



## Acqua Alta: A Commissario Guido Brunetti Mystery (Commissario Brunetti Book 5)

By Donna Leon



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As Venice braces for a winter tempest, Commissario Guido Brunetti, Donna Leon's intrepid Italian sleuth, finds out that an old friend has been savagely beaten at the palazzo home of reigning diva Flavia Petrelli. Then, as the flood waters rise, a corpse is discovered—and Brunetti must wade through the chaotic city to solve his deadliest case yet. Sinister and exotic, *Acqua Alta* is another chilling addition to Donna Leon's best-selling series.

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**Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

An American living near Venice, Donna Leon has crafted an imaginative series of mysteries set in the waterborne city, all starring police detective Guido Brunetti. In this, the fifth installment, Brunetti sets out to investigate an assault on an American archeologist who herself is investigating a museum exhibition of Chinese antiquities. The moods of Venice and the reflections of the canny, emotional detective are the most affecting qualities of the book.

#### From Publishers Weekly

Intelligent and charming Guido Brunetti, the commissioner of police in Venice (seen before in *Death at La Fenice* and *Death in a Strange Country*), continues to confront corruption in his fifth adventure. His moral anger pervades and gives substance to this mystery, from its peripheral incidents to the resolution, in which the villain explains all and which occurs in the rising waters of the title. Investigating an assault on American archeologist Brett Lynch, Brunetti wonders whether the two men who beat her are simply homophobic (Lynch's lover is a popular soprano) or, as Lynch suggests, whether they were trying to prevent her planned meeting with museum director Francesco Semenzato. Five years earlier, Lynch and Semenzato brought a touring display of Chinese antiquities to Venice. Recently, Lynch, on a dig in China, saw the same pieces and realized some had been replaced by fakes. Brunetti's sources suggest that Semenzato's interests in antiques are more diverse than is proper for a powerful museum director, but there's no opportunity for a confrontation: only four days after the beating, Semenzato is murdered. As Brunetti wends his way around the insider's Venice and through accumulating information (not all obtained entirely honestly), he also deals with his superiors, his wife and teenage daughter, all the while remaining the thoughtful, sensitive sleuth readers have come to expect.

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#### From Library Journal

Leon, author of four Venetian mysteries, returns with a fifth. All feature Italian police commissioner Guido Brunetti, and all are rich in local ambiance and intrigue. In Leon's latest tale the worlds of opera and art intertwine when an archaeologist, whose lesbian lover is an opera diva, discovers that an exhibit on Chinese ceramics is full of fakes. Set amid the background of winter flooding in Venice, *Acqua Alta* is a subtle study of emotion and character. Anna Fields does a masterful job with the rich Italian and Chinese vocabulary and provides an enjoyable narration, but her performance is marred by her impersonation of male voices, which seems forced and distracting. A sophisticated mystery; purchase where the author's works are popular.

Recommended. -Ray Vignovich, West Des Moines P.L.

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#### **Bruce Brown:**

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### **David Peacock:**

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