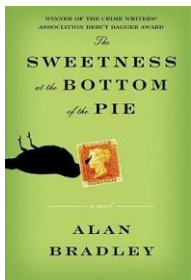


The Flavia de Luce Mysteries

By Alan Bradley



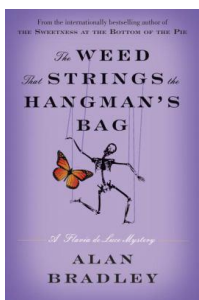
The Sweetness at the Bottom of the Pie [2009]

Awards: *Agatha Award* (winner); *Anthony Award* (nominee); *Ellis Award* (winner); *Dagger Award* (winner); *Dilys Award* (winner); *Macavity Award* (winner)

Great literary crime detectives aren't always born; they're sometimes discovered, blindfolded and tied up in a dark closet by their nasty older sisters. Eleven-year-old Flavia de Luce's bitter home life and vicious sibling war inspires her solitary diversions and "strange talents" tinkering with the chemistry set in the laboratory of their inherited Victorian house, plotting sleuth-like vengeance on Ophelia (17) and Daphne (13), and delving into the forbidden past of her taciturn, widowed father, Colonel de Luce. It comes as no surprise, then, that the material for her next scientific investigation will be the mysterious corpse that she uncovers in the cucumber patch.

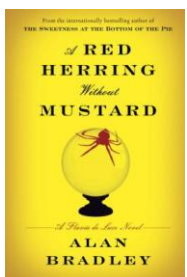
Fearless and darkly imaginative, Flavia hurries to solve the murder and acquit her father of suspicion. Following the lead of its clever protagonist, *Sweetness* is entirely inventive, fast-paced, and quick-witted, with tongue-in-cheek humour that derides the macabre seriousness of subject.

Alan Bradley plants the story deep into the setting of 1950s England, with a portrait of an eccentric home life that is all too wickedly familiar. The story's twists are supported by the time and place as well as the unusual interests of the characters which range from stamp-collecting to making poisons all of which are highly researched and ingeniously incorporated.



The Weed that Strings the Hangman's Bag [2010]

Flavia de Luce, a dangerously smart eleven-year-old with a passion for chemistry and a genius for solving murders, thinks that her days of crime-solving in the bucolic English hamlet of Bishop's Lacey are over—until beloved puppeteer Rupert Porson has his own strings sizzled in an unfortunate rendezvous with electricity. But who'd do such a thing, and *why*? Does the madwoman who lives in Gibbet Wood know more than she's letting on? What about Porson's charming but erratic assistant? All clues point toward a suspicious death years earlier, and a case the local constables can't solve—without Flavia's help. But in getting so close to who's secretly pulling the strings of this dance of death, has our precocious heroine finally gotten in way over her head?



A Red Herring Without Mustard [2011]

The precocious chemist with a passion for poisons uncovers a fresh slew of misdeeds in the hamlet of Bishop's Lacey—mysteries involving a missing tot, a fortune-teller, and a corpse in Flavia's own backyard.

Flavia had asked the old Gypsy woman to tell her fortune, but never expected to stumble across the poor soul, bludgeoned in the wee hours in her own caravan. Was this an act of retribution by those convinced that the soothsayer had abducted a local child years ago? Certainly Flavia understands the bliss of settling scores; revenge is a

delightful pastime when one has two odious older sisters. But how could this crime be connected to the missing baby? Had it something to do with the weird sect who met at the river to practice their secret rites? While still pondering the possibilities, Flavia stumbles upon another corpse—that of a notorious layabout who had been caught prowling about the de Luce’s drawing room.

Pedaling Gladys, her faithful bicycle, across the countryside in search of clues to both crimes, Flavia uncovers some odd new twists. Most intriguing is her introduction to an elegant artist with a very special object in her possession—a portrait that sheds light on the biggest mystery of all: Who is Flavia?

As the red herrings pile up, Flavia must sort through clues fishy and foul to untangle dark deeds and dangerous secrets.

Possible upcoming titles:

Seeds of Antiquity

Death in Camera

The Nasty Light of Day

This handout prepared for the Just Desserts mystery fiction discussion group
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