

The Lie Tree

By Frances Hardinge

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Read this thought-provoking, critically acclaimed novel (6 starred reviews!!!) from Frances Hardinge, winner of the Costa Book of the Year, Costa Children's Book Award, and Horn Book-Boston Globe Award.

Faith Sunderly leads a double life. To most people, she is reliable, dull, trustworthy—a proper young lady who knows her place as inferior to men. But inside, Faith is full of questions and curiosity, and she cannot resist mysteries: an unattended envelope, an unlocked door. She knows secrets no one suspects her of knowing. She knows that her family moved to the close-knit island of Vane because her famous scientist father was fleeing a reputation-destroying scandal. And she knows, when her father is discovered dead shortly thereafter, that he was murdered.

In pursuit of justice and revenge, Faith hunts through her father’s possessions and discovers a strange tree. The tree bears fruit only when she whispers a lie to it. The fruit of the tree, when eaten, delivers a hidden truth. The tree might hold the key to her father’s murder—or it may lure the murderer directly to Faith herself. Frances Hardinge is the author of many acclaimed novels, including *Cuckoo Song*, which earned five starred reviews.

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The Lie Tree By Frances Hardinge Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #15868 in Books
- Brand: Amulet Books
- Published on: 2016-04-19
- Released on: 2016-04-19
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.63" h x 1.25" w x 6.00" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 384 pages

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Editorial Review

From School Library Journal
Gr 7 Up—In a time when a young woman's exterior life can be stifling and dull, Faith Sunderly's interior life is cavernous. She has a sharp mind; a keen interest in the scientific research that has made her father, the formidable Reverend Sunderly, famous; and an irresistible impulse for sneaking, spying, and skulking around. Faith's curiosity about the world around her, which she must keep hidden, is a source of personal shame and the one thing about herself she longs for people, especially her father, to notice. When the Reverend is invited to take part in an archaeological dig on the insular island community of Vane, the whole family packs up and moves with him. It doesn't take long for Faith to suspect there are darker reasons the family left London in such a hurry, and just as she's starting to put things together, her father is found dead. Setting out to prove her father's death was a murder, Faith uncovers a web of secrets the Reverend has been keeping, all centered on one of his specimens—a small tree that thrives on lies and bears a fruit that tells the truth. Faith believes she can use the tree to find her father's killer and begins feeding it lies. As the tree grows, so do Faith's lies and her fevered obsession with finding out the truth. Hardinge, who can turn a phrase like no other, melds a haunting historical mystery with a sharp observation on the dangers of suppressing the thirst for knowledge, and leaves readers to wonder where science ends and fantasy begins. VERDICT Smart, feminist, and shadowy, Hardinge's talents are on full display here.—Beth McIntyre, Madison Public Library, WI

Review

“Over the last decade or so, Frances Hardinge has joined the ranks of those writers of young-adult fiction, like Philip Pullman, whose approach to fantasy proves so compelling that they quickly develop an adult following, and *The Lie Tree* is a good demonstration of why this is so… It’s a rather stunning page-turner of a performance, and an excellent introduction to Hardinge’s increasingly important body of work.” (*Locus*)

"In 19th-century Britain, the study of natural history was reserved for gentlemen. Unlucky enough to be born female, science-minded Faith, the heroine of this dark and captivating period novel, can't hope to follow in her naturalist father's footsteps. Yet when those footsteps lead to his suspicious death, Faith turns her "weakness" into an advantage. Underestimated by everyone, from her father's colleagues to the servants to her own mother, she embarks on an investigation that propels her into the scandal that ruined her father's reputation and entices her to adopt his morally questionable research methods.

"The Lie Tree" shares the rich, cerebral atmosphere and feminist bent of Andrea Barrett's history-of-science-inspired fiction for adults, weaving it all together with gossamer fairy-tale thread. The book's title refers to a plant — Faith's father's secret discovery — that withers in the light and feeds off of lies. Faith believes that reason and logic must hold the explanation to the Lie Tree's puzzling attributes, since, for her, "'magic' was not an answer; it was an excuse to avoid looking for one." Nonetheless, she can't deny that when she whispers untruths into its leaves, things happen: Both the plant and Faith's covert power start to grow.

Hardinge's gorgeous descriptive language is charged with menace and meaning. Lying in bed one night,

Faith imagines "her lie spreading silently like dark green smoke, filling the air around the house like a haze, spilling from the mouths of those who whispered and wondered and feared … soaking like mist into waiting leaves, seeping like sap down gnarled slender stems, and forcing itself out into a small, white spearhead of a bud." "The Lie Tree" is a murder mystery that dazzles at every level, shimmering all the more brightly the deeper down into it you go."

(Christine Heppermann *Chicago Tribune*)

STARRED REVIEW
"Hardinge, who can turn a phrase like no other, melds a haunting historical mystery with a sharp observation on the dangers of suppressing the thirst for knowledge, and leaves readers to wonder where science ends and fantasy begins... Smart, feminist, and shadowy, Hardinge’s talents are on full display here."
(*School Library Journal*)

STARRED REVIEW
"Mystery, magic, religion, and feminism swirl together in Hardinge's latest heady concoction... Hardinge creates a fierce, unlikable heroine navigating a rapidly changing world and does it all with consummate skill and pitch-perfect prose, drawing readers into Faith's world and onto her side and ultimately saying quite a lot about the world. Thematically rich, stylistically impressive, absolutely unforgettable."
(*Kirkus*)

STARRED REVIEW
"Hardinge’s characteristically rich writing is on full display—alternately excoriating, haunting, and darkly funny—and the novel also features complex, many-sided characters and a clear-eyed examination of the deep sexism of the period, which trapped even the most intelligent women in roles as restrictive as their corsets."
(*Publisher's Weekly*)

STARRED REVIEW
"There is an effortless beauty to Hardinge’s writing, which ranges from frank to profound. Though layered, the plot refuses to sag, driven as it is by mystery, taut atmosphere, complex characters, and Faith’s insatiable curiosity... It is a book in which no details are wasted and each chapter brings a new surprise. Readers of historical fiction, mystery, and fantasy will all be captivated by this wonderfully crafted novel and the many secrets hidden within its pages."
(*Booklist*)

STARRED REVIEW
“The elements of the mystery are masterfully keyed to the concerns of the Victorian time period, and its unfolding is handled with a dexterity that never loses sight of the gender problem; the book also directs its light onto matters of faith and doubt, and the issue of lies and truth in the pursuit of science. The excitement and danger, coupled with Faith’s intrepid though morally flawed pursuit of justice, call to mind Hardinge’s *Fly by Night* (BCCB 9/06); give this to readers unafraid to think disquieting thoughts as they race through a breathtaking, action-packed adventure.”
(*BCCB*)

STARRED REVIEW
"Everything in this audacious novel is on the cusp or in limbo, setting up delicious tensions and thematic riches. The time is nineteenth-century England just after Darwin’s theory of evolution has thrown the scientific world into turmoil; the setting is the fictional island of Vane, between land and sea; the main

character is a fourteen-year-old girl caught between society's expectations and her fierce desire to be a scientist... Hardinge maintains masterful control of the whole complex construct: everything from the sentence level on up to the larger philosophical and political questions. A stunner."
(*The Horn Book*)

"Some of the most beloved science-fiction and fantasy writers, from Madeleine L'Engle to Philip Pullman, began as young-adult authors whose fiction proved so compelling that adult readers embraced it as well, ignoring the line that supposedly separates these audiences. One of the latest such writers is Frances Hardinge."
(*Chicago Tribune*)

About the Author

Frances Hardinge is the winner of the Costa Book of the Year and Costa Children's Book Awards for *The Lie Tree.* She is the author of several books for children, including *Cuckoo Song* (five starred reviews, shortlisted for the Carnegie Medal), *The Lost Conspiracy* (five starred reviews, *Los Angeles Times* Book Award Finalist), *Fly by Night* (shortlisted for the *Guardian* Children's Book prize), *Well Witched* (*SLJ* Best Book of 2008), and *Fly Trap* (shortlisted for the *Guardian* Prize, longlisted for the Carnegie Medal). She lives in England. www.franceshardinge.com.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Alan Levin:

Nowadays reading books be than want or need but also become a life style. This reading addiction give you lot of advantages. Associate programs you got of course the knowledge even the information inside the book in which improve your knowledge and information. The knowledge you get based on what kind of book you read, if you want have more knowledge just go with schooling books but if you want feel happy read one using theme for entertaining such as comic or novel. The actual The Lie Tree is kind of reserve which is giving the reader erratic experience.

Lisa Jennings:

The publication untitled The Lie Tree is the guide that recommended to you to see. You can see the quality of the book content that will be shown to you actually. The language that article author use to explained their way of doing something is easily to understand. The copy writer was did a lot of research when write the book, hence the information that they share to your account is absolutely accurate. You also might get the e-book of The Lie Tree from the publisher to make you considerably more enjoy free time.

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Lewis Shafer:

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