

= And Then There Were Fewer =

" And Then There Were Fewer " is the first episode of the ninth season of the animated comedy series Family Guy . This and most of the other season 9 episodes were produced for the eighth production season . It originally aired on Fox in the United States on September 26 , 2010 . The episode follows the citizens of Quahog after they are invited by actor James Woods to his stately mansion on a remote island . While there , a series of murders occurs , and the group struggles to determine who committed the mysterious acts , before ultimately attempting to escape from the island , and avoid being murdered themselves . The name of the episode is a parody of Agatha Christie 's murder mystery , And Then There Were None .

The episode was written by Cherry Chevapravatdumrong and directed by Dominic Polcino . It received high acclaim from critics , who praised its storyline and many cultural references . According to Nielsen ratings , it was viewed in 9 @. @ 41 million homes in its original airing . The episode features guest performances by Drew Barrymore , H. Jon Benjamin , Max Burkholder , Colin Ford , Patrick Stewart , Ashley Tisdale and James Woods , along with several recurring guest voice actors for the series . It was the first Family Guy episode to air in 720p high definition . The episode was nominated for Outstanding Music Composition for a Series at the 63rd Primetime Emmy Awards . " And Then There Were Fewer " was released on DVD along with two other episodes from the season on December 13 , 2011 . The show confirmed afterwards that it was part of the show 's " real " canon and those characters that died (i.e. Diane Simmons , Muriel Goldman etc .) would not be brought back in the future . However , James Woods is seen in the thirteenth episode of season 10 , " Tom Tucker : The Man and His Dream " , in which he tells Peter and Tom that paramedics brought him to a secret science lab made for celebrities and revived him . In the same episode , he hires Peter as his agent after he fired Tucker , but later also fires Peter .

= = Plot = =

The Griffin family , Joe , Quagmire , and other residents of Quahog are sent an anonymous letter inviting them to a party in each of their honor . When they get to the address , they find that they are at the isolated island mansion of James Woods , who wants to make amends with them for his various wrongdoings . While they are having a drink , Woods explains he has become a born @-@ again Christian with the help of his new girlfriend , Priscilla . When he and Priscilla leave to check on dinner , Quagmire 's girlfriend Stephanie sits in Woods ' chair and is mysteriously shot to death . The guests panic , believing Woods intends to kill them all . They attempt to leave , but lightning causes a tree to fall across the bridge , the only way off the island . When Woods returns , the guests accuse him of Stephanie 's murder , which he denies . A sudden blackout occurs , and when the lights come back on , Woods has been stabbed to death with one of the dinner knives . Priscilla faints and is laid on a couch , while Stephanie 's body is found missing . The guests discover none of them can get reception to call for help from their cellphones .

While the guests search for more clues , a plate suddenly smashes , revealing a gun with a silencer connected to a timer . The gun was pointed toward Woods ' chair , indicating that Stephanie was killed accidentally . Tension ensues , with many of the guests blaming each other for the murder ; however , they all have motives for killing Woods . Mort 's wife Muriel disappears after it is discovered that she was providing Woods with prescription Oxycotin from her husband 's pharmacy and was being blackmailed by Woods when she got suspicious , causing everyone to then suspect her as the killer .

After Joe passes out , seeing as it was his fault , Peter organizes several groups to investigate different parts of the mansion . Brian and Stewie hear a scream and discover Muriel dead , having been stabbed in the back . The guests reunite and discover Priscilla missing from the couch where she was laid . Jillian Russell 's husband Derek points out that he is getting a very faint signal on his cellphone and goes to a balcony to get better reception so he can call the police . As he dials the police , he is murdered and sent over the veranda . Dr. Hartman points out a skull fracture on Derek 's forehead , indicating that he was killed with a blunt object before the fall . Consuela points out that

one of Woods ' Golden Globe Awards is missing and the group assumes it was used to kill Derek . The group searches the guestrooms and finds the bloodstained award in Tom Tucker 's room . Tom denies murdering anyone and suggests that Priscilla planted the award there to frame him since she was the only one not there the entire time during the murders . However , Priscilla 's dead body is discovered inside the ventilation shaft over Tom 's room shortly after . He is implicated as the murderer and apprehended after a short chase .

The next day , Tom is arrested by the police . Workmen repair the damaged bridge , allowing the guests to return home . Lois goes to comfort Diane over the arrest of her coworker , but a comment Diane makes about her mother packing a blouse for her first solo broadcast ? something she could not have known about unless she knew what was going to happen ? causes Lois to realize that Diane is the real killer . Diane reveals that she once dated Woods until he dumped her on her fortieth birthday , during which Tom arranged for Diane to be replaced by an attractive younger news anchor . Seeking revenge , Diane bribed Priscilla , a news intern at the time , to talk Woods into becoming a born @-@ again Christian and throw the dinner party so she could get revenge on both men by killing Woods and framing Tom for it .

Diane was forced to kill the other guests after her plan went awry upon Stephanie 's accidental death . During the power outage , she stabbed Woods , and Priscilla woke up while she was removing the knife , so Diane killed her . While hiding Priscilla 's body and planting the knife used to kill James Woods in Tom 's briefcase , Muriel saw her and Diane was forced to kill her as well . Diane had no choice but to leave the knife in Muriel 's back because the guests were alerted and quickly rushing to the scene due to the latter 's scream , but not before she wiped her fingerprints off . Diane then killed Derek to stop the police from arriving too soon , as she did not have enough evidence to frame Tom . Lois is still unsure of what happened to Stephanie 's body , to which Diane responds that it is the only thing she has no knowledge of (it is revealed Quagmire stowed Stephanie 's corpse in the trunk of his car to take home for sexual gratification) . Diane takes Lois outside at gunpoint , intending to shoot her . Suddenly , Diane is shot , loses her balance , and falls down a cliff . Lois shouts her thanks to the unknown shooter before joining the other guests as they prepare to leave . It is then revealed that the shooter is Stewie , who proclaims , " If anybody 's gonna take that bitch down , it 's gonna be me . " , showing that he still is intent on killing Lois .

= = Production and development = =

The episode was first announced at the 2009 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International in San Diego , California , on July 25 , 2009 , by series creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane . It was directed by series regular Dominic Polcino and written by series regular Cherry Chevapravatdumrong shortly after the conclusion of the eighth production season , which completed its airing on television on June 20 , 2010 . The episode takes its title from the Agatha Christie novel *And Then There Were None* , and was largely based on the 1985 comedy film *Clue* . Series regulars Peter Shin and James Purdum served as supervising director , with Andrew Goldberg , Alex Carter , Elaine Ko and Spencer Porter serving as staff writers for the episode . Composer Walter Murphy , who has worked on the series since its inception , returned to compose the music for " *And Then There Were Fewer* " . " *And Then There Were Fewer* " was the first episode of *Family Guy* to be broadcast in high @-@ definition , with series showrunners Mark Hentemann and Steve Callaghan overseeing the transition .

The episode was dedicated to series creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane 's mother , Ann Perry MacFarlane , following her death from cancer on July 16 , 2010 . The original idea of the episode was sent to series showrunner and executive producer Mark Hentemann in a text from Seth MacFarlane simply stating " murder mystery . "

" *And Then There Were Fewer* " , along with the two other episodes from *Family Guy* 's ninth season , was released on a three @-@ disc DVD set in the United States on December 13 , 2011 . The sets include brief audio commentaries by various crew and cast members for several episodes , a collection of deleted scenes and animatics , a special mini @-@ feature which discussed the process behind animating " *And Then There Were Fewer* " , a mini @-@ feature entitled " *The*

Comical Adventures of Family Guy ? Brian & Stewie : The Lost Phone Call " , and footage of the Family Guy panel at the 2010 San Diego Comic @-@ Con International .

In addition to the regular cast , actress Drew Barrymore reprised her role as Jillian Russell , the former girlfriend of Brian ; actor James Woods , in his fifth appearance in the series , reprised his role as the overly exaggerated version of himself ; actress Ashley Tisdale (who is known for playing Candace Flynn on Disney Channel 's Phineas and Ferb , the show created by Family Guy alumnus Dan Povenmire) made her first official appearance on Family Guy as James Woods 's girlfriend , Priscilla ; and voice actor H. Jon Benjamin reprised his role as Quahog Market owner Carl . Additionally , actors Max Burkholder , Colin Ford and Patrick Stewart also guest starred in the episode in minor roles . Recurring guest voice actors Lori Alan , John G. Brennan , Nicole Sullivan , Jennifer Tilly , and John Viener reprised their roles as news reporter Diane Simmons , Quahog pharmacist Mort Goldman , Muriel Goldman , Griffin family neighbor Bonnie Swanson , and Jillian 's husband , Derek Wilcox , respectively . A minor appearance was also made by Family Guy writer and regular voice artist Danny Smith .

= = Cultural references = =

The episode borrows heavily from the 1985 comedy film Clue , which itself was based on the 1976 comedy film Murder by Death , and is largely based upon the 1939 Agatha Christie novel And Then There Were None . In the opening scene of the episode , once the Griffin family arrives at the mansion , Lois remarks on the estate 's beauty , wondering if television host Jeff Probst has a similar home . As they walk into the mansion , Sir John Everett Millais 's Ophelia is seen . As dinner commences , Carl begins conversing with Tom Tucker , and discusses the plot of the 1986 fantasy film Labyrinth , directed by Jim Henson .

After Tucker is accused of murdering James Woods , he reveals that Woods talked him out of auditioning for the lead role in the 1984 hit horror film A Nightmare on Elm Street . The finger is then pointed at Mayor West , who tells the group of his hardships on the social networking service Twitter , after Woods stole his originally intended username . Diane Simmons also goes on to state that Woods had promised to introduce her to former CBS news anchor Dan Rather , but ultimately ended up introducing her to actor and comedian Danny Bonaduce instead .

In the extended DVD release , Carl mentions No Way Out , Hard Rain and Days of Thunder .

While searching for Muriel Goldman throughout the mansion , Brian and Stewie begin humming and singing the theme song to several television shows , including the CBS science fiction series Lost in Space , the CBS sitcom The Dick Van Dyke Show , and the ABC soap opera Dynasty . After discovering the Golden Globe Award underneath Tom Tucker 's bed , Tucker begins to profess his innocence , with Peter then instructing him to " tell it to Mike Judge . "

In the scene where Diane tells Lois her conspiracy , Picasso 's painting Le Rêve can be seen on the wall behind Diane .

= = Reception = =

" And Then There Were Fewer " was broadcast on September 26 , 2010 , as a part of an animated television night on Fox , and was preceded by the season premiere of The Simpsons , and Family Guy creator and executive producer Seth MacFarlane 's spin @-@ off , The Cleveland Show . It was watched by 8 @.@ 85 million viewers in its first half @-@ hour , and concluded with a total 9 @.@ 41 million viewers in its second half @-@ hour , according to Nielsen ratings , despite airing simultaneously with the season premiere of Desperate Housewives on ABC , the season premiere of The Amazing Race on CBS and Sunday Night Football on NBC . The episode also acquired a 4 @.@ 3 and 4 @.@ 7 rating in the 18 ? 49 demographic , beating The Simpsons and The Cleveland Show in addition to significantly edging out both shows in total viewership . The episode 's ratings were Family Guy 's highest since the airing of the season eight episode " Family Goy " .

" And Then There Were Fewer " received widespread acclaim from critics and viewers , with one critic calling the storyline " solidly funny , well @-@ plotted , and nearly perfectly executed . " In a

simultaneous review of the episodes of The Simpsons and The Cleveland Show that preceded the episode , The A.V. Club 's Todd VanDerWerff commented that he enjoyed " the ' a bunch of people go to an isolated place and start getting killed ' murder mystery subgenre " , and that the episode " made fun of the conceits of the genre " . In the conclusion of his review VanDerWerff called the episode " excellent and fun , " and " full of surprisingly gorgeous animation and a nicely creepy feel that hung over all of the jokes " and rated it as a B + , the best rating between The Simpsons episode " Elementary School Musical " and The Cleveland Show episode " Harder , Better , Faster , Browner " . Jason Hughes of TV Squad also praised the episode 's writers for doing a " solid job of creating a genuine mystery throughout the hour , keeping us guessing as to who did it and what their motive may have been . " Hughes went on to comment positively on the episode 's numerous guest stars , and compared its portrayal of Diane Simmons to that of The Simpsons character Sideshow Bob . Natalie Zutter of Ology also praised the episode , calling it , " Surprisingly , the best of the evening . " In the summary of her review , Zutter wrote that it was a " fun murder mystery that lets us see all our favorite Quahog folks , " while continuing to wonder whether the characters who were killed off would remain dead .