

Patricia M. Muhammad
presents

Sweet As Murder

Special Objects:

BAKERY

Baked Goods: These confectionaries may appear to be a prop for the baking competition entrants but they actually provide a purpose. Each category delineates the timeline for the three day baking competition. The first day of the contest is for cookies and miscellaneous sweets. The second day is for pies and the third is for cakes. On each day a great event happens, creating a subplot and furthering complicating Detectives Wilhemina Dankworth's and Arthur Dobson's investigation of the previous murders. For Dankworth, her entries are a reminder that though she is a devoted wife, she is no baker. In addition, her near perfectly purchased baked goods progresses her into the third day's top contenders. The Society, however, knows that pastries and cakes alone is not the ultimate criteria for who will be the chosen one this year. Despite Dankworth's focus on the investigation, she may find herself unwittingly

The Society's building/property: It is a field building for the Society, yet it is the centre of this year's baking competition. Filled with hallways, side rooms and anxious busybodies and some amenable competitors, it encapsulates the microcosm of social friction. Those who will vie for a coveted position may do a lot of things. The baking competition is held on these grounds and is part of the vetting process for who will be the chosen one. One room contains the physical history of the Society and the baking competition. Its walls and doors hold many secrets. The doors provide a gateway for the transmission of light and ethereal communication. Its walls uphold the prestigious reputation of the Society's forebears. This building can be confining as exhibited on the first day when one murder occurs. Its grounds are manicured and provide an open space for the baking entrants to mingle and become acquainted with one another.

Light: In the beginning the only person who seems to know anything about the light is Marceline. Because most of her fellow bakers dismiss her behaviour as odd, her abilities are overlooked though she performs small feats in plain view. Thus, Marceline's gifts are hidden in plain sight from most people to be able to perceive. The light is not a tangible object. It cannot be contained though it may be harnessed. The goal of the light is to manifest guidance and truth. This is how those who wield it, including the seemingly unimportant Arnold, are able to discern those who are worthy from those who would only use it for nefarious purposes. Some are able to wield light by use of their limbs. Light

may leave its *mark* on others with an imprint of viable darkness. It can cause death. This light may be the agent by which someone's death is confirmed. Others may call upon it through these special rings. The light does not necessarily obey those whom beckon. It assesses its caller and by a higher authority it is decided whether it will answer a plea. The light too may be considered part of the hierarchy. Some have argued that it is the apex of the Society's grand order.

Dorothy's brooch: This brooch was worn by Dorothy on her upper left side of her dress. Although most would mistaken it as just an accent to her attire, one of her fellow bakers noticed its importance. No details are provided as to its significance, but it does imply a special relationship between Dorothy and the Society, although she was not a member and would never become a chosen one.

Tally cards: These small placards are used by each of the three judges to calculate points each entry earned based on the competition's set criteria. The standard includes, taste, presentation and originality. At times, they cause contention, but their importance must not be dismissed. The baker with the highest score is declared the winner of the competition, which the panel hopes will coincide with the Society's determination of who will be the chosen one.

S H O P

Rings: As the story progresses, the author will become acquainted with special rings worn by those who are members of the Society. Each ring contains a three-element insignia. The two most important are the staff and the halo. Aspects of this emblem is used to manifest light, but a special connection must exist between the wearer or bearer and the ring. Some are especially forged for a specific recipient. Sometimes the owner is unknown. Light guides those who are tasked with the assignment as to whom the ring is to be delivered to. The light is separate from the ring which acts as a conduit. It too is part of a hierarchy that determines who the chosen one will be.

