

## Catholic Girl's Guide to Summer Reading

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*And Then There Were None*, by Agatha Christie 

**STORY:** A group of eight people of various social positions go to stay at a mansion on a little island upon the invitation of the mysterious couple, Mr. and Mrs. U.N. Owen – or “Unknown.” When the hosts do not make an appearance, the guests are left with the butler and his wife. They find a gramophone record that accuses everyone present, including the servants, of murder. In apparent restitution, the guests and servants begin to die in ways strangely similar to the “Ten Little Indians” nursery rhyme.

**GOOD:** The setup of the mystery is extremely intriguing and paints such clear pictures of the crimes that the reader feels obligated to solve the puzzle but can't, due to obvious clues that were overlooked in the rush to reach the next murder. The characters are very well-rounded, and the last two remaining alive receive particular sympathy because of all they experience.

**BAD:** A few instances of a swear word, using God's name in vain, and some frightening situations preclude younger readers, but are not so overly used that it becomes offensive. Even if younger readers are prepared for suspense and death descriptions, the phrasing of 1920's English is sometimes confusing, but ultimately enjoyable.

**MORALS:** A few suggestions of premarital relations involving some of the crimes and the moral question of the death penalty, however administered, are the main concerns in this book, but are definitely not prevalent. Although many of the characters experience mental breakdowns, they generally hold up well under the strain, and one character in particular feels extreme remorse for committing her crime.

*In the end, I thoroughly enjoyed *And Then There Were None*, and would recommend it to anyone looking for a summer mystery.*