

Agatha christie's "and
then there were
none" – a novel
written as drama



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Throughout Agatha Christie's "And Then There Were None", Christie does a fine job of writing the novel as if it were an actual film or play, to be acted out before the viewers' eyes. The main reason that the novel can be seen as a drama being staged and arranged, was partly because it was. The end of the novel reveals how the person responsible carried out their act of murdering the house full of killers, in a fairly theatrical fashion with an artistic purpose.

Throughout the novel, Christie stages the death of the characters in very dramatic ways that to the reader appear to be a madman carrying out these acts following a rhyme, but the end of the novel reveals that the killer operated in a way very fitting for a drama. Justice Wargrave details the why and how of his actions, thus discarding the illusion that there was some unseen maniac killing everyone on the island, and explaining his actions from his point of view. At one point he reveals the motive for leaving his note stating that "It was my ambition to invent a murder mystery that no one could solve. But no artist, I now realize, can be satisfied with art alone... I have, let me confess it in all humility, a pitiful human wish that someone should know just how clever I have been." This statement reveals the sadistically artistic nature of his actions. He killed to satisfy the need he had to kill criminals, and did so in a pattern that made him a serial killer. Like many other serial killers, he could not keep his actions to himself, and felt a compulsive need to tell someone about his crime, even if there was only a chance of someone finding his letter. This also contributes to the events being arranged for artistic effect because it means that he did this to satisfy an inner need of his.

In his letter, he also mentions that he left three clues for police to find, further pointing to the actions on Soldier Island being a kind of drama, played out with artistic effect. The three clues he mentioned were that first, the police knew Edward Seton was guilty and that in a paradoxical fashion he would be the only person on the island that was not a killer before the events took place, so therefore he must be the killer. Second, he says that the "red herring" line of the poem lined up too perfectly with Armstrong's death and that it would be implied that some trickery was involved in killing him.

Lastly, he says that the mark on his head is the mark of Cain, a symbol placed upon Cain so that everyone would recognize him as a killer. This helps conclude that Wargrave desired to be recognized for his actions, further pointing to the events on Soldier Island being orchestrated in a dramatic and artistic form.