

SUMMARY

The ABC Murders tells about the adventure of Hercule Poirot, a private detective, in solving a serial murder case. He is accompanied by his friend named Captain Hastings. The story starts when Poirot shows a letter from the murderer to Hastings. The killer challenge Poirot to stop him. The letter shows when and where the murder will take place. It is at Andover on the 21st of the month.

The story, then, switch into the third person point of view describing a man named Alexander Bonaparte Cust. He is making a list of name and thick the first name with a pen.

The Andover murder finally takes place. Poirot and Hastings are too late. The victim is Mrs. Ascher. She opens a small store in Andover. The policemen find the ABC railway guide in the room where her body is. Poirot then finds some proves from the persons who know Mrs. Ascher but find nothing suspicious. After a few days, he comes again to the place where the event takes place. He just want to reproduce yesterday's atmosphere as closely as possible. He asks some more people, but again, he finds nothing.

The second letter is finally come to him again. Now the murder will take place in Bexhill-on-Sea on the 25th. The policemen try to stop this murder. Unfortunately, they fail to stop the killer. The murder happens just like what is said in the letter. The victim is a waitress of a café, Elizabeth Barnard. Again, the ABC railway guide is found open under her body.

Poirot visits her parents and her relatives to ask some questions, including Elizabeth's boy friend. He finds some useful facts that will be used for solving the crime later. He also notices that the murders follow the alphabet structure.

A conference is at last held at Scotland Yard. The conference discusses the ABC case. It is visited by some important people from police department.

Another letter is sent to Poirot. This is the third letter. It tells him that the murder will happen in Churston on the 30th. Mr. Carmichael Clarke becomes the third victim of the killer and as usual, the ABC guide found deposited beside his body. Poirot and some policemen meet Franklin Clarke, the victim's only brother. They ask some questions to him to find some proves.

The story switches again to Mr. Cust. He says that he has a headache and sometimes he does not even understand what he have done.

The serial killer becomes reporter's main breakfast. Lots of newspapers report it and make it as their headline. However, Poirot finally makes a hypothesis. He explains what have happened so far. They also get the description of the murderer.

The fourth letter arrives and tells that another murder will take place at Doncaster on the 11th September. The victim is, surprisingly, a man called Earlsfield, George Earlsfield. His name begins with letter E so it does not match with the serial murders, which happened so far. However, the ABC guide still found in the dead body. Poirot and friends meet the man who found the dead body. His name is Mr. Downes. They think that the killer takes a wrong person. It is Mr. Downes who should be the victim.

Another switch of the story shows that Mr. Cust goes out from Regal Cinema. His sleeve is stained with blood. He also finds a knife in his pocket. He blames himself and starts to run to his room. He washes his hands when a tap on the door is heard. A young woman opens the door and offers hot water for him. She looks the basin with the red water. Mr. Cust lies to her about the water. Finally the young woman goes away. Mr. Cust runs away from his room.

The young woman tells the policemen that she saw Mr. Cust with his bleeding sleeve. When the policemen go to his room, they find nothing.

However, Mr. Cust finally surrenders to the police himself. He thinks that he himself is the murderer. The case is over, but not to Poirot. He still has some questions in his mind. He tries to find some answers and finally gets what he wanted. He, then, understands who is the real killer. It is Mr. Franklin Clarke who wants his brother's treasure. Mr. Cust is only a victim that is used by Mr. Franklin because of his illness.