

Agatha Christie
AGATHA CHRISTIE LTD

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Bloody murder. You're going to enjoy it.

Good morning, U.S. Friend of fine mystery fiction.

And a fine morning it will be. Why? Because all I need from you is a tick on the "Why Not" Card I have enclosed. Your elegant bonded leather-bound limited edition copy of Agatha Christie's marvelous tome, "Murder on the Orient Express", will be off to you shortly by prepaid post.

Your cost for this, the first edition of *The Agatha Christie Library*? That is an easy one: Nothing. Nada. Or, in U.S. terms, zilch.

Very well. Now, why on earth should we send you "Murder on the Orient Express", bound in premium bonded leather, as our gift to you? I can advance three quick reasons, and hopefully you will advance several more.

My first reason, and it is a good one: The communication you are reading at this moment is no accident. We at Agatha Christie Limited picked the brains of the very best U.S. list people we could find. Who, we asked them, is a literate, educated individual who appreciates the best of mystery fiction? I am pleased (and you should be pleased) that your name is on that exclusive list.

My second reason is that someone in your position undoubtedly is the recipient of many offers. This one is different. How can I prove to you that this one really is different? Ah - by sending you the first edition of *The Agatha Christie Library* with our compliments.

My third reason is, frankly, commercial. I want you to collect additional books in this programme. Once you see the beauty of this typical book ... once you can envision how handsome it looks on your own shelves ... once you realise what a superb bargain it is, compared against even paper-bound bookstore offerings ... you certainly will share my enthusiasm.

May I continue? I think you will be very pleased.

Agatha Christie's inventive and ingenious novels are timeless. Unlike almost any other author, generations from now her works will be read and appreciated. So to have the permanence of leather binding, accents of pure 22-karat gold, gilded page edges, a ribbon marker, and brilliant printing, you literally will own a legacy - a family treasure

to be handed down and enjoyed.

Now, here is my proposition for you:

The only commitment you are making is to take a look. The risk is ours, as it should be since we have come to you with this private offer.

Agatha Christie Limited will send your leather-bound copy of "Murder on the Orient Express", PLUS a special magazine specifically targeted to that story, PLUS that wonderful murder mystery "And Then There Were None", formerly called "Ten Little Indians", the second book in the Agatha Christie Library PLUS a special magazine about "And Then There Were None".

Now, understand clearly: If after examining these books (and perhaps discussing them with a local bookseller, who undoubtedly would point out that such beautiful examples of the printer's art should cost sixty to one hundred dollars or more) you decide that this simply isn't for you, keep "Murder on the Orient Express" and its accompanying magazine as our gift for agreeing to take a look, and return "And Then There Were None". We still shall be friends.

Or, if you decide that yes, this is a rare opportunity to enhance your personal library with magnificent bonded leather-bound books by the leading mystery writer of all time, then the second book is yours for our direct price of just \$29.95. Yes, you're reading correctly -- \$29.95. If I may lapse into a comparative, we defy anyone to match this quality at anywhere near this price.

Are you still wondering...

"Why are they extending this offer to *me*?"

You need not wonder. Oh, yes, we could place these books in retail book stores, where the selling price for each one would be two to four times higher than your price. (The prices would necessarily be considerably higher than your direct price, because the store has to make a profit.) But for us to deal with stores, each book would represent a separate marketing effort. So putting these volumes directly into your hands is, in our opinion, the best route we can take.

And why, specifically, *you*? I was quite sincere when I told you, earlier in this letter, that we have paid some high-powered experts a great deal of money to compile lists of logical literate book-lovers. I know we are not wrong in selecting you, and I certainly hope you will sample at least one of these fine editions.

We specifically look forward to *your* reaction, one we know will be pleasurable, as you re-visit with gusto the colorful and delightfully civilised detective work of the legendary Hercule Poirot. If you collect future editions, you will encounter the equally remarkable Miss Marple.

What a reunion you can have! Agatha Christie is far and away the most popular novelist in all history, with more than two *billion* books sold. (Only the Bible and Shakespeare have sold more.) That your books will be so lavishly produced adds not

only to their cachet but to their eventual worth!

And “Murder on the Orient Express” is with our compliments.

Few mystery stories have been so lionised, so beloved, as “Murder on the Orient Express”. You may recall the motion picture with its all-star cast – Sean Connery, Lauren Bacall, Ingrid Bergman, and Vanessa Redgrave, among others – a cast whose very presence is a testimonial to the authoress.

A parenthetical but significant “sidebar”: “Murder on the Orient Express” will come to you with another glorious Agatha Christie triumph, “And Then There Were None”. You may not have known that “And Then There Were None” has been filmed three times, featured on many school reading lists, has been developed into a stage-play and performed at a major theatre in London’s West End. And we have the ultimate twenty-first century tribute: “And Then There Were None” is the first Agatha Christie story to be adapted into a computer game. The Agatha Christie renaissance is in high gear!

The very bright future:

Editions to come include “Death on the Nile”, which certainly ranks with “Murder on the Orient Express” and “And Then There Were None” among the most famous Christie stories.

Then we shall have “The Witness for the Prosecution”, whose denouement still is regarded as the reference point for deserved retribution.

And here is the “formidable” Miss Marple (do you recall her first name? It’s Jane). When “The Murder at the Vicarage” comes your way, you will have a happy reunion with that remarkable lady, whose presence you may have seen dramatised by such renowned actresses as Helen Hayes and Angela Lansbury.

Each of these volumes is distinctively bound in splendid bonded leather, and each has distinctive cover art. You may expect not only the height of Agatha Christie’s talents but the height of the book-binder’s art. The fine papers are chlorine-free and acid-free, designed to last through the ages without yellowing as less-perfectly produced books do. Binding is sewn, not glued. Accents, not just on the hubbed spine but on both covers, is 22-karat gold foil. Endsheets are marbled. In every respect, *The Agatha Christie Library* will be the joy of your own library.

A bonus for you:

I am pleased to tell you that we at Agatha Christie Limited also publish the exclusive Agatha Christie Magazine. With each book, we shall include the issue of that magazine corresponding to the title of your book. So together with “Murder on the Orient Express” you will get the Agatha Christie Magazine filled with fascinating and colorful stories about that specific book. (Yes, of course the magazine is printed in full color.)

And I must, must emphasise that each issue of The Agatha Christie Magazine,

usually available at vendors here in the U.K. for £3.50 (U.S. equivalent \$6.50), is yours with our compliments. We want you to understand that in every way, we anticipate a most pleasant relationship with you ... and we sincerely want you to have a similar anticipation.

(Both your books and your magazines will be sent from our U.S. Repository.)

I want to be clear:

“Murder on the Orient Express” is yours to keep, regardless.

You will excuse me for making a point several times. The reason, however, may be obvious to you: Undoubtedly you have received “free” offers that turned out to be not so free. Please do not lump this message with those.

Agatha Christie Limited has authorised me to extend this private pre-publication offer to a relative handful of individuals. Far fewer than one percent of the American public will even know about it. So, to recapitulate:

If you will be so kind as to initial the enclosed “Why Not” Card and drop it in the mail (postage is pre-paid), we shall send you as soon as it is ready, from our U.S. Repository, “Murder on the Orient Express”. It is our gift to you. Also with that shipment will be the issue of *The Agatha Christie Magazine* devoted to that famous book ... plus the second book in this proprietary series, “And Then There Were None” ... plus another issue of the *Agatha Christie Magazine* devoted to that second book.

No matter what you decide, “Murder on the Orient Express” is yours to treasure. If that is the end of it, just return “And Then There Were None” and keep “Murder on the Orient Express” for your trouble.

Or, if you see the value, both today and for the future, of collecting and enjoying additional books in *The Agatha Christie Library*, “And Then There Were None” is yours for what we regard as an extraordinarily low direct-from-publisher price, \$29.95. And you have the right, but never the obligation, to acquire future books for that same low direct price.

Beyond that, I can tell you only that we would be very, very pleased to welcome you to the select group who will own these literary treasures. I do hope you will consider my offer, especially since it involves absolutely no risk whatever on your part.

Thank you for your attention. May we hear from you?

For Agatha Christie Limited,



Tamsen Harward, Crime Business Manager

P.S. A promise: You never have seen so beautifully executed a book as the one we shall send you, with our compliments. But please, reply within ten days. Many thanks.