available in more than fifty languages.

She was born on 15th September, 1890. Her father, Frederick Miller, was American and her mother, Clarissa Boehmer, was English. Agatha spent her childhood in Torquay, in the south-west of England,

where she was taught at home by her mother. This happy childhood ended when her father died in 1901.

In 1912, Agatha met Archie Christie, a pilot and officer with the army. Agatha and Archie got married in 1914, as the First World War was beginning. During the war, Agatha worked as a pharmacy assistant. She also wrote her first detective novel. In 1919, she gave birth to a daughter, Rosalind.

Agatha's first novel to be published was *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* in 1920. This book introduced the world to Hercule Poirot, the brilliant Belgian detective. Agatha Christie wrote over thirty novels and over fifty short stories about Poirot, and he became one of the most famous fictional detectives in the world.

Unfortunately, there were times of loss and sadness ahead for Agatha. In 1926, her mother died. The same year, Archie fell in love with

1. **Dame** : a title given by the Queen to a female British citizen who has done excellent work in her profession; the male form of this title is *Knight*.

another woman. In December, Agatha went missing² for over a week. She was found in a hotel hundreds of miles from her home, with no memory of how she had got there. In 1928, Agatha and Archie divorced.

The following years brought Agatha great success, in her professional and personal life. Her 1926 novel, *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, became an international success. In September of 1930, Agatha married Sir Max Mallowan, who was a respected archaeologist. Agatha spent a lot of time on archaeological digs³ in the Middle East with Max. *Death on the Nile* (1937) was set⁴ in this part of the world.

In 1956, Agatha Christie was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire,⁵ and in 1971 she was made a Dame. On 12th January, 1976, she died at the age of 85, after a long and successful career.

-
- 2. **went missing** : no one could find her.
 - 3. **archaeological dig** : a place where scientists look for objects from history.
 - 4. **set** : choose the place where a story happens.
 - 5. **Commander of the Order of the British Empire** : an award given by the Queen to a British citizen whose work has had positive effects on the world.

Comprehension check

1 What happened to Agatha Christie in each of these years?

- 1 1890:
- 2 1914:
- 3 1920:
- 4 1926:
- 5 1930:
- 6 1976:

The Characters



From left to right: *Tim Allerton, Mrs Allerton, Marie Van Schuyler,
Jacqueline de Bellefort, Simon Doyle, Linnet Ridgeway*

S.S.K



From left to right: Colonel Race, Hercule Poirot, Mrs Otterbourne,
Rosalie Otterbourne, Cornelia Robson, Doctor Bessner

ARNAK

Before you read

Prediction

- ① Look at the people on pages 6 and 7. Pick five characters and complete the sentences.

- 1 will fall in love with
- 2 will steal something valuable.
- 3 will break’s heart.

Compare your answers with a partner. (Remember! If you have read the book or seen the film, NO SPOILERS!)

Vocabulary

- ② These words are all used in Chapter 1. Match the words (1-12) to the right definition (a-l). Use a dictionary, if necessary.

- | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 ☐ clumsy | 5 ☐ darling | 9 ☐ stare |
| 2 ☐ gratitude | 6 ☐ engaged | 10 ☐ by chance |
| 3 ☐ trustee | 7 ☐ honeymoon | 11 ☐ wonder |
| 4 ☐ passionately | 8 ☐ blush | 12 ☐ servant |

- a means the same as *my love* or *my dear*
- b a holiday for a couple who have just married
- c when a couple have agreed to marry each other
- d when your face turns red because you are feeling shy or embarrassed
- e the feeling of being thankful because someone has done something good for you
- f someone whose job is to help a rich person with his or her daily life
- g by accident, by luck
- h speaking or acting with strong feelings, such as love or anger
- i awkward; someone who is always breaking things
- j a person who manages money for someone, often until that person is a legal adult
- k to look at something with attention for a long time
- l to ask yourself a question



CHAPTER ONE

DREAMS OF EGYPT



Linnet Ridgeway! That's her!' said Mr Burnaby, as he looked out the window of the Three Crowns pub.¹ He and his friend stared. A red Rolls-Royce² had just stopped in front of the village post office. A girl jumped out, a confident, beautiful girl with golden hair.



track 02

'She'll bring money into this town,' said Mr Burnaby. 'Her mother was the only daughter of one of those American millionaires.'

As she drove away, the other man followed her with his eyes. 'Money and looks! It doesn't seem fair.'

'You know, Linnet, I really do envy you,' said Joanna Southwood. She and Linnet Ridgeway were in the bedroom of Linnet's beautiful old

-
1. **pub** : usually in the UK or Ireland; a place where people can have drinks or a meal.
 2. **Rolls-Royce** : a kind of sports car.



CHAPTER ONE

house. Joanna went on.³ 'Here you are at twenty, with money, looks, perfect health. You've even got *brains*!' ⁴When will you be twenty-one?

'Next June,' said Linnet. 'I shall have a grand coming-of-age party⁵ in London.'

Joanna picked up a pearl necklace⁶ from a table. 'Darling, these really are incredible. Let me wear them till dinnertime. It would be so exciting.'

Linnet laughed. 'Of course, if you like.'

Just then, one of Linnet's servants told her that she had a telephone call. Linnet left the room for a few minutes. When she came back, she was smiling.

'Jackie's on her way from London,' Linnet said. 'Jacqueline de Bellefort. We've known each other since we were children. Poor Jackie — she's had the most terrible bad luck. Her parents lost all their money in the Wall Street Crash and left her with nothing.'

Linnet's maid⁷ entered the room. She took a dress from the wardrobe and carried it away quietly. There were tears in her eyes.

'What's the matter with Marie?' asked Joanna.

'Poor thing! She wanted to marry a man who has a job in Egypt. But she didn't know anything about him, so I had him investigated. Imagine, he had a wife already — and three children.'

'You've made an enemy of that man, Linnet.' Joanna smiled. 'I'm sure you've got plenty of them.'

'Enemies?' Linnet was surprised. 'I haven't got an enemy in the world.'

3. **went on** : past tense of the verb *go on*; continue.

4. **brains** : intelligence.

5. **coming-of-age party** : a party given when someone becomes a legal adult.

6. **pearl necklace** :



7. **maid** : a female servant.



Jacqueline de Bellefort arrived later that afternoon. She was a pretty girl, small and thin, with dark, curly hair and large, dark eyes. She ran to Linnet and hugged her.

‘Linnet!’ she said. ‘I’m engaged!’ Jacqueline went on, talking quickly. The man’s name was Simon Doyle. They wanted to marry as soon as possible, but Simon had lost his job and they had no money. ‘Linnet, I shall *die* unless I can marry him!’ Jacqueline said passionately. ‘I shall die! I shall die! I shall *die*! You’ve got to help us. You’ll need a land agent⁸ here. I want you to give the job to Simon. Please, Linnet! Beautiful Linnet! My own special Linnet! Say you’ll do it!’

Linnet was laughing. ‘Bring along your young man and let me have a look at him. We’ll talk it over.’

Jacqueline kissed her. ‘Darling Linnet — you’re a real friend!’

Chez Ma Tante was one of the most fashionable restaurants in London. Even rich and famous people might wait hours for a table there. But the little Belgian man with the enormous moustache never had any trouble.

‘Naturally, for *you* there is *always* a table, Monsieur Poirot!’ said the manager. He spoke more quietly. ‘Tell me, are you working on a case⁹ at the moment?’

Poirot shook his head sadly. ‘Unfortunately, no. I have enough money now to enjoy a life without work. Still, there is more time for travel. This winter I shall visit Egypt.’

Hercule Poirot sat at his table alone. A jazz band was playing and the dance floor was full. Poirot noticed a young couple: a tall, handsome man with blue eyes and curly, brown hair and a

8. **land agent** : someone who manages the business of a large house with land.

9. **case** : (here) a mystery or crime to investigate.



CHAPTER ONE

pretty, dark-haired young girl. They moved to the music in perfect happiness and seemed to be deeply in love.

The music stopped and the couple returned to their table. It was very close to Poirot's. The girl was laughing, though her eyes showed another emotion.¹⁰ Hercule Poirot shook his head.

'She cares too much, that little one,' he said to himself. 'It is not safe. No, it is not safe.' And then a word caught his attention. *Egypt*.

'Simon, don't worry. Linnet won't disappoint us!' the girl said. 'And it's just the right job for you. We'll wait three months and then we'll be married. After that, we'll go to Egypt for our honeymoon. The Nile and the Pyramids¹¹ and the sand ...'

'Yes, we'll see it together, Jackie,' the young man said. 'Won't it be wonderful?'

'I wonder.' The girl seemed afraid. 'Will it be as wonderful to you? Do you really care — as much as I do?'

Hercule Poirot murmured¹² to himself, 'Yes, I wonder too.'

Tim Allerton looked out over the sea. 'Do you really like Majorca, Mother?' he said. 'I was thinking of Egypt. I'd like to go up the Nile. Wouldn't you?' Tim was tall and thin with sad eyes. He had had bad health as a child and had never been strong.

'Oh, I'd *like* it,' his mother said. She was a good-looking, white-haired woman of fifty. 'But Egypt's expensive, my dear. Remember, we ought to count our pennies.'¹³

10. **emotion** : a feeling.

11. **Pyramids** :



12. **murmur** : say something in a soft, low voice.

13. **pennies** : the plural of *penny*; a coin worth about one cent.





CHAPTER ONE

Tim laughed. ‘Don’t worry about that. I’ve just made a bit of money on the Stock Exchange.’¹⁴ I heard this morning.’

‘This morning?’ said Mrs Allerton sharply.¹⁵ ‘But you only had one letter, and it was from Joanna Southwood.’ She didn’t want to say anything more. Mrs Allerton didn’t like Tim’s cousin Joanna. But she continued. ‘Well, what did Joanna tell you? Any news from England?’

‘Nothing much,’ said Tim. ‘Linnet Ridgeway is definitely going to marry this land agent person. Simon Doyle. A good family, but he’s got no money — and he used to be engaged to Jacqueline de Bellefort. She’s one of Linnet’s best friends — or she was.’ Tim smiled and put the letter away. He never showed his mother any letters from Joanna.

In an apartment near Central Park in New York, Mrs Robson said, ‘You really are the luckiest girl, Cornelia.’

Her daughter blushed. Cornelia Robson was a big, clumsy-looking girl with dog-like brown eyes. ‘Oh, it will be wonderful!’ she answered her mother. ‘I’ve always dreamed of a trip to Egypt. Thank you, Cousin Marie!’

Old Marie Van Schuyler smiled. She was always pleased when her poor relations showed their gratitude.

‘Miss Bowers will also come with me, of course,’ said Miss Van Schuyler. ‘But she’s only a nurse. I’ll need Cornelia for other things.’

Later, Cornelia’s mother spoke to the nurse alone. ‘Well, Miss Bowers, so you’re going to Egypt? I hope — there won’t be any — trouble.’

14. **Stock Exchange** : a place where people buy and sell shares of different companies.

15. **sharply** : quickly and with attention.



‘Oh, *no*, Mrs Robson. I shall take good care of *that*,’ said Miss Bowers, with perfect confidence. ‘I shall watch her carefully.’

In his office in New York, Mr Andrew Pennington, who was one of Linnet’s American trustees, was reading a letter. Suddenly,¹⁶ he brought his hand down on his desk with a bang. His partner, Mr Rockford, came into the room. They were both tall, thin men with greying hair and clever faces.

‘This is from Linnet Ridgeway.’ Pennington looked up from the letter. ‘She’s married!’

‘Married? But it’s so sudden.’ Rockford sat down. ‘What are we going to do? Those British lawyers will ...’

Pennington said slowly, ‘Linnet’s going to Egypt for her honeymoon. If I can meet her there and pretend that it’s only by chance ...’

‘You’ve got to do it,’ said Rockford. ‘We’re finished unless we act¹⁷ now.’

‘We should move on to Egypt,’ Mrs Otterbourne told her daughter, Rosalie. ‘I’m tired of Jerusalem. Besides, I got into a terrible argument with the manager of the hotel today. I told him that he was lucky to have me here — after all, I’m a famous author. I should pay less than these other people. He asked us to leave in two days! Imagine!’

‘Yes, we’ll go on to Egypt,’ said Rosalie sadly. ‘It doesn’t make any difference.’

‘Yes, it’s certainly not a matter of life and death,’ her mother answered. But Mrs Otterbourne was wrong. It really was a matter of life and death.

16. **suddenly** : fast and unexpected.

17. **act** : do something.

The text and *beyond*

Comprehension check

1 How well do you remember the characters in Chapter 1? For questions 1-8, write the letter of the correct character: a-k.

- 1 ☐ is 20 years old.
- 2 ☐ almost married a man who already had a wife.
- 3 ☐ and ☐ are friends of Linnet's.
- 4 ☐ goes to a fashionable restaurant alone.
- 5 ☐ is travelling with her mother.
- 6 ☐ is Joanna Southwood's cousin.
- 7 ☐, ☐ and ☐ all live in New York.
- 8 ☐ broke up with his girlfriend and married her good friend.

- | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------|
| a Linnet Ridgeway | g Tim Allerton |
| b Joanna Southwood | h Cornelia Robson |
| c Marie, the maid | i Marie Van Schuyler |
| d Jacqueline de Bellefort | j Andrew Pennington |
| e Hercule Poirot | k Rosalie Otterbourne |
| f Simon Doyle | |

Discussion

2 Read the questions and discuss the answers with a partner. Share your answers with the class.

- 1 What is your opinion of Linnet Ridgeway? Why? Were you surprised to read that Linnet had married Simon?
- 2 What do you think Miss Bowers means when she says 'I will watch her carefully'? Who do you think she is talking about?
- 3 Why do you think Andrew Pennington and his partner are upset by the news of Linnet's marriage?
- 4 Agatha Christie does not show her readers the romance between Linnet and Simon. She only shows other characters reading about the news of her engagement and marriage. Why do you think that she chose to do this?

Case notes: Who's going to Egypt?

- 3 Work with a partner. Write down the names of all the characters who are going to Egypt, their reasons for going and the person or people who are going with them. Complete your list on another sheet of paper. If you haven't got enough information to answer, write ?

Name	Reason for going	Going with
Linnet Doyle	honeymoon	Simon Doyle

I had him investigated.

We use causative sentences (**have + noun/pronoun + past participle**) when something is done for us by another person. (In informal English, we can use **get** instead of **have**.)

We can use causative sentences with different tenses.

Positive statements

She's having her house decorated. He needs to get his car repaired.

Negative statements

I didn't have my house cleaned. He isn't going to get his car washed.

Questions

Have you had your computer fixed? Where will you get your hair done?

Grammar: causative sentences

- 4 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the phrases in the box.

~~hair cut~~ office cleaned house painted
computer delivered luggage sent fridge repaired

- You look great! Have you had your hair cut ?
- What's that smell? Oh, no! The food! We need to !
- We've just , so don't touch the walls!
- Do you know a good cleaner? I want to
- He didn't have a car, so he to his house.
- Are you going to to you later, or are you bringing all those bags with you now?

Before you read

Vocabulary

1 The words in bold are all used in Chapter 2. Match the sentence beginnings (1-10) to the correct ending (a-j). Use a dictionary, if necessary.

- 1 The **cataracts** of the Nile are ☐.
 - 2 If you are **strolling**, ☐.
 - 3 To **stamp** means ☐.
 - 4 If someone **breaks off** his or her engagement, ☐.
 - 5 A **threat** is a statement in which ☐.
 - 6 If you are **frowning**, ☐.
 - 7 Someone who is **bad-tempered** ☐.
 - 8 If you say or do something **thoughtfully**, ☐.
 - 9 You might feel **guilt** if ☐.
 - 10 To **dare** means ☐.
- a often seems angry or upset for no reason
 - b you have done something to hurt someone else
 - c you are walking slowly and enjoying the scenery
 - d it is over; there won't be a wedding
 - e to bring your foot down on something forcefully
 - f someone tells you that he or she is going to hurt you
 - g you have an angry look on your face
 - h places where the river has a lot of rocks and the water moves fast
 - i you seem as if you are thinking deeply
 - j to have enough courage to do or say something

Prediction

2 Guess the answers to these questions.

- 1 When we first see Hercule Poirot in this chapter, he is talking to one of the characters from Chapter 1. Who do you think it is?
- 2 In Chapter 2, Linnet and Simon get an unpleasant surprise on their honeymoon. What do you think it will be?
- 3 Someone asks Poirot for help. Who do you think it will be?