



The Body in the Gazebo

Katherine Hall Page

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“Katherine Hall Page is my favorite writer of the traditional mystery.”

—Harlan Coben

“Hungry readers, enjoy!”

—Diana Mott Davidson

Minister’s wife, caterer, and amateur sleuth Faith Fairchild must solve a deadly mystery more than seventy years in the making in *The Body in the Gazebo*, the nineteenth ingenious whodunit in the delectable, Agatha Award-winning series by Katherine Hall Page. Faith has a lot on her plate as she attempts to solve a Depression Era murder while trying to clear her husband’s name after he is accused of a heartless theft. Poignant, suspenseful, puzzling, and all-around marvelous, *The Body in the Gazebo* is cozy culinary mystery at its very best—complete with scrumptious recipes from Faith Fairchild’s kitchen and a resolution that would make Dame Agatha Christie proud.

The Body in the Gazebo Details

Date : Published April 19th 2011 by William Morrow (first published March 31st 2011)

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Author : Katherine Hall Page

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From Reader Review The Body in the Gazebo for online ebook

Sherry says

I had trouble getting into this one. Too many storylines? Ursula's story of the Martha's Vineyard murder of her feckless older brother when she was an early teen and threatening letters she's getting now 80 years later, Sam and Pix off to wedding preps in SC for son Mark's wedding, Tom and Faith trying to figure out who stole \$10,000 from the pastor's discretionary fund, Amy's problems on bus/at school. Too many things going on.

Rebecca Talkie says

This is something like #19 in the Faith Fairchild series of books. I have probably read everyone of them and this one was the best overall. There actually was no body, it dealt with a death from the past as seen and recalled by an elderly woman. Yet, despite spending time in the past it was very much a book of this era with the current subjects of bullying, the financial collapse and safety on the Internet intertwined in the story. I could not put this book down and finished it in a day.

Kristin Aasheim says

I was a little disappointed as this is the first I have read of her books. The narration was a bit awkward and didn't really flow. The Pix narration just didn't have enough substance and felt unnecessary. I'm moving on to another author. Not sure if I'd try another book at this point. Also, hated the forced use of slang from the early era. Too much going on from too many places. In addition, there were several editing errors in my edition. Distracting and made the book feel amateurish.

Martha Cheves says

The Body in the Gazebo – Review by Martha A. Cheves, Author of Stir, Laugh, Repeat

'Where could she hid it? It wouldn't do to have her daughter come across it. Not that Pix was nosy, but she sometimes put Ursula's wash away, so the Sheraton chest of drawers was out. And the blanket chest at the foot of the bed that had been her grandmother's was out, too. Pix regularly aired the contents. There wasn't much furniture in the room. Some years after Arnold died, Ursula had removed his marble-topped nightstand – the repository of books, eyeglasses, reading lamp, alarm clock, and eventually pill bottles – replacing it with a chaise and small candlestick table, angled into the room It felt wrong to go into bed during the day, but she wanted a place to stretch out to read and, increasingly, to nap. Somehow the chase made her feel a bit more like a grande dame than an old one. There was a nightstand on her side of the bed, but her granddaughter, Samantha, often left little notes in the drawer and might notice the envelope. Ursula always saved the notes – bits of poetry Samantha liked or just a few words, "Have sweet dreams, Granny." Generally Ursula did. Her days had been good ones and she felt blessed. Arnold, the two children, although Arnold junior lived in Santa Fe and she only saw him and his wife during the summer in Maine and on her

annual visit out there. Three grandchildren, all healthy and finding their ways without too much difficulty so far. But you never know what life will hand you. She stood up, chiding herself. The six words – “Are you sure you were right?” – had entered her system like a poison, seeping into the very marrow of her bones and replacing her normal optimism with dark thoughts.’

Ursula Rowe has a problem. Someone is sending her notes pertaining to something that happened years before when her brother Theo was still alive. The notes threaten to tell her family about Theo whom her family doesn’t even know existed. When she was young, her parents never talked about him and Ursula never found the right time to tell her own family that she had a brother. This is something she can’t handle alone so she decides to solicit the help of her daughter Pix’s best friend Faith Fairchild.

Faith finds Ursula’s story quite intriguing and will do whatever needs to be done to help but she too is faced with her own family problems. Her husband, the Reverend Tom Fairchild has been “accused” in so many words, of dipping his hand into one of the church funds. It appears that there is \$10,000.00 missing and only he has access to the account. As for Pix, she has gone to Charleston to meet her son’s new in-laws and help plan for the wedding. But she adds to Faith’s building plate of problems by admitting that she recognized the bride’s father. He turns out to be someone she met while in college and that the over a weekend party, the 2 got to know each other “very” well. Problem is, she recognized him but he apparently didn’t recognize her.

So in *The Body in the Gazebo*, I found Faith with her plate full in trying to solve everyone’s problems as well as comfort those who needed comforting. But, being the true friend and the creative person she is, she can handle just about anything. See, she isn’t like her husband, seeing only the good in people. And that’s just part of what made *The Body in the Gazebo* such a fun read. Oh, did I forget to tell you, Faith is also a caterer? Throughout the book you will find her preparing different dishes for different events with the treat of the recipes for her dishes being given at the end of the book! Being a cook myself, this made a good read even better.

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HarperCollins

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Review Stir, Laugh, Repeat at Amazon.com Stir, Laugh, Repeat

Tracey says

A bit more to this is on my blog.

I received the hardcover of *The Body in the Gazebo* as a LibraryThing Early Reader book, and I was tickled - I've liked Katherine Hall Page's Faith Fairchild series from the beginning. It's one of several "cozy mystery" series about a caterer or chef who keeps finding bodies and solving the attached mysteries, and then after you find out who dunnit you can apply yourself to the recipes in the back of the book. (I always wonder with these series, though, why characters like Faith Fairchild or Goldy Schulz or [insert cozy hero/ine here] don't see friends and family go screaming away from them; would you really want to be friends with someone who seems to (sometimes literally) stumble over a body every six months?)

The jacket art is very attractive, but odd; I don't know what the red-and-white-check tablecloth is supposed to represent. It makes it look as though Faith opens an Italian restaurant, or goes on a picnic.

I like the series ... but I don't like Faith that much. She is, avowedly and proudly, a snob. Any food which costs less than one of my hours' pay, or clothing which costs less than one of my weeks' pay, is beneath her, and it's annoying and extremely unattractive. And she's **still** stunned that she can bring herself to live in this tiny provincial place.

Besides that snobbery - an irritation that is not unique to Faith among fictional characters - this was a well-done mystery with a very different slant. There is a body, but Faith isn't the one to stumble over it here, and in fact it's a body long gone to dust before she was born. As Faith's best friend and neighbor Pix frantically prepares for her son's wedding and the two-week-long gathering his soon-to-be in-laws have arranged for the two families, her mother (Ursula) falls abruptly, alarmingly ill. Faith promises to help look after her while Pix is gone, which is one of the only reasons Pix goes - and almost as soon as Pix is gone, her mother begins to unfold a story to Faith, looking for her help. It is a secret, even from Pix and her brother, which has been dormant for decades - and isn't anymore. Intertwined with the old murder story is a current mystery involving funds missing from a church account to which only Faith's minister husband Tom has access, along with a smaller but still personally important mystery involving a person from Pix's past at the wedding.

The storytelling is excellent. The interludes of Ursula's story drew me in, and I would honestly have enjoyed staying there for the whole book; Ursula as a girl was engaging, and that story was terrific. It's fascinating to see how Katherine Hall Page has grown as a storyteller from the first Faith Fairchild mystery, which was very much in the frothy cozy vein; later books like *Gazebo* show greater depth and almost, at times, poetry. (I wonder if KHP has written anything in a different vein under a different name. I'd like to see it.) However I feel in general about Faith, I love her marriage to Tom. The problems they have had in past books have been believable and painful, and I like them much better than I do her. I like Faith's assistants, and I like Pix, though she carries some cliches with her. Actually, many of the characters and situations carry along some been-there-done-that baggage, which is one reason I like the Fairchild marriage so much: it feels genuine.

The reason I rate this at three and a half stars instead of higher has quite a bit to do with said cliches, and the tiresome repetition that series like this can't seem to manage to avoid: in each book there is a certain set of touchstones which have to be included, such as a synopsis of the first book, and the story of how Faith got to where she is as a caterer and as a minister's wife in Aleford, and brief summaries of any other books that are touched upon in the current story. Some of these are more necessary than others, and I'm sure I'm wrong when I grumble that the wording is always the same. There just has to be a better way than this infodump. The main reason, though, for the less than very high rating has a great deal to do with part of the climax. Melodramatic and over the top, it felt absurd, and as though it had been dropped in from another book (either an earlier one in this series, from which it felt very familiar, or ... Robert Ludlum or something). Pity; I enjoyed most of the rest quite a lot.

Terri says

Two separate mysteries dominate this book. In the present, Faith's husband has been accused of embezzling from the Church's discretionary fund and at the same time, her friend Pix's mother is telling her of a mystery in her own past.

I really enjoyed the pre and post depression era descriptions in Ursula's story. The contrast of past and

present as well keep me engrossed.

A fun fast read

Melissa says

Not really a mystery, and far too much fluff.

Julie Trapp says

When Faith's husband, the minister, is accused of the theft of money from the church. She must try and clear his name along with solving a decades old murder involving her best friend's mother, Ursula Rowe. As usual, there are recipes in the back. The book had a very slow start, and was not riviting. Enjoyable read for a rainy afternoon.

Mckenzie says

Slow book, seemed like the story lines jumped which was confusing. The part that could have been exciting was only a few pages.

Shana says

This is this first book that I've ever read in the Faith Fairchild Mystery series. You should have no trouble getting to know the characters even if you haven't read another of this series. It wasn't difficult to get to know Faith, Tom, Pix, Ursula, Niki and the other various characters in Aleford. I couldn't wait to start reading this because, the cover intrigued me, the mystery described was in the 1920's & it sounded really interesting.

Honestly, I had to really make myself keep reading this book through the first 100 pages. Throughout these first 100 pages the main mystery (Ursula's story) was barely touched on. Those first pages were mainly about Pix and her son's upcoming marriage and meeting her soon to be son's in-laws. It felt like the author was trying to provide too much information on a few of the characters for people who hadn't read this series before. After reading so many details about Pix's soon to be son's in-laws and the upcoming wedding plans I felt like it was a bit of an information overload. I kept wondering "where's more of Ursula's story?". After the first 100 pages Ursula's story picks up the pace and it kept me interested and wanting to read on.

In this book there's basically 3 other subplots going on at the same time of Ursula's story (the main mystery). There's an embezzlement found at the church where Faith's hubbie Tom is pastor, Pix's son's marriage and her knowing her son's soon to be father-in-law and Faith's assistant Niki's pregnancy that she has been hiding from her husband. The story kept going from present-to-past and story-to-story, sometimes all in one chapter. In my opinion, I think this book would've been better with just one subplot or just sticking to Ursula's story.

Also, at times the main character Faith seems to be a bit of a snob. At times she talks as though that anyone who is less financially blessed than her or anyone less educated is a tasteless clod. Of which, she at times prides herself on. Of course many of the suspects are poor, uneducated, have filthy homes and have "bad taste". I found it odd since she was a pastor's wife.'

Overall, it's still a good cozy type mystery which, after the first 100 pages was pretty interesting. Ursula's story was great and the descriptions of the old homes and the traditions of that era were really well done. Also, there's some tasty recipes included in the book. I really enjoyed this book when Ursula's story was being told. I'd probably read another of this series but, only if I stumble upon one.

Diane S ? says

A cozy mystery and a series I have read for years. Enjoyed it!

Carol says

Sometimes a mystery does not to be a page turner to be enjoyed. Katherine Hall Page, the author had several spinning plates in the air at the same time with this story. The sleuth in this story is Faith Fairchild. I haven't read any of the previous books of this series so this is a new experience for me.

Faith Fairchild 's long time friend, Pix, is going to her son's wedding party and rehearsals and she feels unsure of herself. Another friend of Faith's, Niki, told her that she just found out that she was pregnant and didn't want to tell her husband. Faith's husband has a big problem of his own. There is \$10,000 missing from the church's discretionary fund. Will he loose his job?

To top it all, Pix's mother, Ursula, is compelled to tell Faith a richly detailed story that include family secrets and also requires action from Faith! It was this story that drew me in the most. This family tale goes from just before the Great Depression to Depression. It includes important facts unknown to even Pix, her daughter. Since I love historical fiction this really hooked me. I was struck by telling of differences in living situations that the Great Depression made to the rich socialites. The setting was mostly, Martha's Vineyard and Aleford. Martha's Vineyard is very different from Aleford, both in the beauty of the physical surroundings and the feeling of the place.

The whole book is fairly light and entertaining but it also whets my interest for more books set in the time period of what I call Ursula's family story. I must say that I am glad that I am not Faith Fairchild and I wonder in the other books in the series, doesn't she always have too much on her plate? This is so ironic because I wondered while I was reading, why are there plates on the cover of the book and only a cut off portion of the gazebo that is in the title. Now I understand.

I recommend this book to all who love light mysteries.

I received this book as part of the Amazon Vine program but that in no way influenced my review. My thoughts are my own.

Jenny says

Another cozy Faith Fairchild mystery but a few things I didn't get:

1. Why was the main story backlogged till the end of the book? I felt like we didn't even get to the "good" part until 50 pages before the end!
2. What was the point of the story about Pix and Dr. Cohen? I really didn't care, especially when it was clear it wasn't going to tie into things at all.
3. On that same token, I didn't like that the narrative shifted so unevenly. I feel like this is becoming a common theme in authors' books and unless it's consistent and for a purpose, it's a big fat no-no. (We didn't really need Niki's perspective just that one time.)

Otherwise, it was great! I liked seeing Patsy again since the most recent Faith Fairchild I read featured her prominently. Plus, it's always fun to read about a city in which I live and work!

Tanya says

I so enjoy books with flashbacks and this book could have had more but Ursula's telling of what she saw as a child while hidden near the gazebo one fateful night was a terrific base plot for this mystery. There were a few substories in the book which seemed unnecessary and distracted the reader from the main one but at the very end all was told. I've always wanted to try some of the author's recipes and the Rum Cake recipe given sure sounds tempting!!

Shannon says

Want to read the whole series now!
