



## A Fatal Obsession

*Faith Martin*

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# A Fatal Obsession

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## **A Fatal Obsession** Faith Martin

The start of a brand new series from the global bestselling author of the DI Hillary Greene series. Oxford, 1960. There's a murderer on the loose and two unlikely heroes are poised to solve the case.

Meet Probationary WPC Trudy Loveday – smart, enthusiastic and always underestimated.

In the hope of getting her out of the way, Trudy's senior officer assigns her to help coroner Clement Ryder as he re-opens the case of a young woman's death. She can't believe her luck – she is actually going to be working on a real murder case.

Meanwhile, the rest of the police force are busy investigating a series of threats and murders in the local community, and Clement can't help but feel it's all linked.

As Trudy and Clement form an unlikely partnership, are they going to be the ones to solve these crimes before the murderer strikes again?

## **A Fatal Obsession Details**

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Author : Faith Martin

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## From Reader Review A Fatal Obsession for online ebook

### Robin Taylor says

How many purse-snatchings and flashing cases must WPC Trudy Loveday attend before her worth is noted? She is an eager, young constable who knows that she has a lot more to offer. She may be a probationary female officer in 1960 in the British police at a time when a women's worth is highly underrated, but the intuitive Trudy feels she has much to prove to her male counterparts.

She is quite surprised when she is assigned to work alongside the local coroner, Dr. Clement Ryder, on an ongoing murder case. Talk about luck! Trudy sets off to prove herself well. As other murders happen, Dr. Ryder tends to believe that they are connected, and it doesn't take long for Trudy to believe that he is correct. Will the unlikely pair be able to unravel clues fast enough before another murder is committed?

A Fatal Obsession is book one in a new series by Faith Martin. How fun to read a police procedural story when today's modern method for crime-solving were nonexistent. What a terrific little read, with a few twists and turns. I rather enjoyed the partnership between Trudy and the curmudgeonly Dr. Ryder. The author has written the successful Hillary Greene series, so it was exciting to be in on the ground floor of something new.

Many thanks to HQ Digital and to NetGalley for this ARC to review.

Date of publication: June 11, 2018

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### Puzzle Doctor says

An entertaining well-constructed mystery with much potential for the future. Full review at [classicmystery.wordpress.com](http://classicmystery.wordpress.com)

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### Linda Strong says

4.5 Stars

Hang onto your socks! This is the first in a new series by Faith Martin, the author of the DI Hillary Greene series. The time is 1960 ... no cellphones, no DNA, no CSI.

WPC Trudy Loveday is on probation. She's young and smart and the only woman in her team. She's mostly relegated to the files and making coffee. Her boss has 'let' her out to patrol the streets on occasion and she's done well. She's arrested a couple of pickpockets and a flasher. But her supervisor doesn't seem to know what to do with her.

Clement Ryder is a coroner. He started out as a medical physician. When he was diagnosed with Parkinsons', he stopped practicing and took up the law. Now he holds court over possible murder cases and he consults with the police quite often. He has a sharp mind and a natural determination to find the truth.

Ryder demands that he be given an officer who can question suspects, make arrests, etc.... since he doesn't have that authority.

In the hope of getting her out of the way, Trudy's senior officer assigns her to help coroner Clement Ryder as he re-opens the case of a young woman's death. She can't believe her luck – she is actually going to be working on a real murder case.

The author has never disappointed me in her other series ... and this one is also not disappointing. This is a gripping, twisty crime novel with complex characters, suspects that are not what they seem to be, and an interesting plot.

Many thanks to the author / HQ Digital / Netgalley for the advanced digital copy of this British Crime Fiction. Opinions expressed here are unbiased and entirely my own.

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### **Heike says**

A female rookie cop in 1960s Oxford assists a coroner working on a cold case of the accidental death of a young, manic-depressive girl, while her colleagues investigate the murder of an ex-boyfriend of the dead 21 year old. Both cases are not related to each other – or so it seems.

While the base story was an interesting one, I had problems to connect with the protagonists and their sidekicks. The coroner fighting his angst of having Parkinson, the rookie cop (and she is only 19) dealing with her angst about being accepted by her much more experienced and (it's the sixties!) male colleagues and superiors.

There was quite a bit of unnecessary filler, mainly angst issues, but also descriptions of surroundings. While the characters of the main protagonists were fleshed out quite a bit (even if they still felt superficial), some side characters were thoroughly neglected. Like a colleague who was described as a vain beau and mentioned quite often, but I don't think he ever had anything to say.

The plot came together nice if not a bit farfetched and with some inconsistencies in the time line.

To sum it up:

A good read, and I would recommend it to certain friends who have a more cultured and serene taste than I do.

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### **Joyce says**

4 stars

Trudy Loveday is a young (almost twenty), probationary PC. Her immediate boss is DI Jennings. She is chasing a bag snatcher down the street as the book opens in 1960's London.

A murder has occurred and DI Jennings is very busy. He doesn't want to be distracted by pathologist Doctor Ryder's request to review the evidence in a cold case. The death was of Gisela Fleet-Wright and it happened five years earlier. He solves his problem by assigning his newest recruit WPC Trudy Loveday to assist Dr. Ryder in his investigation.

At first put off by Dr. Ryder's curmudgeonly manner, the two quickly begin to get along. Trudy is very excited to actually work on her first real murder case.

This book was good and so completely different from Ms. Martin's Hillary Green series. To begin with, it was set in the 1960's when forensic techniques were unheard of and cops had to rely on witness statements and their own ability to tell who was lying and who was not. This reader had to keep reminding herself that there were no cell phones and the like to rely on. I didn't like this book as much as I like Ms. Martin's DI Hillary Greene series. Perhaps in time they will improve as WPC Trudy Loveday finds her feet. It had Ms. Martin's trademark twists in it and there were surprises. A good entry, and I will be anticipating the next in the series to see if WPC Trudy attains her feet.

I want to thank NetGalley and HQ Digital for forwarding to me a copy of this good book to read, enjoy and review.

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### **Liz Mc2 says**

The strength of this book is the fun investigative pairing of the young and eager WPC, Trudy Loveday, with the experienced coroner Dr. Ryder. I enjoyed their mentor-mentee relationship and his appreciation for her talents, something she doesn't get from a lot of her colleagues as a WPC in 1960. The attitudes towards a woman working as a police officer and pop music references were the main things that located this in the early 60s—not a strong sense of the era, I thought.

The book almost lost me at the start as the point of view shifted between a lot of seemingly unrelated characters. I get why mystery writers do that, but it can make it hard to get into the story, especially when the chapters are short—just when I got interested in someone, we moved on. Eventually they did all come together in some interesting ways and the second half was more focused and engaging. There was one big question about how the killer could have known a secret about the victim that victim didn't even know: eventually this was answered, but it seemed implausible (or inexcusable) that Trudy and Ryder didn't wonder about it earlier.

Somewhat sloppy sentence-level writing: at one point it seemed that Martin's favourite word must be "large," as she repeated it about 6 times in 2 paragraphs, and she is rather prone to repeating words close together, which I find distracting. (Also once Ryder found his interest "peaked"). But either that smoothed out or I stopped noticing when I got drawn into the plot. Trudy is fun and I like the pairing. This was an enjoyable time-passer and I'll probably read the next one.

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### **Bebe (Sarah) Brechner says**

Faith Martin, of the fabulously addictive Hillary Green series, has started a new one! Fans will love this new series, which features a young female WPC in 1960. Trudy is very young, doesn't want the traditional life of marriage and motherhood - just yet - and is trying out a new career in the police force. Unfortunately, no one takes her seriously - not her family nor her colleagues. An unusual opportunity comes with a sharp, aging coroner who gets her assigned to his cold case. Martin continues her streak of excellent writing, good action, and realistic characters. This story has every mark of a winning series. The reader is left with a thirst for

more Trudy adventures! Bravo! This is a winner!

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### **Julia Wilson says**

A Fatal Obsession by Faith Martin is a fabulous police retro novel set in 1960. The book is evocative of a bygone age where crimes were solved by legwork, questions and a healthy dose of suspicion.

A Fatal Obsession is a 'thinking man's' novel. Being set in Oxford conjured up familiar landscapes for me. As a fan of the television series Morse and WPC56, I found the novel to be reminiscent of a blend of both. An unlikely pairing of a young WPC and an aging coroner ensured the reader was entertained as the young woman learnt about crime solving from the master.

Modern murder collided with a cold case and kept the reader intrigued as we journeyed from parlors to stately homes. The reader found that secrets resided behind locked doors, requiring digging to unearth them. Due to comprehensive descriptions, the characters were easily to picture and well drawn. The narrative held my attention as I tried to piece together all the clues. In an age of male dominance and female stereotyping, the fresh faced WPC was a breath of fresh air.

Any television producers out there? I think A Fatal Obsession would make a marvelous ITV series that has the legs to run for years and years.

Gripping, original and new. I loved it.

I received this book for free from Net Galley. A favourable review was not required and all views expressed are my own.

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### **Charles Hooker says**

#### **A Fatal Obsession**

A page turned by this author. I feel sure that newcomers to this writer will find her other books just as enjoyable.

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### **Cheryl M-M says**

If you took a young Jane Tennison and a grumpy Judge John Deed and threw them in a police procedural together, then you would get the equivalent of Ryder and Loveday. Trudy is one of the first WPCs on the force, which means having to endure constant put-downs, sexism and just an overall attitude of not being wanted.

The majority of her male colleagues think women are too weak and stupid to be able to work as a police officer. More often than not she finds herself delegated to the role of tea and coffee lady, and never receives any recognition for the actual police work she does.

Trudy jumps at the chance to work with Clement Ryder, a coroner with a keen nose for liars and hidden crimes. When a man, with a reputation to lose, receives threats that turn into actual crimes it reawakens the interest Clement had in an old case. He uses Trudy to do his digging, and she ends up creating a rockslide.

Martin writes a pithy plot with characters readers will want to revisit. I particularly enjoyed the way Martin highlights the daily chauvinism and major obstacles Trudy has to overcome to be taken seriously, and to be seen as equal member of the police force.

In the 21st century it's hard for women who are lucky enough not to have the same obstacles, to be able to fathom how difficult it must have been over half a century ago for women entering male dominated careers. Not that there isn't still a level of inequality or sexism in our day and age, but it's nothing compared to then. Women like Trudy paved the path for others to walk upon.

The author keeps it simple, and yet simultaneously intriguing with a flair of a popular television police procedural. It's about good old footwork, questioning and overlooked evidence. Where Ryder and Loveday are concerned it's all about the niggle of doubt, the flicker of suspicion, and of course the ability to prove your theory. No matter how outlandish it may seem.

\*I received an ARC courtesy of the publisher via NetGalley.\*

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### **Amanda says**

I have been a fan of Faith Martin's books since I was invited to take part in the blog tour for 'Murder At The University', which features the lovely Detective Inspector Hilary Greene and which is printed by Joffe books. Anyway when I heard that she was releasing the first book in a new series, I just knew that it was a book I had to read and the sooner the better. I was not to be disappointed as I absolutely flipping well loved it but more about that in a bit.

Probationer WPC Trudy Loveday is the main character in this book. She absolutely loves her role in the police force and is keen to move up the ladder so to speak. Trudy is desperate to impress her superiors and show that despite her young age, she can be an effective police officer. It can't be easy to be a female in a man's world and have to endure all the naff jobs and be subjected to harassment of one way shape or form.' Trudy puts up with all this and more. Certain behaviours of the men in the police station reminded me a bit of DCI Gene Hunt from the television series 'Life On Mars. Even when she makes an arrest, the credit goes to somebody else, which must be so frustrating when you put all the work in. Trudy is one feisty, determined, young lady who often places herself in dangerous situations to make an arrest without thinking of the threat to her own safety. She is one police officer who really does try to do everything she can to protect the public. Trudy is also very curious and nosy at times. She has a very good gut instinct and if something doesn't sit right with her then she doesn't settle until she has fully exhausted all lines of enquiry. Trudy is asked to work with the local coroner to reinvestigate a closed case. She is thrilled to be trusted with such a job and resolves to do her very best.

It took me a little while to get into this book because I had to get used to a whole new set of characters and the author uses a different writing style to that of her Hilary Greene series. However once I got into this book, boy oh boy the time and the pages of the book flew past in a blur. I became addicted to this book because I just had to know how Trudy got on and how the investigation progressed. I smugly thought that I had figured out who had committed the crime and why but how wrong was I? It turned out that the perpetrator was somebody else entirely. This book certainly kept me guessing. At times there were more skeletons tumbling out of the closet than I could keep up with, which I loved because basically I am a nosy parker, who loves to gossip. There were many twists and turns to this book- some of which I honestly didn't see coming. Just when you thought that the story had settled down then along would come another twist in the tale. For me, this book started with a bang and had a beginning that I won't be forgetting in a hurry. After the beginning, the book kept up a steady pace, which was fine. There are a few sub plots which feed seamlessly into the main story.

In conclusion I have to say that I really loved reading the introduction to what I am sure will become another best selling series. At the moment the series featuring Hilary Greene is my favourite of the two but the series featuring Probationary WPC Trudy Loveday is not far behind. I loved the characters, I loved the story and I can honestly say that there was not one thing about the book that I didn't enjoy. I would definitely recommend this book, this author and this series to other readers. I can't wait to read the next book in the series and fortunately I don't have too long to wait because the next book in the series is called 'A Fatal Mistake' and it is due to be released on 1st October 2018. The score on the Ginger Book Geek is a well deserved 5\* out of 5\*.

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### **Pgchuis says**

I received a copy of this novel from the publisher via NetGalley.

This is the first in a series set in the '60s, featuring WPC Trudy Loveday, who is seconded to assist Coroner Clement Ryder, who wishes to revisit an old coroner's verdict he observed while training and was never happy with. This is partly because the police are afraid of Ryder and partly because they are not sure what to do with Trudy as she is a woman and therefore seen as unsuitable for various roles open to the male officers.

I thought this was very good - Trudy faces a certain amount of prejudice from her colleagues and disapproval from her family as a result of her choice of career, but not to a cruel extent, and her dealings with Ryder are well done. The plot was easy to follow and the characters sympathetic. I look forward to further instalments.

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### **Tasha and Megan Mahoney says**

A Fatal Obsession was a fast paced thriller certainly kept me on my toes. When Mike McCabe's favourite niece is the victim of an abduction by 'The Star Struck Strangler' the clock starts ticking! Zoes father, Bobby begs Mike to return to his NYC beat and save her.

Can Mike McCabe and Maggie Savage get to Zoe McCabe's abductor before he takes her life, like he has taken the lives of the other young, beautiful stars that he has abducted?

This really was a brilliant, edge of my seat, fast paced, read for me and I did not want to put it down! In fact I didn't put it down that much. Yep it had me in it's grips, shook me around and spat me out at the end with a damn! That was one hell of a ride.

I like how this was written, The sentences were a nice length as were the paragraphs. The content really fitted into the 'page turner' category.

And Breathe..

I received a copy of A Fatal Obsession from Witness Impulse. and Edelweiss. This is my honest review.

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## **Elaine Tomasso says**

I would like to thank Netgalley and HQ Digital for an advance copy of *A Fatal Obsession*, the first novel to feature trainee WPC Trudy Loveday and Coroner Dr Clement Ryder, set in Oxford 1960.

When local industrialist Sir Marcus Deering receives an anonymous letter threatening his son he calls in the police. With the station's attention on this threat DI Jennings doesn't have much time to spare for the coroner who wants to re-examine the verdict in the death of Gisela Fleet-Wright five years previously and needs a police liaison officer to facilitate his enquiries. Killing two birds with one stone, appeasing the overbearing Dr Ryder and getting an officer he doesn't know what to do with out of the way he appoints probationary WPC Loveday as liaison. Surprisingly the two of them hit it off and are soon involved in a twisty investigation where nothing is as it seems.

I enjoyed *A Fatal Obsession* which has a clever plot and a most unexpected resolution, although the clues are all there (I just failed to pick up on them!). Given the era there are no forensics so investigators rely mostly on interviews, smart thinking and an ability to read people and know when they are lying. This latter trait is at the heart of the novel as it is full of lies and attempted misdirection. The plot is well developed as it moves from knowing nothing through several developments and twists to a conclusion.

It would be impossible to pick up and read this novel without making comparisons to Ms Martin's very successful DI Hillary Greene series. It is completely different, not just in the setting but in tone. It lacks the warmth and humour between the characters of that series but I suspect that will come as both readers and characters acclimatise themselves to each other. It is a very promising start to a new series and I'm looking forward to reading more.

The characters are well thought out and interesting. Trudy is young and naïve but makes up for it in intelligence and enthusiasm whereas "the old vulture" as he is known is crusty, world weary and not in perfect health but he still has an incisive, logical mind a burning desire for the truth. They work well together, in a teacher/ pupil way although Trudy sometimes surprises her mentor and I'm anticipating great things from this unlikely duo.

The historical setting is interesting. Women had a hard time in the workplace, not just the police, in those days so Trudy doesn't have it easy and doesn't get the credit she deserves. It's the little details like her mum ignoring her desire for promotion and a career and trying to pressure her into marriage and kids which would mean giving up the job that give the novel authenticity.

*A Fatal Obsession* is a fine start to a new series so I have no hesitation in recommending it as a good read.

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## **Renee says**

### **Book Description**

Oxford, 1960. There's a murderer on the loose and two unlikely heroes are poised to solve the case.

Meet Probationary WPC Trudy Loveday – smart, enthusiastic and always underestimated.

In the hope of getting her out of the way, Trudy's senior officer assigns her to help coroner Clement Ryder as he re-opens the case of a young woman's death. She can't believe her luck – she is actually going to be working on a real murder case.

## My Thoughts

I am a fan of Faith Martin's Murder series and have followed DI Hillary Greene on her many adventures. I was intrigued to see that she is beginning a new series and excited to read *A Fatal Obsession*. The bar is always set so high for me when an author has written a great series and I wondered if she could create another compelling character. For me, this was a definite yes as I flipped pages as quickly as I have while reading the Murder series books, anxious to know how everything would come together.

I don't know if Faith Martin plans to continue writing her Murder series books, but I do know that *A Fatal Obsession* was a very good read, and while the books are very different, her engaging writing style was still quite evident. Probationary WPC Trudy Love is a delightful character in many ways. She is smart, determined and though young, eager to learn and advance in her career. Trudy is surrounded by male colleagues who for the most part either barely tolerate her or give her trivial assignments that fail to challenge her or assist her in growing within the department. When her supervisor assigns her to work with one of the coroners, Clement Ryder, he has no idea that he has just inadvertently provided her a mentor. Ryder believes the verdict in an investigation 5 years ago was wrong and that a new murder case is connected to this prior one. Can this duo put all the pieces together before someone else dies? No spoilers here, you will want to read *A Fatal Obsession* and find out whodunit and why.

I really enjoyed this book and look forward to reading more as they are released. Thank you, Faith Martin, HQ Digital and NetGalley for the complimentary digital ARC.

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