

Dear Agatha Christie,

One of the most painful events a person can experience is his being wronged by someone who is protected by law. This idea, which is a major theme in your book, And Then There Were None, took me back to a very different time in my life. I was nine years old and just beginning to get interested in magic and martial arts, two skills that I would later develop tremendously. I had two loving parents and a brother, and I lived in a beautiful town in which everyone knew each other. It still amazes me how these things were all taken away from me by a simple act of one man. Having read your book, I now have a new perspective on crimes that cannot be punished.

Cletus Finney, a friend of my dad, worked at an auto body shop. Ironically enough, he turned out to be quite a reckless driver. I mean, one would think that a person who fixes cars for a living would pay attention to the road, but I suppose not everything in the world makes sense. One day my mom was driving me home from a karate lesson. As we were approaching our neighborhood, we were surprised to see that a major road was blocked because of an accident. I can remember the event perfectly. "I hope that wasn't Dad," I said jokingly to my mom. She must have been thinking about it because there was no response from her. We took the long way home. When I got home, I eagerly ran upstairs to continue practicing my cups and balls routine.

A couple of moments later, my mom yelled up at me, "Adam, get down here!" Thoroughly annoyed at her for interrupting me, I slowly walked down the stairs. She was waiting at the bottom. "Remember that accident on Darius Road? It was Dad. He's dead."

My dad's death affected me in many ways; my mom found that she could not deal with living in the town where he died, so we ended up moving from Brattleboro, Vermont to Upper St. Clair, Pennsylvania. This move affected me in several ways. My favorite town and my two hobbies were thus taken away from me. My brother Salim developed some problems that may have been caused by the trauma of being in the car when my dad died, and he was moved into a mental hospital. But most of all, I had to live with the knowledge that the man who took all of this away from me walked away almost as if nothing had happened. My mom explained it to me; we could not have sued Cletus, for we would run the risk of losing the case and our chance to make things right, so the best we could do was make him do community service. Being young and uninformed, I accepted this situation all too well.

When I read And Then There Were None, the story of my dad's death became vivid in my mind. The murderer in your book was a sensible, law-abiding man like myself who wanted to punish those who committed crimes but were protected by the bulwark of law. I found myself looking back on my dad's death from a new perspective. I was disgusted that a death directly caused by someone could go so unnoticed. I can only imagine how many people there are in the world who have suffered through a loss and are unable to find justice. Wouldn't the world be a better place if there were a way to remedy this pain? Certainly, whether or not the

perpetrator of the unpunishable crime is chastised, a great number of lives would be touched if justice were somehow found.

Your book directly changed the way I look at the most memorable event of my life. While others may look upon your book as a thrilling murder mystery, I see it as a message about justice to those who have lost someone without feeling amends. Though your book has brought back a painful memory, it has also shown me that not all crimes are punishable, and sometimes we have to live with what the world deems fair.

Thank you,

Adam Snyder