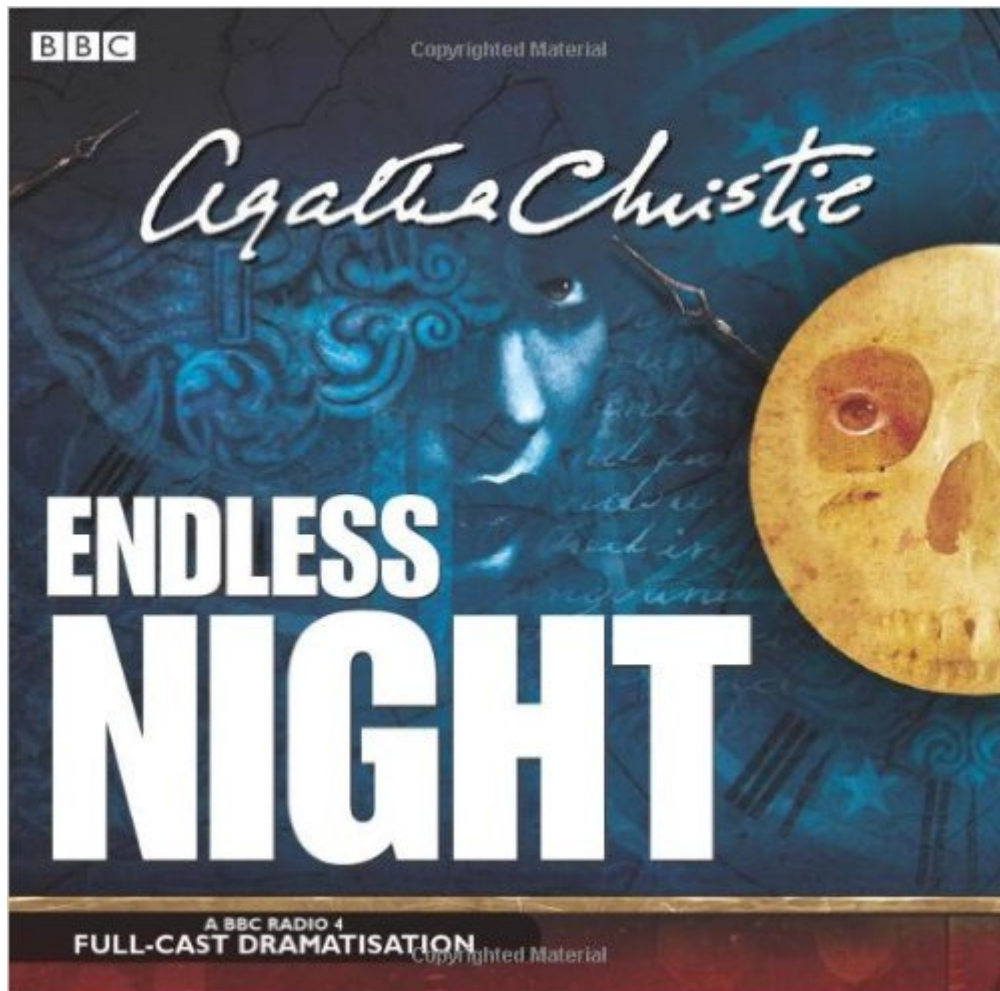


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Endless Night (BBC Radio Crimes)



Synopsis

"Some are born to sweet delight/Some are born to endless night." — William Blake
Agatha Christie wrote *Endless Night* in 1967, and it is one of her greatest—and most unusual—novels. Creepy, malevolent, and claustrophobic, it is a story about choices, the nature of good and evil, and grim retribution. Mike Rogers had a childhood fantasy about what life would be like as an adult: he'd have a beautiful wife, they would live in a beautiful home, and this would be a peaceful and deserved reward for a turbulent early life. When he meets Ellie Gutman at a lovely, remote spot known as Gypsy's Acre, suddenly it is all within his grasp. However, things are not as idyllic as they seem — local legend has it that the land is cursed, and several terrible accidents have occurred there. Mike and Ellie pay no attention to these tales: but when they move into their new home, the curse suddenly seems to come to life and they find themselves in grave danger. . . Starring Jonathan Forbes and Lizzy Watts, this is a menacing drama that perfectly evokes the atmosphere of Agatha Christie's brooding, malevolent tale, infused with passion, hauntings, and grim retribution. 1 CD. 1 hr.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Critics tend to debate what era can most appropriately be called Agatha Christie's "golden era"—and there is much to be said for her work in the 1930s, the 1940s, and the 1950s. But like her earliest works of the 1920s, her later works of the 1960s are neglected. And in the case of *ENDLESS NIGHT* this is an oversight indeed. *ENDLESS NIGHT* presents us with Mike, a restless young man

who has drifted from job to job without seeming to find any true satisfaction--and a young man who is fascinated by "Gipsy's Acre," a plot of land in rural England said to be cursed by the Gipsies who once lived there and who were driven away. While walking the property, which has come up for sale, he meets an attractive young American woman, and a whirlwind courtship ensues. It is not until well into the relationship that the woman, Ellie, discloses that she is rich. And not just rich: she is the heiress to a fabulous fortune. The two marry and hire a noted architect to construct the perfect home on Gipsy's Acre--but no sooner are they installed than the property's legendary curse begins to unfold. A local gipsy woman warns them of bad luck; rocks are flung through windows; a bird is found pinned to the front door with a dagger. And they are surrounded by Ellie's relatives and business relations, all of whom seem to have hidden agendas and none of whom like the fact that Ellie has been torn from their control. Many Christie novels can be read in a single sitting, but *ENDLESS NIGHT* has an unusually slow build--and Christie defies her detractors, who often accused her of purely mechanical construction, by creating an atmosphere that collects into deepest darkness before the novel's startling conclusion.

One of Christie's later novels (first published in 1967) "Endless Night" was written well before her literary powers began to wane, and ended up being one of her personal favorites. Initially "Endless Night" reads a little bit like a fairytale. Michael Rogers is a poor but ambitious young man who writes of his fascination for a stretch of wooded land known as Gipsy's Acre, said to be cursed by the gypsies that were turned off it (and is in fact based on a real legend of a similarly named patch of land in Wales). A chance meeting with a beautiful young woman under the fir trees leads to a whirlwind romance, an elopement, and the revelation that she is in fact a very wealthy heiress. Suddenly all of Michael's dreams are within his reach, and together he and Ellie build their dream house on Gipsy's Acre. But from the very first page of his narrative, Michael makes it clear that disaster is on the horizon. It is impossible to say much more without giving away the entire book, (even the identity of the murder victim should be kept under wraps) but "Endless Night" ends up being one of Christie's most haunting novels, and certainly the best of her late work. Readers who are ploughing through Christie's books in chronological order (or who are at least familiar with her writing) may recognize some of the techniques she utilizes in order to shape the plot. There is one plot device in particular that she has used to great effect in the past, and some long-time readers may pick up on it as they read. However, even if one does figure it out, the realization does little to sully the enjoyment of the story; if anything, it simply makes the slow build-up even more disturbing. But the story is unique in other ways.

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