

A Fine And Private Place Peter S Beagle

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • A finger in a wedding cake is only the beginning in this deliciously shocking mystery featuring Flavia de Luce, “the world’s greatest adolescent British chemist/busybody/sleuth” (The Seattle Times).

Although it is autumn in the small English town of Bishop’s Lacey, the chapel is decked with exotic flowers. Yes, Flavia de Luce’s sister Ophelia is at last getting hitched, like a mule to a wagon. “A church is a wonderful place for a wedding,” muses Flavia, “surrounded as it is by the legions of the dead, whose listening bones bear silent witness to every promise made at the altar.” Flavia is not your normal twelve-year-old girl. An expert in the chemical nature of poisons, she has solved many mysteries, sharpening her considerable detection skills to the point where she had little choice but to turn professional. So Flavia and dependable Dogger, estate gardener and sounding board extraordinaire, set up shop at the once-grand mansion of Buckshaw, eager to serve—not so simple an endeavor with her odious little moon-faced cousin, Undine, constantly underfoot. But Flavia and Dogger persevere. Little does she know that their first case will be extremely close to home, beginning with an unwelcome discovery in Ophelia’s wedding cake: a human finger. Praise for *The Golden Tresses of the Dead* “Delightful . . . The mysteries in Mr. Bradley’s books are engaging, but the real lure is Ms. de Luce, the irreverent youngster.”—The Wall Street Journal “A ghoulish question is at the heart of Bradley’s excellent tenth Flavia de Luce novel. . . . Bradley, who has few peers at combining fair-play clueing with humor and has fun mocking genre conventions, shows no sign of running out of ideas.”—Publishers Weekly (starred review)

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One short story, one novella, and two complete movies populated by ghosts, unicorns and werewolves are included. On a cold, dark winter day during the Second World War, a young Alan Bradley found hidden beneath a floorboard in his mother's bedroom closet a well-worn cardboard shoebox. At the time, he could make little sense of the ragtag things he found inside: cigarette packages, soup can labels, handbills, calendars, paper bags, pie boxes—any scrap of paper upon which his mother could copy out, in her old-fashioned handwriting, what seemed to be no more than unrelated snippets of Scripture. He only knew that the box, which he would later come to think of as the Shoebox Bible, had something to do with the fact that his father had run away from home. Many years would pass, and his mother would be on her deathbed before he would once again hold this treasure in his hands. And only then would he put together the pieces of the puzzle, and learn the complete truth. Beautifully and lovingly told, *The Shoebox Bible* is a wonderful memoir of a precocious family who manage to live and love despite the absence of their father. Interspersed with heartbreaking quotations from the Old and New Testaments, this sad, funny, and above all inspiring story will appeal to readers who fell in love with such inspirational books as *Tuesdays with Morrie* and *Mister God, This Is Anna*.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER On a spring morning in 1951, eleven-year-old chemist and aspiring detective Flavia de Luce gathers with her family at the railway station, awaiting the return of her long-lost mother, Harriet. Yet upon the train's arrival in the English village of Bishop's Lacey, Flavia is approached by a tall stranger who whispers a cryptic message into her ear. Moments later, he is dead, mysteriously pushed under the train by someone in the crowd. Who was this man, what did his words mean, and why were they intended for Flavia? Back home at Buckshaw, the

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de Luce's crumbling estate, Flavia puts her sleuthing skills to the test. Following a trail of clues sparked by the discovery of a reel of film stashed away in the attic, she unravels the deepest secrets of the de Luce clan, involving none other than Winston Churchill himself. Surrounded by family, friends, and a famous pathologist from the Home Office—and making spectacular use of Harriet's beloved Gipsy Moth plane, Blithe Spirit—Flavia will do anything, even take to the skies, to land a killer. **BONUS:** This edition includes an excerpt from Alan Bradley's *As Chimney Sweepers Come to Dust*. Praise for *The Dead in Their Vaulted Arches* “Part Harriet the Spy, part Violet Baudelaire from Lemony Snicket's *A Series of Unfortunate Events*, Flavia is a pert and macabre pragmatist.”—*The New York Times Book Review* “[Alan] Bradley's award winning Flavia de Luce series . . . has enchanted readers with the outrageous sleuthing career of its precocious leading lady. . . . This latest adventure contains all the winning elements of the previous books.”—*Library Journal* (starred review) “Bradley's latest Flavia de Luce novel reaches a new level of perfection as it shows the emotional turmoil and growth of a girl who has always been older than her years and yet is still a child. The mystery is complex and very personal this time, reaching into the past Flavia never knew about. . . . These are astounding, magical books not to be missed.”—*RT Book Reviews* (Top Pick) “Excellent . . . Flavia retains her droll wit. . . . The solution to a murder is typically neat, and the conclusion sets up future books nicely.”—*Publishers Weekly* (starred review) “It's hard to resist either the genre's pre-eminent preteen sleuth or the hushed revelations about her family.”—*Kirkus Reviews* “Flavia . . . is as fetching as ever; her chatty musings and her combination of childish vulnerability and seemingly boundless self-confidence haven't changed a bit.”—*Booklist* Acclaim for Alan Bradley's beloved Flavia de Luce novels, winners of the

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Crime Writers' Association Debut Dagger Award, Barry Award, Agatha Award, Macavity Award, Dilys Winn Award, and Arthur Ellis Award "If ever there were a sleuth who's bold, brilliant, and, yes, adorable, it's Flavia de Luce."—USA Today "Irresistibly appealing."—The New York Times Book Review, on *A Red Herring Without Mustard* "Original, charming, devilishly creative."—Bookreporter, on *I Am Half-Sick of Shadows* "Delightful and entertaining."—San Jose Mercury News, on *Speaking from Among the Bones*

"The world's greatest adolescent British chemist/busybody/sleuth" (*The Seattle Times*), Flavia de Luce, returns in a twisty new mystery novel from award-winning and New York Times bestselling author Alan Bradley. In the wake of an unthinkable family tragedy, twelve-year-old Flavia de Luce is struggling to fill her empty days. For a needed escape, Dogger, the loyal family servant, suggests a boating trip for Flavia and her two older sisters. As their punt drifts past the church where a notorious vicar had recently dispatched three of his female parishioners by spiking their communion wine with cyanide, Flavia, an expert chemist with a passion for poisons, is ecstatic. Suddenly something grazes against her fingers as she dangles them in the water. She clamps down on the object, imagining herself as Ernest Hemingway battling a marlin, and pulls up what she expects will be a giant fish. But in Flavia's grip is something far better: a human head, attached to a human body. If anything could take Flavia's mind off sorrow, it is solving a murder—although one that may lead the young sleuth to an early grave.

Beautiful actress Martha Lawrence has a problem. Her once loving husband, Dirk, has become violent and controlling, and she doesn't know why. When she reaches out to their friend, mystery-solver Ellery Queen for help, Dirk interrupts their meeting in a drunken rage. He is convinced that the two are having an affair. Martha needs Ellery's help to convince Dirk

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that she's never cheated and never will. But from the clues he uncovers, it looks as if Martha might be two-timing after all. If Dirk is a cuckold, is his anger justifiable? And who is responsible if it results in murder? Ellery must figure out who is responsible for crippling a marriage before someone gets killed in the name of love.

The clown suddenly appeared beside a group of kids at the candy floss van, bringing Kira to an abrupt halt. Then it began. The rapid heartbeat, the burst of perspiration, the gasping breath. The baby lurched inside her, as though sharing her panic. When the body of a pregnant teenager is found in a Hall of Mirrors with the full-term foetus surgically removed, forensic scientist Rhona MacLeod is called in to assist the police. Suspicion falls on Jeff Coulter, a psychotic inmate at a nearby hospital whose hobby is making Reborns - chillingly realistic baby dolls intended for bereaved parents or those unable to conceive. But how could he have orchestrated the murder from a secure mental facility? The investigation leads to a group of teenage girls who seem to have all got pregnant at the same time. Then a Reborn doll is discovered near the crime scene and a second girl from the group is found dead. Creepy, compelling and heart-stoppingly tense, *THE REBORN* is Lin Anderson's most powerful novel yet.

New and uncollected stories from the beloved author of *The Last Unicorn*

Loni Meadows is the beautiful, unstable director of an arts foundation headquartered in a crumbling castle outside Florence. When Meadows dies under peculiar circumstances, it becomes clear that almost everyone at Castello Orfeo would have been pleased to see her dead. Years ago, as a low-level member of the Florence police force, Sandro Cellini, now working sporadically as

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a private eye, ran a routine background check on Meadows, and he hopes that the tidbits he learned back then can help him determine who helped her to her death.

This New York Times Notable Book is the captivating tale of one man's quest to capture the ghost of his dead lover. His odyssey draws him into the lives of three magical women on horseback with a dangerous quest of their own. A dazzling fantasy of love and death, lust and betrayal, from the beloved author of *The Last Unicorn*. After moving with her mother to the English countryside, Jenny, a young American girl, begins to unravel a mystery on the grounds and uncovers evidence of another, hidden, occupant of her new home--a three-hundred-year-old ghost named Tamsin. Reissue.

Story of a unicorn lost in the modern world.

NAMED ONE OF THE BEST BOOKS OF THE YEAR BY NPR • NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER From award-winning author Alan Bradley comes the next cozy British mystery starring intrepid young sleuth Flavia de Luce, hailed by *USA Today* as "one of the most remarkable creations in recent literature." Eleven-year-old amateur detective and ardent chemist Flavia de Luce is used to digging up clues, whether they're found among the potions in her laboratory or between the pages of her insufferable sisters' diaries. What she is not accustomed to is digging up bodies. Upon the five-hundredth anniversary of St. Tancred's death, the English hamlet of Bishop's Lacey is busily preparing to open its patron saint's tomb. Nobody is more excited to peek inside the crypt than Flavia, yet what she finds will halt the

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proceedings dead in their tracks: the body of Mr. Collicutt, the church organist, his face grotesquely and inexplicably masked. Who held a vendetta against Mr. Collicutt, and why would they hide him in such a sacred resting place? The irrepressible Flavia decides to find out. And what she unearths will prove there's never such thing as an open-and-shut case. BONUS: This edition includes an excerpt from Alan Bradley's *The Dead in Their Vaulted Arches*. Acclaim for *Speaking from Among the Bones* "[Alan] Bradley scores another success. . . . This series is a grown-up version of Nancy Drew, the Hardy Boys and all those mysteries you fell in love with as a child."—The San Diego Union-Tribune "The precocious and irrepressible Flavia . . . continues to delight."—Publishers Weekly (starred review) "Fiendishly brilliant . . . Bradley has created an utterly charming cast of characters . . . as quirky as any British mystery fan could hope for."—Bookreporter "Delightful and entertaining."—San Jose Mercury News "This overview of Peter Beagle's extraordinary career as a fantasist contains seven short stories and three essays as well as a new preface by the author. It also features the original whimsical Chesley Award-winning cover illustration by talented Bay Area artist Michael Dashow. *The Last Unicorn*, Beagle's most beloved novel, was an underground bestseller in the late 1960s and 1970s. This collection includes two of Beagle's popular unicorn stories, "Professor Gottesman and the Indian Rhinoceros" and "Julie's Unicorn," as well as "Lila the Werewolf," which is anthologized in the *Oxford Book of Fantasy*, and a tribute to J. R. R. Tolkien, "The Naga." "

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NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER Alan Bradley, author of the most award-winning series debut of any year, returns with another irresistible Flavia de Luce novel In the hamlet of Bishop's Lacey, the insidiously clever and unflappable eleven-year-old sleuth Flavia de Luce had asked a Gypsy woman to tell her fortune—never expecting to later stumble across the poor soul, bludgeoned almost to death in the wee hours in her own caravan. Was this an act of retribution by those convinced that the soothsayer 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? As the red herrings pile up, Flavia must sort through clues fishy and foul to untangle dark deeds and dangerous secrets. BONUS: This edition contains an excerpt from Alan Bradley's *I Am Half-Sick of Shadows*.

A complicated family brings a young woman named Lioness Lazos into their lives, and as spring leads into summer, Lioness awakens each family member's long-hidden dreams and desires.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER "I come from a family forged by tragedies and bound by a remarkable, unbreakable love," Hunter Biden writes in this deeply moving memoir of addiction, loss, and survival. When he was two years old, Hunter Biden was badly injured in a car accident that killed his

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mother and baby sister. In 2015, he suffered the devastating loss of his beloved big brother, Beau, who died of brain cancer at the age of forty-six. These hardships were compounded by the collapse of his marriage and a years-long battle with drug and alcohol addiction. In *Beautiful Things*, Hunter recounts his descent into substance abuse and his tortuous path to sobriety. The story ends with where Hunter is today—a sober married man with a new baby, finally able to appreciate the beautiful things in life.

Called to an urgent meeting at a mysterious shack in the middle of nowhere, attorney Bill Angell finds his brother-in-law, traveling salesman Joe Wilson, stabbed. With Joe's dying breath, he manages to convey that his murderer was a veiled woman. Was it the wild-eyed woman who had sped past Bill on his way up the dark road to the shack? To help him unravel the mystery, Bill calls on his old friend Ellery Queen. But first Queen will have to unravel the victim's double life - starting with the shack where he's been found dead, smack dab between two very different worlds. From his first appearance in print in 1929, Ellery Queen became one of America's most famous and beloved fictional detectives. Over the course of nearly half a century, Frederic Dannay and Manfred B. Lee, the duo writing team known as Ellery Queen, won the prestigious Edgar Award multiple times, and their contributions to the mystery

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genre were recognized with a Grand Master Award, the highest honor bestowed by the Mystery Writers of America. Their fair-play mysteries won over fans due to their intricate puzzles that challenged the reader to solve the mystery alongside the brilliant detective. Queen's stories were among the first to dominate the earliest days of radio, film, and television. Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine, which the writers founded and edited, became the world's most influential and acclaimed crime fiction magazine.

The long-awaited sequel to the popular classic *The Last Unicorn* is the centerpiece of the powerful collection of new tales from a fantasy master. As longtime fans have come to expect, the stories are written with a grace and style similar to fantasy's most original voices, such as J.R.R. Tolkien, Fritz Leiber, and Kurt Vonnegut. Traditional themes are typically infused with modern sensibilities--reincarnated lovers and waning kings run shoulders with heroic waifs; Schmendrick and Magician returns to adventure, as does the ghost of an off-Broadway actor and a dream-stealing shapeshifter; and Gordon, the delightfully charming "self-made cat," appears for the first time in print, taking his place alongside Stuart Little as a new favorite of the young at heart. This wide-ranging compilation contains sly humor and a resounding depth that will charm fans of literary fantasy.

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A Fine and Private Place centers on the insular world of Jonathan Rebeck, who, following the failure of his business, rejected his place in society in order to live for twenty years within the quiet of a Bronx cemetery. With only a sardonic raven and a pair of increasingly regretful ghosts as companions. Rebeck has forgotten what life is really about. That is until a lonely widow visits the mausoleum where her late husband - and Rebeck - reside, giving the reclusive Rebeck the courage to perform the most magnanimous gesture of his misspent life.

Conversing in a mausoleum with the dead, an eccentric recluse is tugged back into the world by a pair of ghostly lovers bearing an extraordinary gift-the final chance for his own happiness. When challenged by a faithless wife and aided by a talking raven, the lives of the living and the dead may be renewed by courage and passion, but only if not belatedly. Told with an elegiac wisdom, this&delightful tale of magic and otherworldly love&is a timeless work of fantasy imbued with hope and wonder. After multiple printings since 1960, this newest edition will contain the author's recent revisions and will stand as the definitive version of an ageless classic.

From the author of THE LOST CHILD, a crime novel which examines child abuse and its repercussions for an ordinary family. An agreeable, middle-aged woman murders one of her neighbour's sons after she discovers

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that he abused her daughter several years earlier, an action which fails to stop the pain of a shattered home life.

Three sinister crimes in one, set against the backdrop of the faded decadence and small-town claustrophobia of contemporary Florence 'Brooding Italian noir' Independent on Sunday 'Suspense, atmosphere, and the architectural beauty of Florence... Fantastic' Irish Examiner A Time of Mourning Sandro Cellini - ex-policeman, good husband and newly-minted private detective - is at first unwilling to see any connection between the disappearance of a young English girl from among Florence's hard-drinking community of foreign arts students, and the suicide of an elderly Jewish architect. But as he investigates the circumstances more closely, Sandro's first case turns out to be darker and more complex than he could have imagined... A Fine and Private Place Just as Sandro gets to grips with the reality of life as a private detective, an old case comes back to haunt him. As he attempts to uncover the truth of Loni Meadows's violent and lonely death, he finds himself drawn into the lives of the highly strung arts community and the closed world they inhabit in the Casentino's isolated hills The Dead Season Florence's inhabitants have fled to the hills, but Sandro Cellini will not be joining the holidaymakers this year - a man has vanished into thin air, leaving his pregnant wife abandoned. Meanwhile, bankteller Roxana Delfino is trapped in the city heat, worrying for her aging mother and puzzling over the disappearance of one of her regular clients. When the weather finally breaks, it brings with it a

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shocking revelation.

The acclaimed author of *The Last Unicorn* and *A Fine and Private Place* presents an evocative, deeply personal fantasy about dreams lost and found, friendship, and the unique relationship that exists between cats and humans.

Ellery Queen was both fictional detective and literary pseudonym, created in 1929 by cousins Frederic Dannay and Manfred Lee. Ellery Queen starred in over 30 novels and short story collections, along with a popular radio show, several television adaptations, and numerous films. Ellery Queen received the Grand Master Award of the Mystery Writers of America, and founded and edited *Ellery Queen's Mystery Magazine*, the most important magazine in the field. These three Dell Four Color comics (published in 1961 and 1962) were the fourth appearance of Ellery Queen in comic book format.

In 1963, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. articulated his dream, JFK was assassinated, and zip codes were first introduced to the US. The world was monumentally changing and changing fast. But in the eyes of future fantasy author Peter Beagle and his best friend Phil, it wasn't changing fast enough. For these two twenty-something beatnik Jews from the Bronx, change was something you chased after night and day across the country on the trembling seat of a motor scooter.

The author of *The Innkeeper's Song* offers six new stories set in his beloved fantasy world. Reprint.

For at least a generation, scholars have asserted that privacy barely existed in the early modern era. The divide between the public and private was vague, they

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say, and the concept, if it was acknowledged, was rarely valued. In *Privacy in the Age of Shakespeare*, Ronald Huebert challenges these assumptions by marshalling evidence that it was in Shakespeare's time that the idea of privacy went from a marginal notion to a desirable quality. The era of transition begins with More's *Utopia* (1516), in which privacy is forbidden. It ends with Milton's *Paradise Lost* (1667), in which privacy is a good to be celebrated. In between come Shakespeare's plays, paintings by Titian and Vermeer, devotional manuals, autobiographical journals, and the poetry of George Herbert and Robert Herrick, all of which Huebert carefully analyses in order to illuminate the dynamic and emergent nature of early modern privacy.

As Sandro gets to grips with the dispiriting realities of life as a private detective, touting for business among old contacts and following errant teenagers, an old case comes back to haunt him... As Sandro Cellini gets to grips with the dispiriting realities of life as a private detective, touting for business among old contacts and following errant teenagers, an old case comes back to haunt him... Once the subject of a routine investigation back in Sandro's early days as an investigator, Loni Meadows - the glamorous, charming and ruthless director of an artistic Trust based in a castle in the hills outside Florence - is found dead in circumstances Sandro cannot convince himself are accidental. However inconvenient his suspicions might be, both to Sandro - whose marriage appears to be disintegrating - and to Meadows's erstwhile employers at the Trust, he presses ahead with the case. And as Sandro attempts to uncover the truth of Loni Meadows's violent and lonely death, he finds himself drawn into the lives of the castle's highly strung community and the

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closed world they inhabit in the Casentino's isolated hills. NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Flavia de Luce—“part Harriet the Spy, part Violet Baudelaire from Lemony Snicket’s A Series of Unfortunate Events” (The New York Times Book Review)—takes her remarkable sleuthing prowess to the unexpectedly unsavory world of Canadian boarding schools in this captivating mystery. BONUS: This edition includes “The Curious Case of the Copper Corpse: A Flavia de Luce Story.” Banished! is how twelve-year-old Flavia de Luce laments her predicament, when her father and Aunt Felicity ship her off to Miss Bodycote’s Female Academy, the boarding school that her mother, Harriet, once attended across the sea in Canada. The sun has not yet risen on Flavia’s first day in captivity when a gift lands at her feet. Flavia being Flavia, a budding chemist and sleuth, that gift is a charred and mummified body, which tumbles out of a bedroom chimney. Now, while attending classes, making friends (and enemies), and assessing the school’s stern headmistress and faculty (one of whom is an acquitted murderess), Flavia is on the hunt for the victim’s identity and time of death, as well as suspects, motives, and means. Rumors swirl that Miss Bodycote’s is haunted, and that several girls have disappeared without a trace. When it comes to solving multiple mysteries, Flavia is up to the task—but her true destiny has yet to be revealed. Praise for *As Chimney Sweepers Come to Dust* “Flavia de Luce [is] perhaps contemporary crime fiction’s most original character—to say she is Pippi Longstocking with a Ph.D. in chemistry (speciality: poisons) barely begins to describe her.”—Maclean’s “Another treat for readers of all ages . . . [As Chimney Sweepers Come to Dust] maintains the high standards Bradley set from the start.”—Booklist “Exceptional . . . [The] intriguing setup only gets better, and Bradley makes Miss Bodycote’s a suitably Gothic setting for Flavia’s

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sleuthing. Through it all, her morbid narrative voice continues to charm.”—Publishers Weekly (starred review) “Even after all these years, Flavia de Luce is still the world’s greatest adolescent British chemist/busybody/sleuth.”—The Seattle Times “Plot twists come faster than Canadian snowfall. . . . Bradley’s sense of observation is as keen as gung-ho scientist Flavia’s. . . . The results so far are seven sparkling Flavia de Luce mysteries.”—Library Journal

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • Hailed as “a combination of Eloise and Sherlock Holmes” by The Boston Globe, Flavia de Luce returns in a Christmas mystery from award-winning author Alan Bradley. In spite of being ejected from Miss Bodycote’s Female Academy in Canada, twelve-year-old Flavia de Luce is excited to be sailing home to England. But instead of a joyous homecoming, she is greeted on the docks with unfortunate news: Her father has fallen ill, and a hospital visit will have to wait while he rests. But with Flavia’s blasted sisters and insufferable cousin underfoot, Buckshaw now seems both too empty—and not empty enough. Only too eager to run an errand for the vicar’s wife, Flavia hops on her trusty bicycle, Gladys, to deliver a message to a reclusive wood-carver. Finding the front door ajar, Flavia enters and stumbles upon the poor man’s body hanging upside down on the back of his bedroom door. The only living creature in the house is a feline that shows little interest in the disturbing scene. Curiosity may not kill this cat, but Flavia is energized at the prospect of a new investigation. It’s amazing what the discovery of a corpse can do for one’s spirits. But what awaits Flavia will shake her to the very core. Praise for *Thrice the Brinded Cat Hath Mew’d* “Mystery fans seeking novels of wit, an immersive English countryside setting, and rich characterizations will be rewarded with this newest entry in the award-winning series.”—Library Journal (starred review) “There is such a thing as willing suspension

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of disbelief brought on by sheer outlandish charm, and that's what [Alan] Bradley and some delicious writing have tapped."—London Free Press "Flavia's first-person narration reveals her precocious intellect as well as her youthful vulnerability."—Shelf Awareness "Flavia is once again a fun, science-loving protagonist. . . . This series entry ends on a note that begs for the next story."—Library Reads "An eleven-year-old prodigy with an astonishing mind for chemistry and a particular interest in poisons."—The Strand Magazine (Five of the Best Historical Heroines) "Bradley's preteen heroine comes through in the end with a series of deductions so clever she wants to hug herself. So will you."—Kirkus Reviews "Claudio Bianchi has lived alone for many years on a hillside in Southern Italy's scenic Calabria. Set in his ways and suspicious of outsiders, Claudio has always resisted change, preferring farming and writing poetry. But one chilly morning, as though from a dream, an impossible visitor appears at the farm. When Claudio comes to her aid, an act of kindness throws his world into chaos. Suddenly he must stave off inquisitive onlookers, invasive media, and even more sinister influences"--

What better Christmas surprise for detective-in-training Flavia de Luce than a dreadful murder under Buckshaw's roof - and a snowbound house full of suspects! It's Christmas time, and our beloved Flavia is tucked away in her laboratory whipping up a sticky concoction to trap that infamous sneak, Saint Nick, and thereby prove once and for all - despite the claims of her evil sisters - that he does exist. But she is soon distracted from her task: Colonel de Luce, in desperate need of funds, has rented the family's crumbling manor house to a film company for the holidays. When its crew arrives from London to shoot a movie starring the reclusive and renowned actress, Phyllis Wyvern, there's no end to the disruptions - and dramas - demanding Flavia's attention. When Wyvern is

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convinced to perform a famous scene to help raise funds for the local church, it is decided that Buckshaw Manor is the only suitable location. Its foyer alone is bigger than the parish hall, and could fit every man, woman, and child in Bishop's Lacey, to a soul. It's almost Christmas Eve, but - to no one's surprise - all of the village inhabitants fight their way through a raging snowstorm to be in the audience that magical night. As the actors take to the stage, however, the blizzard sets in, and it becomes clear that the villagers will have to hunker down at Buckshaw for the night. Sleeping head to toe in the de Luces' foyer seems amenable to most, until word spreads of the evening's shocking conclusion - Phyllis Wyvern is found strangled to death in the Blue Bedroom, with a length of film from one of her movies tied in an elaborate bow around her neck. But who among the assembled guests would stage such a chilling scene? As the storm worsens and the list of suspects grows, Flavia must use every ounce of her chemical cleverness and crime-solving prowess to ferret out a killer hidden in plain sight. But when she does piece the puzzle together and deduce who has committed this twisted crime, will Flavia be able to escape in one piece?

Looking for trouble, Ellery Queen descends on a small town At the tail end of the long summer of 1940, there is nowhere in the country more charming than Wrightsville. The Depression has abated, and for the first time in years the city is booming. There is hope in Wrightsville, but Ellery Queen has come looking for death. The mystery author is hoping for fodder for a novel, and he senses the corruption that lurks beneath the apple pie façade. He rents a house owned by the town's first family, whose three daughters star in most of the local gossip. One is fragile, left at the altar three years ago and never recovered. Another is engaged to the city's rising political star, an upright man who's already boring her. And then there's Lola, the divorced, bohemian black sheep.

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Together, they make a volatile combination. Once he sees the ugliness in Wrightsville, Queen sits back—waiting for the crime to come to him.

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