

Then There were None

Agatha Christie

Chapter 1

Mr. Justice Wargrave was reading the news while smoking in a carriage. The news was about Indian Island; some said that an American millionaire had bought it, and some said that an actress had bought it to get in touch with nature. He also took the letter out of his pocket. Constance had invited him to Indian Island.

II

Vera was in the third-class carriage. She had got a job at Indian Island taking care of children for the summer. It was a summer job, and it would be good for her to get away from her school term.

III

Philip Lombard was in the carriage, thinking about meeting a client from Indian Island. A Jewish friend had told him that a hundred guineas would be paid.

IV

Emily was also in the non-smoking carriage and had been invited to Indian Island by a friend she could not recall. She thought of it as a holiday.

V

General Macarthur was waiting for a train to take him to Indian Island.

VI

Armstrong was also invited to Indian Island with a cheque for a large sum.

VII

Tony Marston left his apartment and got into his car to travel to Indian Island, off the Devon coast.

VIII

Mr. Blore sat in the carriage and wrote down the names of everyone coming to the island. Then he met an old man who told him that judgement day was coming for him.

Chapter 2

When the train arrived at the station, there were only two taxis. So Vera and Lombard waited for another one, while Miss Brent, Justice Wargrave, and a porter took the first taxi. Vera told Lombard that she was coming to take up a temporary post as secretary at the Owens', and Lombard said he knew the Owens. Then they heard the train coming, and they got into a taxi with General Macarthur. The people from the first taxi were waiting for them so that they could all take the small boat to the island. The boatman had never seen the Owens before, and he told the guests that he could not land the boat when the sea was rough. When the guests entered the house, they were greeted by Mr. and Mrs. Roger, the only two servants in the house. They were escorted to their rooms but could not find the Owens. Vera found a poem about ten Indians and how they disappeared one after another. Miss Brent read the Bible before dinner.

Chapter 3

They had dinner and began to talk more freely over the wine. Then they heard a voice within the room saying that all of the guests, excluding Justice Wargrave and

Miss Brent, had been murderers, and asking whether the prisoners had anything to say in their defence. Mrs. Roger fainted, and Armstrong attended to her. They then tried to find where the voice was coming from. They found a gramophone, and it was Roger who had turned it on, as instructed in a letter from the Owens. When Justice Wargrave questioned everyone, they learned that they had all been summoned by letters and calls from mutual acquaintances. The name that signed those letters was U. N. Owen, meaning 'Unknown.' They also learned that Blore was a detective, sent there to investigate all of them.

Chapter 4

The guests gave their accounts of the accusations. Almost all of them denied the allegations; they each knew the person they were accused of harming, but claimed the deaths had not been their fault. Lombard, however, did not deny his, saying it had been an accident when he took all the food from the natives. The doctor, Armstrong, said that he did not remember the person's name but knew that he had operated on the patient while drunk. Miss Brent said nothing. They all decided to leave the island in the morning, when the boat came.

Chapter 5

Marston choked and died. Armstrong thought it could be suicide, with cyanide in his drink. They could not find any other explanation, so they laid Marston's body on the bed. Then Justice Wargrave told the group that they should get some sleep before the boat came. Even though the house was full of modern comforts and electric light, it was hard for them to fall asleep.

Chapter 6

Justice Wargrave thought of the trial, General Macarthur thought of the affair between his wife and one of his soldiers, and Vera thought of the boy. Armstrong could not sleep, and then he heard Mr. Roger calling him because he could not wake his wife. Mrs. Roger had died, and Mr. Roger told him that she had taken nothing except the drug Armstrong had given her. So breakfast was prepared single-handedly by Mr. Roger. Everyone learned of Mrs. Roger's death and put it down to her heart. Then Roger came to talk to Armstrong on the terrace. It was about the ten Chinese figures on the table. When Mr. Roger had first counted them there had been ten, but this morning there were only eight.

Chapter 7

Vera and Miss Brent went out to check for the boat. Then Miss Brent told her about the suicide of her servant. She had turned the girl out after finding out that she was behaving immorally, and the girl then took her own life. Later, Lombard and Armstrong talked on the terrace; they suspected Roger of both killings, but they could not tell how or why. So they decided to take a look around the island.

Chapter 8

Mr. Blore joined Lombard and Armstrong on their stroll around the island. The island was little more than a rock. They tried to find anywhere someone could hide, but found nowhere. General Macarthur was staring into space as if in a trance and did not want to be disturbed. Then Vera came out, and he told her that he was waiting for the end; he believed that none of them would come out alive, and that he was carrying the burden of having sent his wife's lover to his death. Lombard, Blore, and Armstrong used a rope to check whether there was anything near the cliff, but

there was nothing. Then they heard a noise in one of the rooms, and it was Roger. He was moving about quietly with garments in his hands, and they thought it strange that he was moving so quietly.

Chapter 9

Lombard and Armstrong had an argument about whether an overdose could have caused Mrs. Roger's death. Blore tried to calm them. Lombard had not told the truth the night before: he had not been invited like the others but had been asked to come, and he had brought a revolver with him. Then they heard the gong calling them to the meal. Vera thought she was late, but the General was not there yet. So they went looking for him and found him dead. A storm was coming. They all believed that Mr. Owen was one of them, and Justice Wargrave explained that everyone was under the same suspicion, including Roger and the women. The judge then explained why no one could be ruled out by the facts. He examined the facts regarding the three deaths. Although it was Armstrong and Roger who could most easily have administered the drug, the others could not be ruled out either, since any of them could have slipped into Mrs. Roger's room to give it to her. And no one had an alibi for Macarthur's death. Nobody could be excluded, and the killer was among them.

Chapter 10

Vera and Lombard talked about the judge. Vera told Lombard that she thought it was the doctor. Then tea was served to the whole group. The storm was coming down heavily, and they were all tired, so they went to bed.

Chapter 11

When Lombard woke up, it was nearly ten, and everyone had overslept. No one had woken them, and Mr. Roger could not be found. Breakfast was laid on the table, and there were only six Indian figures left. They found Roger with a wound to his head, killed while chopping wood. Then Vera asked where the bees were, as she had realized that the murderer was following the rhythm of the poem to kill Roger and the others. Lombard and Blore talked about Vera and her hysteria when she found out Roger was dead. Vera had been thinking about Hugo and the others while she was cooking breakfast. There were only six china figures on the table.

Chapter 12

They had their breakfast, and Miss Brent felt giddy but refused to take anything from Armstrong. Vera and Lombard were in the kitchen washing the dishes. Then Miss Brent heard a bumblebee buzzing against the window pane, and moments later something stung her. Vera and the others were talking about Miss Brent, whom they suspected. When they came back to her, she was dead, with a syringe mark on her neck. Wargrave asked whether the doctor had a syringe, and Armstrong admitted he had brought one along with other drugs. So they took everything from one another that could be lethal, placed it in a cupboard, and locked it. Then they searched each other's rooms. No one had anything to hide, except that Lombard's revolver was missing and could not be found anywhere in the house.

Chapter 13

The five of them were frightened. They stuck together and thought of trying to signal for help, but the wind was too strong. When they ate, they had their tinned food standing up, watching one another. They grew half-mad and watched each other's every step. Then Vera wanted some time alone to bathe, so she went upstairs; there

she caught the smell of the sea and screamed as a piece of seaweed wrapped around her. The men came and gave her something to drink. Then they realized that Wargrave was not there. So they went back to look for him and found him sitting in a chair. He had been shot with the revolver, and a wig had been placed on his head.

Chapter 14

They had been fooled when Vera screamed. They all went back to bed, but they could not sleep: Vera kept thinking about Hugo, and Blore lay waiting for someone to move. Then he heard a footfall, so he quietly slipped out of his room and tapped on Armstrong's door, but there was no answer. He then woke the others and asked Vera not to open her door unless he or Lombard tapped on it. After a few hours, they came back and told Vera that Armstrong had disappeared and that there were now three Indian figures on the table.

Chapter 15

The day was clear now that the storm had passed. They tried to signal to the mainland, and Blore and Lombard argued about Lombard's still having the revolver. Vera told them that Armstrong could still be on the island. Then Blore wanted something to eat, so he went inside; since the next line of the poem pointed to a zoo, Vera and Lombard did not want to go into the 'lair,' the house. Then they heard a thud and a cry, and when they looked inside they found Blore's dead body, with a bear-shaped clock having fallen onto him. They thought it might be Armstrong who was hiding. But when they went outside, they found Armstrong dead near the shore.

Chapter 16

Lombard laughed and told her that the end was near. While they were pulling Armstrong's body out of the water, Vera pulled the trigger out of fear, and Lombard was killed. Now alone, Vera knocked two of the Indian figures off the table and took one away with her. Then, when she opened her door, she found a rope hanging there, and she hanged herself. When the commissioners read the report, they could not understand who had done it. They tried to cast each person as the murderer but could not work out how any one of them could have killed all the others. They also found another victim, named Morris, who had died of an overdose of sleeping pills. The commissioners could not determine who was responsible. Then a letter was sent to Scotland Yard from a fishing trawler. It contained an account of how everything had unfolded on Indian Island. The judge had a terminal illness and wanted to commit murder on a grand scale, so he had planned the whole thing. He had learned the stories of most of the victims, including Armstrong's and the General's. He faked his own death by persuading Armstrong that it was a way to catch Lombard, whom the judge also believed to be a killer. They agreed to meet, and then he pushed Armstrong over the cliff. He later staged Vera's hanging as a kind of psychological experiment in unconscious guilt. Then he wrote this letter and sealed it in a bottle. Finally, he shot himself, rigging the gun with a length of black cord and his eyeglasses so that Vera's fingerprints on it would be preserved. The letter was signed with his name, Lawrence Wargrave.

Summary

Written by Thura Htoo

20 April 2026