

Agatha Christie

And Then There Were None

BESTSELLER
contemporary



free Audiobook



Agatha Christie

And Then There Were None

Illustrated by Francesca d'Ottavi
Adaptation and activities by Alex Raynham





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Content editor: Chiara Blau

Editor: Francesca Pinagli

Design: Erika Barabino, Silvia Bassi, Daniele Pagliari

Page layout: Simona Speranza

Picture research: Alice Graziotin

Art Director: Nadia Maestri

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info@blackcat-cideb.com

blackcat-cideb.com

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B1 PRELIMINARY This icon indicates B1 Preliminary-style activities

T: GRADE 6 This icon indicates Trinity-style activities

n. track  THE STORY IS FULLY RECORDED.



Agatha Christie

Dame¹ Agatha Christie is the best-selling novel writer of all time. In her long career, she wrote sixty-six crime novels and over a hundred and fifty short stories under her own name. She also wrote six more novels under the name Mary Westmacott. Agatha Christie's books have sold more than 2 billion copies² in many different

languages around the world.

Agatha was born Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller on September 15th, 1890, in Torquay – a small town on the south coast of England. Her parents taught her at home, and because her sister and brother were much older, she spent a lot of time alone – reading books and inventing stories in her head. Sadly, Agatha's father died when she was eleven years old. After that, her mother sent her to school, and she learnt to sing and play the piano very well. When Agatha was eighteen, she began writing short stories. She sent them to magazines and book companies, but at first nobody was interested in publishing³ them.

In 1912, Agatha met a military⁴ pilot called Archibald Christie. She married 'Archie' two years later, a few months after the start of the First

-
1. **Dame of the British Empire** : the monarch of the United Kingdom gives this title to a woman who has done something important for Britain.
 2. **copy** : a thing that is made to be the same as something else, e.g. a book.
 3. **publish** : print something or put it online.
 4. **military** : this describes people who fight in a war, or the things people use in a war.



World War. While Archie was fighting in France, Agatha began to write a novel. She also worked in a military hospital in Torquay, and there she learnt a lot about dangerous medicines. This knowledge later inspired ⁵ some of the murders in her crime stories.

In 1919, Agatha Christie's daughter was born. A year later, Agatha finally published her first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at*

Styles. Its main character was a clever-but-kind Belgian detective called Hercule Poirot. Later, Agatha Christie wrote many more stories about Hercule Poirot: he became one of the most popular characters in English literature.

By the mid 1920s, Agatha Christie had become a very successful author. Sadly, her mother died in 1926, and that same year her husband told her that he loved another woman. It was a terrible time for Agatha, and on December 3rd she suddenly disappeared. People thought she might be dead, and the story of the police search for her appeared in newspapers around the world. Luckily, she was found alive and well eleven days later in Harrogate, over two hundred miles from home.

5. **inspire** : give someone an idea.

However, she couldn't remember exactly how she had got there or what had happened.

In 1930, Agatha Christie married archaeologist⁶ Max Mallowan. They travelled a lot for Max's work, and these travels inspired some of her famous novels like *Death on the Nile* and *Murder on the Orient Express*. The story in *And Then There Were None* takes place much closer to home, on an island in Devon where Agatha Christie often stayed. The novel was first published in 1939, and Agatha Christie made it into a successful play in 1943. She said it was her most difficult book to write, but it has become the most successful crime novel of all time, selling over 100 million copies.

Over the years, Agatha Christie received many awards⁷ for her writing, and in 1971, Queen Elizabeth II made her Dame of the British Empire. She died on January 12th, 1976, at the age of 85, but her stories are still very popular around the world. Many of them have also become successful plays, television and radio programmes, comics and films.

Comprehension check

1 Answer the questions.

- 1 How did Agatha Christie spend a lot of her time when she was a child?
- 2 What did she learn to do very well at school?
- 3 What did she do during the First World War?
- 4 Who is Agatha Christie's character Hercule Poirot?
- 5 Why was Agatha Christie in the newspapers in 1926?
- 6 Where do the events in *And Then There Were None* take place?

6. **archaeologist** : this person studies objects and cultures from the past.

7. **award** : a prize someone gets for doing something important or good.

- 2** What do these numbers refer to? Write facts or events from Agatha Christie's life.

- 1 66:
- 2 2 billion:
- 3 11:
- 4 200:
- 5 100 million:
- 6 85:

- 3** The text mentions three more novels by Agatha Christie. Choose one of these novels, find out about it online and complete the information.

Novel title:
Published in:
Two main characters:

Two key events:

- 4** Now find a partner with a different novel. Ask and answer questions to find out about your partner's story.

The Characters



From left to right: (Standing) Thomas Rogers, Emily Brent, Philip Lombard
(Sitting) Judge Lawrence Wargrave, Dr Edward Armstrong



From left to right: (Standing) Vera Claythorne, William Blore,
General John Macarthur, Ethel Rogers (Sitting) Anthony Marston

Before you read

Vocabulary

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

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a <input type="checkbox"/> judge | e <input type="checkbox"/> mysterious | i <input type="checkbox"/> pretend |
| b <input type="checkbox"/> carriage | f <input type="checkbox"/> inquest | j <input type="checkbox"/> admire |
| c <input type="checkbox"/> rumour | g <input type="checkbox"/> illegal | k <input type="checkbox"/> guilty |
| d <input type="checkbox"/> retire | h <input type="checkbox"/> sculpture | l <input type="checkbox"/> platform |

- 1 to stop working because you are quite old
- 2 strange, and not understood or known
- 3 this person decides how people must pay for their crimes
- 4 the place in a station where people get on or off trains
- 5 feeling bad about doing something wrong
- 6 not allowed by law
- 7 this object in art is often made of things like metal, stone or wood
- 8 to act as if something is true when it isn't
- 9 people sit in this part of a train
- 10 an official investigation to find out why something bad happened
- 11 a story about someone or something that might not be true
- 12 respect someone because of how they look or behave

Prediction

2 Think about the title of the book and the title of Chapter 1, then answer the questions.

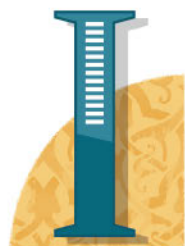
- 1 Why do you think the characters go to Soldier Island?
- 2 What do you think will happen to the characters? Why?

3 Look at the people on pages 8 and 9 and describe them.



CHAPTER ONE

SOLDIER ISLAND



In the corner of a first-class train carriage, Judge Lawrence Wargrave smoked, and read *The Times* newspaper. From time to time he looked up from his newspaper and examined the other passengers in his carriage. Wargrave was an old man who had recently retired, and he had grey hair, deep lines on his face and small, clever eyes. Putting his paper down, Wargrave glanced¹ out of the window at the Somerset countryside, then he checked his watch.



track 02

‘Only two hours to go,’ he thought as he took a letter out of his pocket. It was an invitation from an old friend, but her writing was very difficult to read.

1. **glance** : quickly look at something.



CHAPTER ONE

*My dearest Lawrence,
How long has it been since we last met? You must come to Soldier
Island to see me and stay for a while. It's such a beautiful place, and
we have so much to talk about after all this time. Get the 12.40 train
from London (Paddington Station) to Oakbridge. I'll meet you there.
Yours,
Constance Culmington*

Wargrave was looking forward to seeing Soldier Island. When an American millionaire bought the island and built a luxury house there, the story had been in all the newspapers. The American had then sold it to a mysterious man called Owen, but nobody knew who he was, and that is when the rumours started. Some people said that the real owner of Soldier Island wasn't Owen but a film star, a relative of the king – or even the military.

'I haven't seen Constance Culmington for about eight years,' Wargrave thought. 'Since then, she's travelled and had all kinds of adventures. It's easy to imagine that she's the real owner of Soldier Island. She's rich enough and crazy enough to buy an island!'

'It'll be nice to spend summer on the coast,' Vera Claythorne thought as she looked out of the window of her third-class train carriage and watched the world go by. 'They say the house on Soldier Island is beautiful.'

Vera wondered why Mrs Una Nancy Owen had offered her a job as her secretary when she usually taught children. She knew that she was lucky to get any job really, after the inquest into Cyril's death. After all, it isn't good to have your name in the newspapers for something like that. When Vera closed her eyes, she remembered





CHAPTER ONE

Cyril's head disappearing under the waves, far out by the rocks. She had swum out to him quite calmly, knowing that she wouldn't reach him in time. It was her job to look after Cyril, but nobody at the inquest had thought it was her fault – not even Cyril's mother. Everyone had been very kind to her ... except Hugo. 'Hugo loved me so much,' she thought sadly, 'until Cyril died.'

Vera shivered² and opened her eyes. A tall man with a tanned³ face was sitting opposite her. 'He's probably a military man,' she thought. 'I bet⁴ he's had some adventures too, but he looks quite mean.'

Philip Lombard noticed that Vera Claythorne was looking at him. 'She's good-looking,' he thought. 'A strong character too, I imagine.' Then Lombard thought about the man who had given him the job in Devon. Why had Isaac Morris told him so little about the job?

'You will travel to Oakbridge, Devon, by train,' Morris had told him. 'There, someone will meet you and take you to Soldier Island. The person I work for wants you to stay on the island for a week.'

'Why? To do what?'

'I can't tell you any more right now. But people say that when there's trouble, you know what to do.'

'Listen, I can't do anything illegal,' Lombard had told him, but Morris just smiled and said 'We're going to pay you well – take it or leave it.'

Lombard needed the money because he hadn't worked for a while, so he took the job. 'I'll probably enjoy it,' he told himself, but he had brought his gun ... just to be safe.

2. **shiver** : shake because you are cold or afraid.

3. **tanned** : your skin is like this if you stay in the sun.

4. **I bet** : I think this is probably true.



Sixty-five-year-old Miss Emily Brent was sitting in a hot, crowded carriage. She was very uncomfortable in her long, heavy dress, but she sat up straight and her back hardly touched the seat behind her.

'I don't mind being a little uncomfortable,' she told herself. 'Girls these days wear such thin clothes in summer. It's all *wrong!*'

Miss Brent had received a mysterious invitation a few days earlier. 'Do you remember me?' the letter had said. 'We met on holiday last August at Belhaven, and we got on so well. I've opened a small hotel on Soldier Island, and I'd like you to be my guest this summer.'

The letter had mentioned 'a free holiday, good cooking and nice, old-fashioned people'. It all sounded very moral⁵ and correct – just right for a religious⁶ person like Emily Brent. But she couldn't read the signature ... *U.N. Ow-something*. 'It doesn't really matter,' she told herself. 'I'll know her when I see her.' She remembered meeting a nice old lady – a Miss Ormen ... or Oliver. Perhaps it was her.

In Exeter Station, General Macarthur was reading his invitation from Mr Owen again.

We haven't met, but I know Johnnie Dyer and quite a few of your old military friends. They're coming to Soldier Island. It'll be a chance to talk about the old days.

It would be nice to see some old friends. Most military people avoided⁷ Macarthur these days because of all the rumours about him. 'Someone's talking about what happened in the war,' he thought angrily. 'Why can't people forget about it?'

-
5. **moral** : in a correct, good way.
 6. **religious** : believing in a god or gods.
 7. **avoid** : keep away from someone or something.



CHAPTER ONE

Dr Armstrong was feeling very tired as he drove from Salisbury down to the coast. He was looking forward to a rest on Soldier Island, and he had received a big cheque with his invitation.

‘A friend of mine is worried about his wife’s health,’ the letter from Mr Owen had said. ‘She’s afraid of doctors, so she mustn’t know that anybody is examining⁸ her. Just watch her and write a report about her health. I’ll tell you her name when you arrive.’

It all sounded very mysterious, but it would be nice to have a little break – he was so busy back in London. Armstrong was one of London’s most popular doctors, and he had many rich, important patients – but he didn’t have enough time to spend his money. ‘I’ve been very lucky,’ he thought, ‘especially after that terrible affair⁹ fifteen years ago.’ He’d nearly gone to pieces¹⁰ then, but after that he had stopped drinking, worked hard and become very successful. ‘Thank God it’s all in the past,’ he told himself.

At that moment, a loud, expensive sports car suddenly drove past him. Armstrong was so surprised, he nearly went off the road!

‘Stupid man!’ he shouted after the disappearing car.

‘That car’s going slowly!’ Anthony Marston thought as he went past the doctor at eighty miles an hour. ‘He’s in the middle of the road too. I nearly hit him!’

Marston soon decided to stop and drink something. ‘I wonder who Mr and Mrs Owen are,’ he thought as he sat outside a country pub. ‘They must be even richer than me if they’ve bought an island. I’m sure they have good parties too! My friend Badger certainly likes a good party, and he’s the one who invited me.’

8. **examine** : look at something carefully and find out about it.

9. **affair** : (here) an unfortunate event.

10. **go to pieces** : (here) become very nervous and have mental problems.



Marston was young and good-looking, with deep blue eyes and the body of a Greek sculpture. As he walked back to his car, two young women watched him carefully. Marston wasn't surprised: lots of women admired him.

On the train from Plymouth, William Blore was writing names in his notebook and thinking. '... Emily Brent, Philip Lombard, Judge Wargrave ... that's everyone. It'll be an easy job if I don't make any mistakes.'

'Who shall I pretend to be?' he thought, then smiled to himself. 'I bet nobody's been to South Africa. I'll say I've just come back from there.'

Just then, the old sailor on the other side of the carriage woke up and said, 'There's a storm coming!'

'No, my friend. It's a lovely day!'

The old man looked at him with foggy eyes. 'A storm's coming! I can smell it!' Blore smiled: clearly the man had drunk too much.

When they reached the next station, the old sailor opened the carriage door and fell out of the train. 'A storm's coming, I tell you!' he shouted as he lay on the station platform. 'Guilty people will pay for their crimes. The end is coming!'

'He'll meet his end sooner than me,' Blore told himself - but he was wrong.

The text and *beyond*

Comprehension check

1 Complete the sentences with the names in the box.

Dr Armstrong	Emily Brent	Anthony Marston	William Blore
General Macarthur	Vera Claythorne	Philip Lombard	Judge Wargrave

- is going to pretend to be someone.
- has just retired.
- has brought a gun to Soldier Island.
- is a very religious person.
- thinks about the death of a young boy.
- stops for a rest on the way to Soldier Island.
- is looking forward to seeing old military friends.
- looks after important, rich people for his or her job.

2 What reasons do the characters have for coming to Soldier Island? Complete the table. Then discuss the characters in Chapter 1.

<i>This person is going to do a job</i>	<i>This person was invited by a friend or a stranger</i>

Discussion

3 Read the questions and discuss them with a partner. Then share your ideas with the class.

- What do we learn about Soldier Island in Chapter 1?
- How do you think Vera Claythorne feels about Hugo now?

- 3 What do we learn about Anthony Marston in Chapter 1?
- 4 In general, do you think the characters in Chapter 1 are happy with their lives? Why?/Why not?

Vera wondered why Mrs Una Nancy Owen had offered her a job.

We use the **past perfect simple** to talk about something that happened before another event in the past.

We often use it with the **past simple**, but it can be in a separate sentence if we have already mentioned a past event.

Positive statements

Lombard **thought** about the man who **had given** him the job in Devon.

Negative statements

Lombard **needed** the money because he **hadn't worked** for a while.

Questions

Why **had** Isaac Morris **told** him so little about the job?

Grammar: past perfect simple

- 4** Complete the sentences. Use one verb in the past simple and one in the past perfect simple.

- 1 Before Mr Owen (buy) Soldier Island, an American millionaire (own) it.
- 2 Vera (know) about the island because she (read) about it in the newspapers.
- 3 Vera (feel) lucky that the inquest (not blame) her for Cyril's death.
- 4 Lombard (meet) Mr Owen before he (get) the job?
- 5 Miss Brent (wonder) who (send) her the invitation.
- 6 Armstrong (have) any problems before he (become) a successful doctor?

Before you read

Vocabulary

- 1 The words in the box are all used in Chapter 2. Use them to complete the sentences. Use a dictionary, if necessary.

suspicious cruel dust butler terrace reptile
ghost bee stick court

- 1 A is an animal like a snake or a crocodile.
- 2 You are of someone when you don't think they are telling the truth.
- 3 A works in a big house and looks after the rich people who live there.
- 4 means the opposite of *kind*.
- 5 A is a long, thin piece of wood that has fallen from a tree.
- 6 A is an image of a dead person which appears to people.
- 7 A is a place to sit outside a house with a view of the garden.
- 8 Everyone stands up when a judge comes into the
- 9 A is a small insect which makes honey.
- 10 is made of very small pieces of dry earth.

Prediction

- 2 What do you think will happen in Chapter 2? Choose the answers (a or b) you think are correct, then compare your answers with a partner.

- 1 When the guests arrive on Soldier Island, they meet:
a ☐ a butler and a cook. b ☐ Mr Owen.
- 2 At first, the house on Soldier Island seems to be:
a ☐ frightening and cold. b ☐ nice and comfortable.
- 3 Each person has a ... in their room.
a ☐ poem b ☐ sculpture