



To learn from the greats, it helps to dissect their work. In this lesson, we are going to dissect *The Crooked House* by Agatha Christie.

***** Warning: Spoilers Ahead *****

PART ONE: THEME

The first layer we examine is her use of **theme**. In *The Crooked House*, Christie used a children's rhyme to illustrate the bent and twisted nature of the family involved in the murder.

The following excerpts illustrate her use of the theme throughout the story.

Chapter 1

She added softly in a musing voice: "In a little crooked house ..."

I must have looked slightly startled, for she seemed amused and explained by elaborating the quotation. "'And they all lived together in a crooked little house.' That's us. Not really such a little house either. But definitely crooked – running to gables and half timbering!"

Chapter 3

I suddenly remembered the whole verse of the nursery rhyme:

*There was a crooked man and he went a crooked mile.
He found a crooked sixpence beside a crooked stile.
He had a crooked cat which caught a crooked mouse,
And they all lived together in a little crooked house.*

I wondered why it had been called Three Gables. Eleven gables would have been more apposite! The curious thing was that it had a strange air of being distorted – and I thought I knew why. It was the type, really, of a cottage, it was a cottage swollen out of all proportion. It was like looking at a country cottage through a gigantic magnifying-glass. The slant-wise beams, the half-timbering, the gables – it was a little crooked house that had grown like a mushroom in the night.



Chapter 8

This was the Original Crooked Little Man who had built the Crooked Little House – and without him the Crooked Little House had lost its meaning.

Chapter 13

I went down to the Crooked House (as I called it in my own mind) with a slightly guilty feeling.

Chapter 15

“I think that’s what I mean when I said we all lived together in a crooked little house. I didn’t mean that it was crooked in the dishonest sense. I think what I meant was that we hadn’t been able to grow up independent, standing by ourselves, upright. We’re all a bit twisted and twining (...) like bindweed.”

Chapter 17

“He was a natural twister. He liked, if I may put it so, doing things the crooked way.”

Chapter 26

“We will go there together and you will forget the little Crooked House.”

Throughout the solving of the murder, the evidence twists and turns and reveals the way the family members are intertwined in an unhealthy way. The young widow is often described as being like a cat.

Christie used a similar method in *The Five Little Pigs*, where she described the suspects as one who went to market, one who stayed home, one who had roast beef, and one who had none.

Christie sprinkled the theme in with a delicate hand. The analogy is referred to in only seven of the twenty-six chapters.



To address theme, I suggest considering at the beginning or end of the first draft what you want the story to say. Then, as you go through the revision layers, develop your theme through description and dialogue. You might find a nursery rhyme to fit your purpose.

PART TWO: CHARACTER DESCRIPTION

Christie was a competent mechanic. Her mysteries were linear stories with multiple, credible suspects. She did an excellent job of pointing the finger.

When it comes to describing characters, she was a minimalist. Writers are advised to avoid the laundry list, but she used it to good effect.

We view most of the characters through the filter of the point of view character, the amateur sleuth, as he meets each person for the first time. He notes their basic appearance and his first impression.

Chapter 1

[Sleuth describes his fiancée Sophia.](#)

I liked everything I saw. The dark crisp hair that sprang up proudly from her forehead, the vivid blue eyes, the small square fighting chin, and the straight nose. I liked the well-cut light-grey tailor-made, and the crisp white shirt. She looked refreshingly English and that appealed to me strongly after three years without seeing my native land.

Chapter 3

[Sleuth describes himself.](#)

"I shall figure in the reports you get. Five foot eleven, brown hair, brown eyes, dark-blue pinstripe suit, etc."

[Secondary character describes the Victim.](#)

"Funnily enough he was attractive. He'd got a personality, you know. You could feel it. Nothing much to look at. Just a gnome – ugly little fellow – but magnetic – women always fell for him."



Two different characters describe the victim's widow, Brenda.

"A young woman out of a tea shop. A perfectly respectable young woman – good-looking in an anemic, apathetic sort of way."

"She's what I call a harem type. Likes sitting about and eating sweets and having nice clothes and jewelry and reading cheap novels and going to cinema."

Chapter 5

Sleuth describes the elderly aunt.

Along the path toward us came a tall figure walking briskly. It had on a battered old felt hat, a shapeless skirt, and a rather cumbersome jersey. ... Edith de Haviland was a woman of about seventy. She had a mass of untidy grey hair, a weather-beaten face and a shrewd, piercing glance.

Chapter 6

Sleuth describes suspect Philip.

He got up from behind his table as we entered – a tall man, aged somewhere around fifty, an extraordinarily handsome man. (...) Certainly I was not prepared for this perfection of feature – the straight nose, the flawless line of jaw, the fair hair touched with grey that swept back from a well-shaped forehead.

Sleuth describes suspect Magda.

I don't know how she gave the impression of being three women rather than one who entered. She was smoking a cigarette in a long holder and was wearing a peach satin negligee which she was holding up with one hand. A cascade of Titian hair rippled down her back. Her face had that almost shocking air of nudity that a woman's has nowadays when it is not made up at all. Her eyes were blue and enormous and she was talking very rapidly in a husky, rather attractive voice with a very clear enunciation.



Chapter 7

Sleuth describes suspect Magda.

The titian hair was piled high on her head in an Edwardian coiffure, and she was dressed in a well-cut dark-grey coat and skirt. With a delicately pleated pale mauve shirt fastened at the neck by a small cameo broach. For the first time, I was aware of the charm of her delightfully tip-tilted nose.

Sleuth describes suspect Roger.

He was a clumsy giant of a man with powerful shoulders, dark rumpled hair, and an exceedingly ugly but at the same time rather pleasant face. His eyes looked at us and then quickly away in that furtive, embarrassed manner which shy but honest people often adopt.

Sleuth describes suspect Clemency.

She was a woman of very sharp and definite personality. She was about fifty, I suppose; her hair was grey, cut very short in what was almost an Eton crop but which grew so beautifully on her small well-shaped head that it had none of the ugliness I have always associated with that particular cut. She had an intelligent sensitive face, with light-grey eyes of a peculiar and searching intensity. She had on a simple dark-red woolen frock that fitted her slenderness perfectly.

Chapter 8

Sleuth describes Victim's portrait.

It was a portrait of a little old man with dark, piercing eyes. He wore a black velvet skull cap and his head was sunk down in his shoulders, but the vitality and power of the man radiated forth from the canvas. The twinkling eyes seemed to hold mine. ...

Sleuth describes widow Brenda.

She wore black – very expensive black and a good deal of it. It swathed her up to the neck and down to the wrists. She moved easily and indolently, and black certainly suited her.



Her face was mildly pretty, and she had rather nice brown hair arranged in somewhat too elaborate style. Her face was well powdered and she had on lipstick and rouge, but she had clearly been crying. She was wearing a string of very large pearls and a big emerald ring on one hand and an enormous ruby on the other.

Sleuth describes suspects Laurence and Eustace.

There a fair-haired young man of about thirty and a handsome, dark boy of sixteen were sitting at a table.

Chapter 10

Sleuth describes the suspect Josephine.

The face still had its goblin suggestion – it was round with a bulging brow, combed-back hair and small, rather beady eyes. But it was definitely attached to a body – a small skinny body. (...) She was a fantastically ugly child with a very distinct likeness to her grandfather.

Chapter 14

Sleuth describes witness Nannie.

In the doorway stood an old woman – a rather bulky old woman. She had a very clean white apron tied around her ample waist and the moment I saw her I knew that everything was all right.

Chapter 15

Sleuth describes widow Brenda.

Brenda Leonides was the first. She was wrapped in a grey chinchilla coat and there was something catlike and stealthy in the way she moved. She slipped through the twilight with a kind of eerie grace. I saw her face as she passed the window. There was a half-smile on it, the curving, crooked smile I had noticed upstairs.

Sleuth describes suspect Laurence.



A few minutes later Laurence Brown, looking slender and shrunken, also slipped through the twilight.

It is important to introduce your characters when they appear for the first time. The level and style of introduction is up to you. Too little, and you risk talking heads. Too much, and you risk annoying your reader. Christie advocated just enough to get the point across.

PART THREE: DESCRIPTION OF PLACE

Let's take a look at how Agatha Christie used description of place to set the scene and reveal theme in *The Crooked House*.

Chapter 2

I returned to England on a soft grey day in September. The leaves on the trees were golden in the evening light. There were playful gusts of wind.

Chapter 6

[Sleuth describes Magda's parlor.](#)

We passed through it into a rather surprisingly spacious hall. It was furnished with restraint – well-polished dark oak and gleaming brass. At the back, where the staircase would normally appear, was a white paneled wall with a door in it. (...) We went through the doorway on the left into a large drawing room. It had pale-blue paneled walls, furniture covered in heavy brocade, and on every available table and on the walls were hung photographs and pictures of actors, dancers, and stage scenes and designs. A Degas of ballet dancers hung over the mantelpiece. There were masses of flowers, enormous brown chrysanthemums and great vases of carnations.

[Sleuth describes the library.](#)

It was a big room, full of books. The books did not confine themselves to the bookcases that reached up to the ceiling. They were on chairs and tables and even the floor. And yet there was no sense of disarray about them. The room was cold. There was some smell absent in it that I was conscious of having expected. It smelt of the mustiness of old books



and just a little beeswax. In a second or two I realized what I missed. It was the scent of tobacco. Philip Leonides was not a smoker.

Sleuth describes Clemency's apartment.

The walls were painted white – really white, not an ivory or a pale cream which is what one usually means when one says “white” in house decoration. They had no pictures on them except one over the mantelpiece, a geometrical fantasia in triangles of dark grey and battleship blue. There was hardly any furniture – only mere utilitarian necessities, three or four chairs, a glass-topped table, one small bookshelf. There were no ornaments. There was light and space and air. It was as different from the big brocaded and flowered drawing room on the floor below as chalk from cheese.

The bedroom with its twin beds and white coverlets and its simplified toilet appliances reminded me again of a hospital or some monastic cell. The bathroom, too, was severely plain with no special luxury fitting and no array of cosmetics. The kitchen was bare, spotlessly clean, and well equipped with labour-saving devices of a practical kind.

Then we came to a door which Clemency opened, saying: “This is my husband’s special room.” This was an intensely personal room. There was a large roll-top desk untidily covered with papers, old pipes, and tobacco ash. There were big shabby easy-chairs. Persian rugs covered the floor. On the walls were groups, their photography somewhat faded. School groups, cricket groups, military groups. Water-color sketches of deserts and minarets, and of sailing-boats and sea effects and sunsets. It was, somehow, a pleasant room, the room of a lovable, friendly, companionable man.

Sleuth describes Brenda's parlor.

Its proportions were the same as the drawing room on the ground floor below. There were colored cretonnes, very gay in color, and striped silk curtains. Over the mantelpiece was a portrait that held my gaze riveted – not only because of the hand that painted it, but also because of the arresting face of the subject.



Chapter 14

Sleuth describes the drawing room.

It was a woman's room, exotic, soft, shut away from the rude blasts of outside weather. It was not a room that a man would be happy in for long. It was not a room where you could relax and read the newspaper and smoke a pipe and put up your feet. Nevertheless, I preferred it to Clemency's own abstract expression of herself upstairs. On the whole I prefer a boudoir to an operating theatre.

Christie's amateur sleuth in *The Crooked House* commented on the rooms as he discovered them. There was very little description of place from chapters 15 through 26. Only as much as was needed to place a character in a chair, etc.

Christie's method was spare and to the point. She used the different living spaces to reveal character. This is a technique you can use in your story.

Next week, we'll look at the planting and payoff of clues in *The Crooked House*.

PART FOUR: PLANTING EVIDENCE

If you are reading Agatha Christie for pleasure, by all means start at the beginning. If you are reading Christie for craft, start at the end. Her sleuths always put the puzzle together in the final scenes, revealing the clues you may or may not have picked up on. Let's look at the key pieces of evidence Christie planted in *The Crooked House*.

1. The murderer kept saying how clever she was and how stupid the police were.
2. She was a child. "Children don't kill intentionally."
3. The victim told her how to kill him. All she had to do was avoid fingerprints.
4. She faked an attempt on her own life and claimed she was in danger.
5. She made it look like someone had searched her room.
7. She provided motives for others.



8. She made it look like she was a target. She stole the poison and put in her own cup and left it untouched. Victim 2 drank it.
9. She had to be kept at home because she was a danger. When her mother decided to send her away to school, it triggered the murderous rampage.
10. A witness found her confession in a diary but kept it hidden.
11. The murderer threatened to kill Victims 2 and 3.

PART FIVE: PLANTING CRITICAL CLUES AND FALSE EVIDENCE

The Crooked House by Agatha Christie is a manor house mystery. All of the suspects reside in the house. The amateur sleuth has connections with the police, but is not a professional investigator. His goal is to solve the murder so he can marry his fiancée Sophia.

All of the suspects had access to the victim (the wealthy patriarch), and the method (eye drops substituted for insulin). Everyone had a potential motive. The actual killer was never seriously considered until the very end, though clues were planted if you knew where to look.

Suspects included:

- Suspect 1: Brenda, the victim's much younger widow.
- Suspect 2: Victim's son Phillip (Sophia's father).
- Suspect 3: Phillip's wife Magda, an actress (Sophia's mother).
- Suspect 4: Victim's son Roger.
- Suspect 5: Roger's wife Clemency.
- Suspect 6: Sophia, the victim's granddaughter and sleuth's fiancée
- Suspect 7: Laurence, the children's tutor.
- Suspect 8: The grandchild Eustace, 16.
- Suspect 9: The grandchild Josephine, 12.
- Suspect 10: Victim's sister-in-law Edith.

Chapter 1: Introduce Sleuth.

We meet the amateur sleuth and find out he wants to marry the victim's granddaughter.



Chapter 2: The inciting incident.

The victim is murdered and the sleuth is made aware of it.

Chapter 3: Suspects are lined up. Challenge is stated.

Amateur sleuth talks to his father, of Scotland Yard, about the case. They agree he is in a unique position to find out who had the most compelling motive. All suspects had access to the method and opportunity. It is a question of who had the greatest motive. The victim was killed when his insulin was replaced with eye drops and he received the wrong injection by his wife. She is the most likely candidate.

Chapter 4: Suspect 6 is discounted.

Sleuth arrives at the scene. His story goal is repeated: to find out who murdered the victim so he can marry his fiancée. Sophia had no apparent motive, so she is ruled out.

Chapter 5: Finger points to Suspect 1.

The sons were already financially cared for but would inherit more money. The young widow would be free to remarry.

Chapter 6: Sleuth interviews Suspect 2.

Sleuth interviews Suspect 2 Phillip, who insists he had no motive.

Chapter 7: Sleuth interviews Suspects 3, 4, and 5. The finger points to Suspects 1 and 7.

Magda is overly dramatic but had no apparent motive other than the victim refused to fund one of her plays.

Suspects 4 Roger and 5 Clemency point the finger at Suspect 1 Brenda who they believe was having an affair with Suspect 7 Laurence. Brenda administered the injection and had the strongest motive.

Chapter 8: Sleuth interviews Suspects 1 and 7 who deny their guilt.



Brenda insists she didn't notice anything odd about the insulin and gave him the shot as scheduled. She denies having an affair with Suspect 7 Laurence. She felt safe with the Victim, why would she ruin that?

Sleuth interviews Suspect 7 Laurence who denies the affair. Both are lying. It could be the prime motive.

Chapter 9: Sleuth interviews Suspect 1 again. Important clue 1 is planted.

First hint that Suspect 9 Josephine is the killer. Brenda mentions that Josephine isn't quite right.

Chapter 10: Sleuth interviews Suspect 9. Important clue 2 is planted. Finger points at Suspects 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7. Red herring is planted.

Josephine brags that she knows things and always wanted to be a detective. She insists she is more intelligent than the police. She knows the name of the poison and how it was administered. She also states that she did not like the Victim. She points the finger at other suspects. Tells the sleuth Suspects 4 Roger and 5 Clemency were packed to leave town. She overheard a conversation between the Victim and Suspect 4 Roger that suggested Roger was guilty of embezzlement.

She points the finger at her own father and mother. Suspect 2 Philip and Suspect 3 Magda are now free to move to London. The Victim refused to fund one of Magda's plays.

Suspect 9 Josephine also states she has seen love letters between Suspects 1 Brenda and 7 Laurence.

The red herring is planted. The terms of the will are discussed. The Victim asked for a revised will which his attorney sent to him. He left money to everyone. The revised will was discussed with everyone and everyone saw him sign it. However, the signed will was never sent back to the attorney. The Victim stated that he mailed it to his bank. However, they find the revised will provided by the attorney and it is not signed.



Chapter 11: Recap with police. Finger points to Suspects 4 and 5. They have proof they had no motive. Suggests alternative motive for Suspect 2.

Sleuth reveals Suspect 4 Roger's motive: hide embezzlement from the victim and get money to solve problem. The police confirm that his business was on the rocks. They believe Suspect 4 is too bumbling and it must have been his wife Suspect 5 Clemency.

Sleuth confronts Suspect 4 Roger. He admits that he discussed his business failure with the Victim but produces a letter the Victim wrote instructing his agent to fix the problem. He was going to mail it then the Victim was murdered so it was still in his pocket. He had no motive. If the victim had lived, his problems would be over. He was back to having a problem.

Which leads to a new conjecture: Did someone in the house want Roger to fail? Depends on what happens with the will. If the revised will disappeared, the person most likely to benefit from it is the widow, Suspect 1 Brenda.

Chapter 12: Theme stated. Important clue 3 planted.

Thematic statement is made: murder is an amateur crime. Reinforces second clue that Suspect 9 Josephine is the killer, though the sleuth and the police have not seriously considered her.

"Murderers are vain. They think they are far too clever to be caught and want to talk about it."

Sleuth is encouraged to look for people who give false information. They always slip up. He is also admonished to protect the child, suggesting the child could be in danger from the killer because she is always listening at doors and might know something she shouldn't.

This is a critical chapter. It lays the foundation for Suspect 9's guilt and dismisses her as a potential suspect in the same paragraph. The Sleuth is told that children sometimes kill on accident but feel horrible when they realize what they have done. This reinforces that children do not kill intentionally, further removing any possibility in the Sleuth's mind that the child is guilty of premeditated murder.



Chapter 13: Sleuth interviews Suspect 9. Plants important evidence.

The Sleuth did not tell the police about the love letters. He interviews Suspect 9 Josephine. She states she lied about the love letters. Reinforces that Josephine is a snoop. The letters play a critical role later.

Chapter 14: Sleuth interviews Nannie, Suspect 6, and Suspect 10. Critical piece of evidence is introduced but overlooked. Suspects 1, 4, and 5 are dismissed. Finger points to Suspects 1 and 7.

Sleuth meets Nannie who hints that Josephine is always listening at doors and writing in a book – another hint that there is a diary to be found. No one thinks to look at it. But it is the damning piece of evidence at the end.

The Sleuth asks Suspect 6 Sophia who knew about the drops. The Victim told everyone assembled that if his wife mistook his eyedrops for his insulin he'd die. He provided the method. The Sleuth deduces that this actually dismisses Suspect 1 Brenda, because she would have been clever enough to destroy the vial with eserine in it. The police tested the vial because they thought he might have been dispensed the wrong drug or wrong dosage. If she had replaced the vial with a normal vial of insulin, she would have gotten away with it. The poison left no signs.

The family meets to discuss the business problem. They resolve to wait until the will is found.

Sleuth interviews Suspect 5 Clemency. She is relieved the victim is dead because they are finally free of the family home and the business. Dismisses Suspect 4 Roger. He worshiped the victim and he was actually relieved the business failed. Dismisses herself: She would never have killed anyone for money because she doesn't care about money. She points the finger back to Suspects 1 and 7 Brenda and Laurence as the main suspects.

Sleuth interviews Suspect 10 Edith. She states she loves them all dearly, hinting as to why she withholds the critical evidence at the end and her reason for the final tragic act.



Chapter 15: Sleuth interviews Suspects 3 and 6. Hints at motive for Suspects 8 and 10.

Sophia states she thinks Suspect 8 Eustace hates them all. She also states that her mother Suspect 3 Magda loves drama and gets bored and likes to stir things up.

Suspect 3 Magda joins them and repeats Suspect 10 Edith would do anything for the family and that she had been in love with the victim before he married her sister. She disapproved and was jealous of Suspect 1 Brenda. Also repeats that Suspect 9 Josephine must go away to school. Sleuth incorrectly deducts that she is worried for Josephine's safety.

Chapter 16: Sleuth recaps what he has learned. Finger points to Suspect 2. False attempt on Suspect 9's life is set up. Critical piece of evidence is planted and misunderstood.

Sleuth considers Suspect 2 Philip, his fiancée's father is the only one who has avoided him. Considers his motive: he was cold, reserved, a jealous second son. Could he have wanted his brother to fail enough to kill their father to incriminate the brother? The whole family wanted it to be Suspects 1 and 7, Brenda and Laurence, but no one seemed to really believe it. He investigates the bathroom where the insulin was kept. Anyone could have had easy access to it.

Interviews Suspect 8 Eustace. Eustace thought it was well past time for the Victim to go.

Interviews Suspect 7 Laurence. He believes he is being set up. Denies Suspect 1 Brenda had a motive.

Runs into Suspect 9 Josephine who was in the Cistern room and is covered in cobwebs. Says it is about time for the next murder. She is setting up the false attempt on her life. This is important because the sleuth deducts erroneously that Josephine hid the letters later found in the Cistern room, when in fact she followed Suspect 7 Laurence there and read the letters and left them there.



Chapter 17: Sleuth reports to the police. Red herring is extended and provides a motive for Suspect 6.

An outsider was given a sealed envelope from the Victim which he was to forward to the attorney upon the Victim's death. It is a will written by hand. The will leaves a bequest to Suspect 1 and the rest to Suspect 6 Sophia, presenting his fiancée with a motive if she had known about it. Victim did not consider his sons fit to take his place.

Chapter 18: False attempt on Suspect 9. Find critical piece of evidence. Finger points to Suspects 1 and 7. Important clue is planted.

Suspect 9 is nearly killed by her own device. Sleuth feels guilty for not protecting her. Everyone knew she played there. Important clue: someone stood on a broken chair with muddy feet and Josephine was the only one short enough to need the chair to plant the object that nearly falls on her head. But this is not considered by the sleuth until the end.

She was always snooping and writing things in a little black book. They decide to look for it. They search her room. It was in disarray as if someone had searched it. Anyone could have done it. Sleuth remembers she was in the cistern room. He goes there and finds a packet of letters from Suspect 1 Brenda to Laurence. Evidence convicts Suspects 1 and 7.

Chapter 19: Suspect 1 is dismissed. Finger lands on Suspect 7.

The attempt on Suspect 9 Josephine suggests the murderer does not like direct violence which is why he or she used poison and a booby trap. They dismiss Suspect 1 Brenda based on the assumption that she could not have rigged the booby trap. It must have been Suspect 7 Laurence.

Chapter 20: Suspect 6's possible motive is revealed.

The inquest is held, the contents of the will are revealed. It divides the family. Josephine was in the hospital, so she missed the drama.



Chapter 21: Suspects 1 and 7 are arrested. Suspect 6 is called into question.

Suspect 6 Sophia is sending Eustace and Josephine off to school. She is letting Laurence go. Suspects 1 and 7 Brenda and Laurence are arrested. Sophie reveals that she had known about the will.

Chapter 22: Suspect 9 falsely accuses Suspect 7 for the attempt on her life.

Josephine returns. She points the finger at Laurence for the attempt on her life. Said she saw him coming out of the cistern room one day and found the letters he hid in there.

Chapter 23: Recaps the arrest with the police. Victim 2 is murdered.

Letters were damning but the defense will twist it to say they were talking about being together after the Victim died of natural causes. Their instincts still place doubt on their guilt. They review the motives. Sleuth realizes that he thought the child's room was searched for the letters, but she didn't have or hide the letters. So someone must have been looking for her little black book. Receives the news that the Nannie has been killed.

Chapter 24: Suspect 9 states her motive but it is disregarded. Suspect 9 is taken away by Suspect 10.

Roger and Clemency are on their way out. They deny that they had motive to kill Josephine or Nannie. Josephine states that she never liked Nannie. Josephine tells the Sleuth that she knows who poisoned her grandfather, set up the booby trap, and put poison in her cocoa. She refuses to tell. Nannie was killed with the digitalin that Edith takes. Edith takes Josephine to London.

Chapter 25: Suspects 9 and 10 are killed in a car accident. The truth is revealed.

They get the news that Suspects 10 and 9 Edith and Josephine were found dead in the car that had gone off the road into a quarry. The sleuth remembered that he had seen Edith write letters and left them in the hall. He retrieves them. They realize Edith was protecting Josephine. Her little black book is in the second envelope.



Chapter 26: Crime recapped. Important clues recognized. World returns to new normal.

They read the little black book and recognize the signs they missed. The sleuth and Sophia decide to marry despite the madness of her sister.

When I first imagined writing a mystery, the scope of it felt overwhelming. Not only would I have to come up with multiple suspects, I would have to come up with multiple motives. Dissecting Christie's work has given me a better handle on how to plant and payoff evidence and motives. I hope it helps you too.

Dame Agatha is one of the longest lasting, highest selling mystery writers of all time. It's always a good idea to learn from the best.