

Patricia M. Muhammad  
Presents

# Sweet As Murder

Places:

The Home of Charles and Wilhemina: It is a two-level house with windows near the front door and throughout. This is where the Charles and his wife seek refuge from the turmoil of 1950s society and the strange happenings of the baking competition. When the detective and her husband crosses over the threshold from their home, they enter the potential racial strife heaped upon them by strangers. The distance between their home and their external destinations attenuate them from the physical comfort they easily find with one another. It is the abode in which Charles and Wilhemina manifest the greatest expression of their intimacy. Their home is where they receive a special, but unexpected delivery.

Bakery: The local bakery is Wilhemina's primary stop ever since she went undercover at the Society's baking competition. She is not the only one who ventures to this area. Other competitors have been near, gossiping about their fellow entrants and plotting their way to proceed further. This is the place where Detective Dankworth can take a few moments to gather herself, transform from detective to the presumable 1950s housewife, all the while using her purchased baked goods as part of her façade.

Hospital: The local hospital is where the vagrant Arnold, who has sat and observed members as well as those affiliated with the Society, was transported after being stabbed near their property. The hospital itself is not extraordinary in purpose, where the ailing and dying seek for medical treatment. However, it, just like any other building can be used as a conduit to transmit messages, especially warnings to others by use of harnessing and transforming light. Apparently its best food is cookies that the nurse discovers placates their unusual patient. She uses them to distract Arnold from taunting her with subtle hints of his gifts of light. She does not understand his practice of this power, nor has no desire to. Dr. Francis Tate is the attending physician to Arnold. Both of them discover that each has the power to wield light. Walls and doors of any building, including the hospital are but agents for what they are capable of. The hospital transforms into the meeting place between an unexpected master and one who has still yet to learn of the power of light. It is here where Arnold gives Dr. Tate his assignment. He is to assist in identifying 'the chosen one' who is believed to be an entrant in this year's baking competition.

The Society's field building: This is the property where the annual baking competition and preliminaries are held this year. The outside grounds are beautiful with plenty of manicured greenery and a large patio. Its building is vast, often used for carrying out the business of local members of the Society. Vast with many rooms and more than one auditorium, it not only holds plenty of visitors, but some believe that several secrets are buried here... One of the revered quarters within this building houses historical records, memorabilia and a rather large portrait of an important person in the Society's development. This is a clue as to what importance a certain patient of Dr. Tate had in the Society's hierarchy. It also is the unfortunate site of two deaths of the main baking competition.

Coroner's Lab: The coroner's lab is where bodies are examined and causes of death are determined. Most civilians would not be interested in observing the work of the coroner. Detectives and other interested parties, however, make it their business to know the cause of death of particular subjects. Likely morbid to visit, Dr. Tate is led to the unwelcoming, large cold room. He, however, is not primarily interested in knowing who and how two victims of the baking competition are no more. He takes his assignment from his patient, Arnold, seriously. In the barely lit coroner's office, a different sort of light illumines from the hands of the coroner. He just happens to be a member of the Society as well. Dr. Tate presents a ring. It is not his own. The coroner understands the power that can be harnessed through these special objects as he has one as well. He demonstrates what light is able to do, from displaying images to communication; the coroner guides Dr. Tate on his mission. Maybe it will become obvious to Francis as to who 'the chosen one' is. From the darkness that snuffs out life, Dr. Tate stands next to a fellow member, where light can be present even in the midst of death. 'The chosen one' must be protected at all costs—even if the person is someone no one had ever known to so.

U.S. Capitol: Home to the President and the center of the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Capitol is not a place most Negroes seek company in the 1950s. The Congressional floor has become the platform for the McCarthy hearings. Negroes have been accused by their fellow Americans of Communism, a gateway for another sort of prosecution. The baking competition was also a platform, one in which Dorothy and Eldora were the primary facilitators of such rumours against innocent entrants. Dorothy was the worst of the two, and in keeping with the balance that the universal hierarchy must maintain, she found herself *accused* of Communism. This is the place where Dorothy soon realizes that she is ultimately of no further use to the Society and they have completely severed any ties with her.