



The A.B.C. Murders

Agatha Christie, Thi Huong Lan (Translator)

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When Alice Ascher is murdered in Andover, Hercule Poirot is already on to the clues. Alphabetically speaking, it's one down, twenty-five to go.

The A.B.C. Murders Details

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Author : Agatha Christie , Thi Huong Lan (Translator)

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From Reader Review The A.B.C. Murders for online ebook

Mitch says

Before I begin my review, let me start off my saying I am a HUGE fan of Agatha Christie. Throughout the years I have always used her novels as "go to" books if I am in a literary dry spell and yearn to read something I am guaranteed to enjoy. My girl Aggie usually hits the spot! However, sadly, I must say that "The A.B.C. Murders" is thus far my least favourite of all her books.

The following may contain spoilers:

Poirot, everyone's favourite detective, receives a mysterious letter warning him of a crime to hit Adover: and Hercule correctly predicts murder. Soon a string of murders spread out among different cities and a variety of victims begins to occur. The only thing in common is that the murderer sends a letter prior to the tragedies, each victim's name corresponds to the next letter of the alphabet, and an A.B.C. train book is always at the scene of every crime. Now Poirot teams up with the friends and family of the victims to try to prevent the killer from moving his way up the alphabet!

Now, the premise and general story are quite interesting. However, I just felt like this book was different from many of the other that I love. Call me old fashioned, but I like the "Oh no, there is a murder! I will gather clues, interview each person one by one, and then gather them together and spring the answer on everyone with the killer present!" And although this book also sort of follows that formula, it just isn't as...hmmm effective I guess as other books like "Murder on the Orient Express" or "Appointment with Death". I don't know...something just seemed missing and I didn't feel invested with any of the characters. So, Aggie my girl, I love ya, but this one was just so-so for me.

Ginger says

The book starts off with a methodical, serial killer sending Hercule Poirot a letter of a future murder! Did a person just die and how do they find the victim?

Enter the mind of the great Agatha Christie.

I loved that Agatha Christie went in a completely new direction with this plot. She usually does a singular murder, not a manhunt on stopping a serial killer.

The last part of the book made this a 4-star book for me!

It was lagging in the middle for me. I didn't think the serial killer was who we were expecting it to be and I'm glad I stuck it out. The mystery of the killer was not so obvious. I had a feeling that AC would try to fool me because of the past books that I've read! She's clever like that.

I had my suspicions of who it was at about 85% in the book and when Poirot started stating all the facts at the end, I did a fist bump! I love how AC can take a murder mystery and put all the facts and assumptions together seamlessly.

Her brain is brilliant and she's the GOAT of mysteries. Hahaha!

Ahmad Sharabiani says

The A.B.C. Murders, Agatha Christie

The A.B.C. Murders is a work of detective fiction by British writer Agatha Christie, featuring her characters Hercule Poirot, Arthur Hastings and Chief Inspector Japp, as they contend with a series of killings by a mysterious murderer known only as "A.B.C.". The book was first published in the UK by the Collins Crime Club on 6 January 1936. The form of the novel is unusual, combining first-person narrative and third-person narrative. This approach was famously pioneered by Charles Dickens in Bleak House, and was tried by Agatha Christie in The Man in the Brown Suit. What is unusual in The A.B.C. Murders is that the third-person narrative is supposedly reconstructed by the first-person narrator of the story, Arthur Hastings. This approach shows Christie's commitment to experimenting with point of view, exemplified by The Murder of Roger Ackroyd.

Aditi says

“Our weapon is our knowledge. But remember, it may be a knowledge we may not know that we possess.”

----Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie, the Queen of Mystery, has spun and extremely intriguing crime fiction and the thirteenth tale from her *Hercule Poirot* series called, *The A.B.C. Murders* that revolves around the anonymous letters stating as well as challenging Poirot that a murder will take place in the alphabetical order in a random town, and that intrigues the clever Poirot to come out of his early retirement to catch the mad serial killer striking random people in the alphabetical manner.

Synopsis:

There's a serial killer on the loose, bent on working his way through the alphabet. And as a macabre calling card he leaves beside each victim's corpse the ABC Railway Guide open at the name of the town where the murder has taken place. Having begun with Andover, Bexhill and then Churston, there seems little chance of the murderer being caught - until he makes the crucial and vain mistake of challenging Hercule Poirot to frustrate his plans.

Poirot is tempted by the anonymous letter addressed to him stating about a murder that is going to take place in a particular town on a particular date and signed as ABC. And within no time, the letter's each word comes true as the murder of an old lady takes place on the letter's said date and place, and it seems the killer has left an ABC railway guide book beside the dead body. And pretty soon one after another murder takes place that Poirot could not stop those from happening. So four murders later, Poirot finally manages to lure the serial killer onto his trap. Although this time, Poirot uses his gray matter and logic more than the clues to come to a conclusion about this baffling serial killing case.

One of my absolute favorite Agatha Christie books that, no matter, how many times I read it, always leave me awestruck with the intensity of the thrill and with Poirot's unmatched wits that comes out strikingly only in few of the books from the *Hercule Poirot* series. Although the book opens bit slow, still somewhere in the middle of the story, the complexity of the plot will drown its readers and leave them anticipating till the very last page.

The writing style is eloquent and is laced with so many layers that makes this plot challenging and interesting that will keep the readers glued to the pages of this book. The narrative is equally engaging with that light French flair mixed heavily with the English undertone thereby making the story line real and enthralling for the readers. The pacing is quite fast as the author unravels her plot through so many twists and turns that will leave the readers guessing till the very end.

The mystery part is extremely well concocted by the author, in fact, I've never ever came across such a mystery book where the plot is so thick and keeps getting thicker until it deludes the readers into its unknown depth and finally in the climax, the plot gradually begins to unravel through the author's smart and clever perspective that is highly absorbing and justifiable. The mystery is one hell of a roller coaster ride filled with some highly anticipating scenes, adrenaline rushing moments and some challenging events.

The characters are, no doubt, very much well crafted through their flaws, psychological challenges, and their thorough mindset, so while reading, it will feel like taking a trip inside the head of the secondary characters apart from Poirot and his friend, Hastings. The author depicts her characters with a clear insight into the minds of those characters, thereby making her readers contemplate with the characters' demeanor easily. Poirot's charm, his French exclamations and his wit simply steals the show. *Oui!*

In a nutshell, this book is one of the few showstopper crime fiction books that is not only riveting but also enlightening enough for the readers to look beyond the characters demeanor and the fictional plot's development and right into the mind of such an excellent and flawless writer of all times.

Verdict: *Poirot and Christie at their best!*

Shobhit Sharad says

Agatha Christie is a WITCH! I don't know how but she manages to confound me EVERY TIME I read one of her books. Specially, with this one. You're going with the story, reading with a flow, building up to the climax, and then suddenly whatever you were thinking is snatched away from you, and you begin to look at the things in a way that you never thought of until now.

And to do her justice, not only was this story (and any of her others) thrilling, but it had an element of reality better than most of her counterparts (no comparisons). And here's an example, in the words of Poirot-

"And it is very true—when a young girl is dead, that is the kind of thing that is said. She was bright. She was happy. She was sweet-tempered. She had not a care in the world. She had no undesirable acquaintances. There is a great charity always to the dead. Do you know what I should like this minute? I should like to find someone who knew Elizabeth Barnard and who does not know she is dead! Then, perhaps, I should hear what is useful to me—the truth."

(Skip this paragraph to avoid spoilers.)

At one point of time in the book, I felt I was going to be disappointed, because up to the last the crimes were attributed to mental illness, and what fun is in that? I had my doubts deep within, but they were too deep to have any effect on what I was reading.

But when we came to the typical Christie climax scene, a room full of people, and Poirot giving his dramatic explanation, that is when the cloud from in front of my eyes cleared and I praised one of the best writers of detective stories ever!

Vikas Singh says

One of the most engrossing Poirot stories. It has a great beginning and as the plot progresses you stay glued trying to make a sense of it all. Tantalizingly, clues are scattered loosely to off track you. And then finally with a flourish Poirot reveals the murderer you are left gaping at the cleverness of author in steering such a plot. I loved Poirot's quote at the end ' ... but for myself I consider your crime not an English crime at all- not above board- not sporting'

Amy | shoutame says

Agatha Christie is quickly becoming one of my favourite authors and definitely a go-to author for when I fancy a quick pick-me-up!

This novel is the 13th book in the Hercule Poirot series, I am reading them out of order as I'm just grabbing them from my library's e-book collection when they become available - although I don't think it matters too much if you read them slightly out of order!

- This novel follows Poirot as he endeavours to solve a series of mysterious murders. After receiving an anonymous letter hinting that death may be coming Poirot is left a little befuddled. Soon after it is reported that a woman has been murdered and left beside her body was an ABC Railway Guide. This leads to a series of murders all following a similar pattern - the murderer is going through the alphabet, murdering people with names beginning with the specified letter, working his way from A-Z. Not only does the name of the person play a part but also the place that they live in - as the news becomes more publicized everyone is trying to guess where the next murder will take place and which unfortunate person will be chosen. Poirot and his trusty friend Hastings get on the case...how far into the alphabet will the murderer get?

- As always with Christie novels I got such a feeling of nostalgia whilst reading - it's such a bizarre sense of happiness I just love it! Poirot was on top form and did his usual slow release of information - I still didn't manage to work out who the murderer was!

- I really enjoyed the fact that there was more than one murder - it seemed to give the novel a lot more excitement and more places where the murderer could be caught out! In saying that though it did mean there were a lot of characters involved so some of them we didn't get to know as well as in some of the other Poirot stories I've read.

- I would highly recommend to any lover of Christie or to anyone looking for a good brain-teaser!

- 4 out of 5 stars and I can't wait to read my next one!

Brenda says

Was the killer working his way through the alphabet? That's what M. Hercule Poirot wanted to know. And his offsider Captain Hastings was of the same mind.

Andover and the elderly Mrs Ascher; Bexhill and a young Miss Betty Barnard and Churston and a gentleman by the name of Sir Carmichael Clarke had all met untimely deaths at the hands of a maniac who would leave the ABC Railway guide near to or on the body, showing each destination as proof he was once again bettering the police, but especially M. Poirot. With Scotland Yard involved, plus Poirot and Hastings – surely they would get to the bottom of the dastardly murders before "D" arrived.

The ABC Murders by Agatha Christie is #13 in the Hercule Poirot series and another excellent crime novel. I always enjoy M. Poirot's deductions; the way his little grey cells get a work-out. Highly entertaining, and once again, highly recommended.

Beata says

One of the best HP cases.

Adina says

Back when I had an Audible subscription I acquired 2 literature courses and one of them is called The Secrets of Great Mystery and Suspense Fiction. It is a history of the genre and its many ramifications. There are quite a few books mentioned and I am planning to read most of them as they appear in the lectures. Since Agatha Christie is one of the most important personalities in the history of Crime fiction (among Poe, Doyle, Hammett and Chandler) her works are extensively present in these lectures. The first novel I encountered by her is the ABC murders and this is why I decided to read it as my 2nd Christie.

I doubt anyone contests her talent to write amazing, clever, twisting crime novels. Time passed well over the pages of her works and I feel that they will continue to be enjoyed many years from now. She managed to surprise me this time as well and I enjoyed the reveal at the end although I had intuited who the murderer was.

This time, Hercule Poirot faces a direct challenge from a serial killer. He is sent letters from the perpetrator

announcing in advance where the murders will take place. As the title suggest, the killer chooses his/her victims and crime location in alphabetic order.

I enjoyed reading this little book and my only regret was that I had no time to absorb it in one go and had to settle for a few pages/day.

My next Christie will probably be The murder of Roger Akcroyd.

Poonam says

3.5 stars

Even though this book belongs to the Poirot series it is very different to the other Poirot books. Most of the books in this series belong to the cozy mystery genre and the only other time I have read Christie attempt something different in the Poirot series was in The Big Four. That was not something I enjoyed but relieved to say I actually enjoyed this attempt.

In this the murderer sends letters to Poirot himself issuing a challenge. *Reminded me of the infamous Zodiac Killer.*

The whole city is in uproar over the string of murders and there is an added pressure to nab the culprit in time before another murder is committed. **Here goes the typical cozy mystery feel out of the window. I did enjoy this for a change.**

There are chapters from the killers perspective which is unexpected and again a new in Christie's novel (from the one's I have read). Loved the chase, the turn of events and the overall excitement.

But at the end do remember it's Poirot and his grey cells that always win!

Richard Derus says

My review of the actual story is over here: Murder-Go-Round: Thirteen at Dinner, The A.B.C. Murders, Funerals are Fatal

SO DON'T ANYONE SNARK AT ME ABOUT THIS POST. I'LL DELETE YOUR POST IMMEDIATELY.

There's yet another unnecessary, unwanted remake of this book into a 3-part miniseries being made; John Malkovich will appear as Poirot, which is as ludicrous as that Brannagh dude and his mustachios appearing in the unnecessary, unwanted remake of Murder on the Orient Express that carbuncled itself onto screens last year.

Rupert Grint, of Harry Potter fame, will also appear. Amazon Prime will stream in the US, though I'm not sure about international markets. End of this year.

Why they can't leave it with David Suchet, who filmed all the Poirot stories in 25 years as the little Belgian, I cannot fathom. He **was** Poirot. *annoyed sigh*

Valerie says

I try to get my math students to read mysteries, because the logical skills of finding a pattern and using inductive and deductive reasoning are often skillfully laid out. If you've read this book, you know why its one that I use to illustrate that point in my class. Sadly, the point is underappreciated by my high school students.

Renata says

Between loving the recent movie Murder in the Orient Express and reading Anthony Horowitz's Magpie Murders, I am once again enthralled by Agatha Christie's mysteries.

I'm still smiling and feeling as smugly satisfied as Hercule himself at the way she thoroughly captivated me on so many levels in The A.B.C. Murders. A plot that felt comfortably yet intriguingly straight forward was anything but and I found myself muttering aloud several times until I exploded in laughter at her pulling the rug out from under my feet.

Poirot received a series of typed letters challenging him to uncover crimes about to be committed ... crimes with an alphabetic pattern, Railroad time tables as a calling card and the dire threat of serial killings. For once he is rather at a loss of what to make of this. Is this personal. about him? What is the madness behind this method? Along the way are a cast of interesting characters from different walks of life, Dame Agatha's thoughts on beautiful women, and always her deep reflections on the human condition.

I like her interplay of humor, irony, and yet deeply relevant dialogues on the nature of crime. Throughout the story there are multiple references to the unremarkable appearance of a criminal, to the nature of madness and obsessions that tilt people over the edge. She may have written this in 1936, but the reflections in this police procedural are all relevant today from greater crimes to the wild insanity of the shooting recently at YouTube. Poirot was perhaps the first psychological profiler - she mentions the police hiring an alienist and it made me think of a couple of TV series.

And then there is Poirot. The more I read him, the more I like him. He is above all a man of reason - it is not enough to solve the crime, he must also understand the reasoning behind the crime. He is both man of steel will and a sensitivity to the hearts of others. He sees people clearly because he seeks to understand. By turns compassionate and stern, and a man you can entrust yourself to. And in this mystery quite joyful at the conclusion: "so Hastings - we went hunting once more, did we not? Vive le sport."

A favorite quote from Poirot: "...there is nothing so dangerous for anyone who has something to hide as conversation! Speech, so a wise old Frenchman said to me once, is an invention of man's to prevent him from thinking. It is also an infallible means of discovering that which he wishes to hide. A human being, Hastings, cannot resist the opportunity to reveal himself and express his personality which conversation gives him."

zahra haji says

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Noha Badawi says

I get it now why people call her, *the queen of crime*

Erin ? *Proud Book Hoarder* says

"There is nothing so terrible as to live in an atmosphere of suspicion - to see eyes watching you and the love in them changing to fear - nothing so terrible as to suspect those near and dear to you - It is poisonous - a miasma."

Hercule Poirot gets a few surprises – his old friend Hastings has come for an extended stay and visit, and a serial killer has decided to target him with teasing notes before he strikes.

As always, clever. The point of this one was the journey and not the destination/culprit. I didn't guess the killer exactly, it's complicated with this one, but there was a surprising twist that made a diabolical sense. Christie shows the viewpoint of the supposed culprit from the start. Poirot wasn't trying to figure out who the killer was so much as he was trying to figure out a possible motive other than a 'madman is doing it because he's mad.'

It was a treat to see Poirot and Hastings meet up again when both are older and still friends - poor Hastings is apparently losing his hair, which makes one of several amusing moments. Their comical exchanges bring spice to the page - even if Hastings isn't the most fascinating character, their friendship is a joy in these books. He's definitely grown to enjoy the sleuthing business more than he used to.

We don't get into the head of the great detective this time, and Christie uses a multiple viewpoint between two people, but it works well.

The ABC Murders would make a clever movie adaptation – have they done it already? – although the mystery itself isn't the strongest of her works. Poirot being there solving the puzzle makes it all the better – he's definitely my favorite detective. He will live on.

Miriam says

These alphabetical serial murders are a bit different from the usual Christie crimes -- or ARE they?

For once I solved the murder before the end. My little gray cells must be working harder...or I've simply read enough of these stories to be a better guesser.

Jason Koivu says

Agatha Christie is such a crafty devil that midway through a novel she might have you believing that YOU are the murderer!

Indeed, *The ABC Murders* uses slight-of-hand most deftly. Again, I was thrown off the scent of the real killer and was ready to blame others. I feel a bit foolish when she dangles bait in front of me, and although I guess it for what it is, I take it anyway. And yet, if ever it felt good to be played the fool, it's while reading a cracking good mystery.

Ah, but never fear, Hercule Poirot is here! Christie may make him out to be the retired old sleuth past his prime, but she's used that line on us before and we know the little man with the peculiar accent and fantastic mustaches won't let us down! In this story, he is put on his guard by the personal nature of the murderer's actions. He is not quite as flippant as he can be, in fact, he seems downright disconcerted at times. It makes for a nice change in the character.

After sampling a few shorter Poirot stories, it felt liberating to read something that stretched and breathed a bit more. While the shorts feel like wham-bam-thank-you-ma'am, this makes you feel like you've been wined and dined. Christie even gets all psychological on this one! Not only in how she delves into the minds of the suspects, but the 1st person/3rd person narration switches made *The ABC Murders* seem that much more cerebral! Seriously, she may not go down as the most clever author of all time, but I like that she tried these sorts of techniques.

Rating: A 4 star book that gets an extra star for captivating me almost from start to finish!

Tim says

This is without a doubt one of the most enjoyable of the Poirot novels. Christie takes the usual formula and puts a bit of a different spin on it, creating one of her most compelling stories as well as one of the most unique.

Prior to this novel, all of Poirot's cases have been of a more "intimate" nature (Poirot's own words). They've all been classic locked room mysteries where we had all our suspects lined in a row. It was all a matter of finding motive and opportunity. Here Poirot is dealing with a serial killer sending him taunting letters and killing unconnected people in alphabetical order. This time the killer could be anyone, and Poirot's only

method it to approach the psychology of the killer. Find out the reason “why.” Why send the letters to Poirot? Is it for fame? To cause chaos? Did Poirot one time foil him (intentionally or unintentionally) and it is a matter of revenge? These become the questions rather than solving alibis.

This approach is refreshingly different for the Poirot series. While the serial killer is a common antagonist for mysteries, they are typically police procedurals rather than private detective stories... yet, this new approach fits Poirot and his love of psychology. It is different, but not a jarring change.

The letters Poirot receives are well done, with both a taunting air and a bit of childishness in their insults. They create a tension that many books in this series do not have. Poirot fits into the classic cozy mystery, there may be a few murders, but tensions do not typically run this high in the series. The solution is rather brilliant as well, and ranks up with *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* in terms of clever solutions.

In fact, now that I've mentioned *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*, I'll go ahead and make the bold statement that this is my second favorite Poirot novel only after the Ackroyd case. *The ABC Murders* receives a full 5 stars and my highest recommendation to all mystery fans.
