

**Title and Release Date:** *Murder on the Orient Express* (1974)

**Length of the Film in Minutes:** 128 minutes

**Film Genre:** Mystery

**Reviewer Name and Grade:** Oliver W., 8<sup>th</sup> Grade

**Date Reviewed:** July 8, 2020

In December of 1935, famous detective Hercule Poirot is traveling aboard the train the Orient Express from Istanbul to London. Aboard the coach with him is widow Harriet Hubbard, businessman Samuel Ratchett with his servant Edward Beddoes and secretary Hector McQueen, a Russian princess and her maid, a Hungarian diplomat with his wife, an army officer, a teacher, a Swedish missionary, a salesman, and a theatrical agent. When Ratchett tells Poirot that he is getting death threats and tries to get him to be his bodyguard, Poirot refuses. That night, the train is stopped in heavy snow in Yugoslavia. Poirot is disturbed several times during his sleep by some commotion. The next morning, Ratchett is found stabbed to death in his bed. Poirot immediately starts interrogating everyone on board the train, as well as investigating the crime scene. A burned letter at the crime scene reveals that Ratchett's true identity was Lanfranco Cassetti, the person who organized the kidnapping and murder of Daisy Armstrong five years earlier, which caused the suicide and death of several other people in and close to her family. Poirot learns about some of the passengers' connections to the Armstrong family. In the end, he comes up with 2 possible solutions to the case. In the simpler solution, Poirot says that Cassetti's murder was due to a Mafia feud and that the murderer entered and exited the train when it was stopped in the snow. In the second and more complex version, Poirot suggests that McQueen had drugged Ratchett's drink earlier in the night and all the passengers had then stabbed the dead Cassetti as a way of getting revenge for the murder of Daisy Armstrong. Poirot decides that Cassetti deserved to die and decides to give the Yugoslavian police his simple solution.

***How did you find the film on Kanopy?*** - I found this film on Kanopy when I searched for the movie "On The Basis of Sex" and found this as a recommended film instead.

***Did the plot keep you interested?*** - The plot was pretty interesting. It was basically a mystery and clues were provided and the watcher had to try and solve the mystery.

***Was the pace of the film too fast, too slow, or just right?*** - The film was just a lot of talking and interrogating to try and find the murderer. I prefer movies with more action. Overall I think the pace was a little too slow.

***What grade level(s) is the film appropriate for?*** - This film had a little bit of violence, especially when they reenacted the scenes to see what could have happened. In the part where they stabbed the body, the actual body wasn't shown. There is a scene depicting a dead man who was stabbed many times and certain characters drink and use cigars and pipes. I think this film would be appropriate for people in grades 5 and up.

I would rate this film *3 stars*. It was sometimes hard to understand what the actors were saying, partly because of their accents. There were certain parts of the movie where I didn't understand what was going on. Most of the movie was just talking and Poirot interrogating the passengers. There really wasn't any action and I had trouble keeping track of all the clues that were revealed during the interrogations. It was a nice mystery with an interesting backstory, but I would have liked the movie to have some more action.