



## I Shall Not Want

*Julia Spencer-Fleming*

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## **I Shall Not Want** Julia Spencer-Fleming

*Millers Kill reaches the boiling point in this white-hot novel of love and suspense*

People die. Marriages fail. In the small Adirondack town of Millers Kill, New York, however, life doesn't stop for heartbreak. A brand-new officer in the police department, a breaking-and-entering, and trouble within his own family keep Police Chief Russ Van Alstyne busy enough to ignore the pain of losing his wife--and the woman he loves.

At St. Alban's Episcopal Church, the Reverend Clare Fergusson is trying to keep her vestry, her bishop, and her National Guard superiors happy---all the while denying her own wounded soul.

When a Mexican farmhand stumbles over a Latino man killed with a single shot to the back of his head, Clare is sucked into the investigation through her involvement in the migrant community. The discovery of two more bodies executed in the same way ignites fears that a serial killer is loose in the close-knit community. While the sorrowful spring turns into a scorching summer, Russ is plagued by media hysteria, conflict within his department, and a series of baffling assaults.

As the violence strikes closer and closer to home, an untried officer is tested, a wary migrant worker is tempted, and two would-be lovers who thought they had lost everything must find a way to trust each other again---before it becomes forever, fatally, too late.

Julia Spencer-Fleming shows you can escape danger---but not desire---in her most suspenseful, passionate novel yet, *I Shall Not Want*.

## **I Shall Not Want Details**

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Author : Julia Spencer-Fleming

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## From Reader Review I Shall Not Want for online ebook

### Shala Howell says

This series just keeps getting better and better. I like that it's set in a part of the country that I am familiar with (upstate New York), but mostly I kept reading and reading these (all six in ~ a week), because I loved the story of Russ & Clare. Very realistic behavior on all sides from some really well-drawn characters, which made for an engaging story. And it helped that the story plays out over the course of some pretty good mysteries (although I often guessed the solutions before they happened, oh well). Read them anyway if you like to mingle romance with your detective's work.

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### Katie says

[I do think it was well done. One thing that impresses me about this series how Clare and Russ just getting drawn back together, no matter what they do. It makes it feel like a kind of fate. Not the overwrought kind of fate, but just . . . that this is meant to be.

I guess some of what I didn't like about this series is that it started off with Russ getting shot and that just felt like TOO M

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### Hallie says

Honestly, I'm not sure it makes any sense at all to give books in this series ratings, as I'm far too hand-wavey and stammering and emotionally overwrought (to use Melissa/Jacob's description) for deliberation. Also, I need to qualify a metric cr\*p-load of things. (Okay, so anyone reading this will know I've opted for a 4 star rating, but the paragraph above was written before that!)

Some of that hand-waving indecisiveness relates to the fact that I find the books - and this one in particular - an incredibly odd mixture of engaging characters over whom I appear to lose all ability for rational thought, real emotional wisdom and some of the more egregious authorial manipulation I've come across (in books I haven't abandoned in disgust). As usual I'll write in fairly general terms with only the odd line or two behind spoilers for a bit, and then go behind a proper cut for the rest. *Safeish* review in other words, but not if you've only read the first book, or none.

As I said in my review of book 5, a huge problem I had with that book was brought front-and-centre by a wonderful minor character on page 23 of this book, and that redeemed a lot of things for me. It returns on page 287 (of my St Martin's Paperbacks copy, anyway), though it's Clare saying what has been said to her. And it's painful for all concerned but *necessary* - has to be said, to be named, because if Clare can't manage to be honest with herself, she'll never manage to get beyond it. Or anything. That was fine, except then we had a bit of the authorial manipulation that I found excessive on two counts (view spoiler) It made me roll my eyes, but more than that too, and it seems to me that the author doesn't need to pull what started to feel like cheap, almost exploitative moves, when the books are so powerful already.

Just because I'm willing to share about how admirable my consistency is, however, I'll admit that I got to the little bombshell very near the end (view spoiler) and actually burst out laughing. Leaving aside the fact that I'm just stupid about this series, I think it didn't bother me at all because I felt enough resolution about the

central relationship arc at this point (it's not total, as I'll explain when I write up book 7, but it's enough) not to worry. In which I was both right and deeply wrong, but that's another day's reviewing.

Just a few other things though. I was a bit disappointed that Elizabeth didn't develop as a character to anything like the extent that Father Aberforth had, but from completely out of left field, we got Kevin, who made up for that lack. Kevin's been just a gangly, overeager kid at the police department all along, although Russ's saying that he's not surprised some dogs attacked Kevin since he's a human Irish setter cracked me up. The first hint that he was going to be someone with a good deal more in-depth characterisation came during the unnecessary bit of manipulation/melodrama, which was almost worth it just for the brief glimpse of him (view spoiler). The aftermath of that event was very surprising in a really lovely, gentle way and then he kept on showing how he'd matured, and how good a person he is. I also got my quota of really funny scenes/lines (view spoiler), and if I'm not totally convinced by the mystery plot to this one, it's not the worst by any means.

And behind the spoiler... (view spoiler)

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### **erforscherin says**

That's it, it's official, the shark has been jumped - repeat, the shark has been jumped. This series isn't even bothering with believability anymore and has fully embraced its true soap opera nature... which, oddly enough, might have actually improved the crack-filled trainwreck-ness of the whole thing. Somewhere around the halfway mark I finally cracked and started brainstorming a list of all the possible soap opera twists that might happen; by the end I was pleasantly surprised to see that a few of them were already in play. ((view spoiler))

I think I need a break from this series for a little while - man cannot live on fluff alone, and I've definitely overdosed on this particular flavor - but I think I'll stash away this bingo card of soap opera tropes. I have a feeling it might come in handy the next time the Snowpocalypse rolls around...

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### **melissa says**

I had severe let down. I don't know if it's because my expectations were so high, after the other one was so good, or if I was just in a different mind space, or if I could predict where it was going as I had read the author before, but this one fell short for me. Or maybe it's because I have read Harlan Coben, who tends to do a lot a similar things in his books, but more so.

Now with that said, I do like Russ and Clare, but am getting a bit tired of the push/pull between them. I liked that a lot of my old favorite characters were there, and well and short visits from past ones. I like Hadley and hope she sticks around. We finally got some edge of my seat moments near the end, and I like that it was a humorous ending, although I'm not sure it fit with the rest of the book. There was pay off in the end, but it felt like me to be a lot of work to get there. I'm glad I did though, otherwise I would have been very discouraged. It made it worth my time investment.

I like the dialog, internal as well as between the characters. I like that we got to see EVERYONES point of view, from the main characters, to minor characters. I think that it could have been done very well (and easier for the author) from just the two points of view of the main characters, but the fact that there was more really added layers to the story.

Will I read anymore of this series? I don't know. I didn't think I would read this one, and I did, so who knows?

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## **Lourdes Venard says**

(Warning: Spoiler below for those who haven't read the previous book)

It's been two months since the accident that killed Russ Van Alstyne wife, and he and the Rev. Clare Fergusson haven't spoken in all that time. But then an accident involving undocumented Mexican migrants brings them together, and soon they are solving a string of deaths. Meanwhile, a new character, Hadley Knox, is introduced -- one that Spencer-Fleming has said may spin off into another series. Spencer-Fleming manages to pair a controversial topic -- illegal immigrants -- with a trio of love stories, the main one, of course, being the relationship between Clare and Russ. The author, however, isn't done with the Clare and Russ story -- this book ends on another cliffhanger.

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## **Ann says**

I admit that I took this one out of order. I've read 4 in the series and wanted book #5 on CD for my car trip, but it wasn't available at my library, so I took #6. So obviously, there was a surprise in store in this one! I love the very real way the relationship between Clare and Russ has played out over this series and hope it continues to do so (in other words, I hope this isn't the last book!). The supporting characters were all very real and well developed (go, Kevin! who's the man?) and the mystery was decent. I like the way the story was constructed, too. Instead of a slow introduction and build-up, the author hits us with a gut punch right at the beginning, then goes back to explain how everyone got there, making the reader wonder the whole time if it really is going to turn out the way it seems.

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## **Kathy says**

As a great series should do, each book in the Clare Fergusson/Russ Van Alstyne series gives something new in the progression of the story line of the characters. Of course, with Clare and Russ there are always ups and downs that drive the reader crazy, too. Crazy in a good way, though. In this latest tale, there is a new cop on the force, Hadley Knox, somebody is killing Latino men, and Clare has joined the National Guard. After discussions with her bishop, Clare and he decided that there were some issues she still needed to work out concerning her calling, and being in the Guard would help her. Her duties as a priest are to be carried on, but she has her new deacon, Elizabeth de Groot, continuing to help her. The deacon, introduced in the last book, is proving to be a mixed blessing. Clare and Russ have much personally to deal with in this story, after the traumatic events of All Mortal Flesh, the previous novel. The search for a killer or killers involves illegal drugs, a growing migrant community, and a law-skirting local trio of brothers. There is suspense, tragedy, and desire aplenty in this latest hot book from Julia Spencer-Fleming. My reviews have gotten somewhat shorter simply because I am fairly chomping at the bit to begin the next book.

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## Sonia Cristina says

[Depois de 3 anos difíceis, que tiveram de impedir-se de estar juntos, de recalcar os

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## Jennifer says

I love this series beyond all reason, on so many levels. The character development, the emotional depth--which makes these stories more engaging than most romance novels I've read--the sincere spirituality, the thrilling mysteries . . . it's always a pleasure to return to Millers Kill and see what's happening with Russ and Clare and the rest of the gang. (Also, I desperately want a bumper sticker like Clare's: 'Jesus is Coming: Look Busy'.)

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## Carol says

Moving right along on the Clare/Fergusson/Russ Van Alstyne Mysteries with number 6, *I Shall Not Want* chalked off.

At the end of number five the ongoing affair of the two main characters, Priest Fergusson and Chief Van Alstyne came literally to a dead stop. We knew or we hoped we knew this couldn't be so as the sexual tension of these two is what brings many readers back. We are not disappointed. The beat goes on.

By now I sort of know what I'm going to get in this series, a mystery that will be solved in a town I'm familiar with and characters I'm getting to know. Comfortable. A nice book for a long winter's afternoon read. I enjoyed the addition of a new character, Hadley Knox, a divorced mother of two who comes to Millers Kill with no job plan but soon joins the force. I hope Spencer-Fleming fleshes this character and the issues she faces as the only female on the team a bit more. The author has already given her a love interest in the character of "*In Like Flynn*" (Kevin), several years her junior. Not certain yet what I think about this coupling. I also found the subject, illegal Mexican workers in this Adirondack community, interesting and always timely. I tend to think of these men and women in our border towns, forgetting they are everywhere trying to eek out a living. Drugs, immigration legalities, a small town over-burdened police department, and the continued story of church and law are entertaining.

I continue to enjoy this light faith based series, its hymnal quotes, chapter titles referring to religious holidays, quick passages from the bible or gospels, liturgy and psalms and the quest of the characters to understand how God plays a part in their lives.

(view spoiler)

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## James Glass says

This is another great story from Julia Spencer-Fleming. When chief of police, Russ Van Alstyne's sister and brother-in-law buy a farm, they decide to hire some Mexicans to help with the work. But the van the workers

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are in crashes. Upon arrival at the scene, only two in the van load have remained due to they are illegals. Several days later, the body of a Mexican is discovered on the outskirts of Chief Alstyne's sisters farm. The autopsy reveals the person to be a male with a gunshot wound to the back of the head. On a Sunday afternoon, a three year old walks off from the Eucharist being held by Clare Fergusson and the church. As a search party sets out to find the boy, two more bodies are discovered in shallow graves. As the search for the killer or killers is launched, a roller sister ride will keep the reader guessing as to who done it and why.

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### **Melissa McShane says**

I am *so* glad I went directly to this book after *All Mortal Flesh*, because after the trauma that one inflicted on me, I really needed the payoff in this one. The mystery isn't very good; it limps along a little, and again it's Spencer-Fleming's characterization that saves it, because it's hard not to cheer for Amado and Octavio and Isabel even if the plot surrounding them is a little too mundane to be captivating. Once again, it's all about Russ and Clare, their relationship in broken shards after the events of the previous book, and again, it's almost too much drama to be real. (view spoiler) Watching them tiptoe around each other, trying to work out where they both stand, is painful and sweet, and the ending is extremely satisfying. (view spoiler)

There's some good character development with some of the secondary characters, particularly Kevin Flynn, who truly is a human Irish setter, but turns out to be far more than that. I also liked Hadley, first female addition to the MKPD, and how she deals with being a woman on an all-male force as well as being a single mom and someone who isn't totally sure she wants to be a cop--her conversation with Russ on applying for the job is great. (view spoiler)

Bigger spoiler: (view spoiler)

Another spoiler: (view spoiler)

All things considered, though, I loved this book--probably more than it deserved, but ultimately I care more about Clare and Russ than I do about the mysteries. I'm looking forward to seeing what happens when (view spoiler)

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### **Diane says**

Just not what I wanted to read right now. Should remember to read the description more closely instead of just picking books with bright colors on the cover.

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### **Jocelyn says**

Drug wars in Millers Kill, New York! Will Russ and Clare be among the casualties?

Two young couples are having extra-marital sex! Will Russ and Clare make it three?

My hat is off to Julia Spencer-Fleming. She has gauged her audience. She has hit her stride. Well-paced action; witty dialogue (and one really funny scene near the end); sexual tension that gets played for all it's

worth; courageous and capable women with courageous and capable men. Kind of like Janet Evanovich but without the crudity. And with values, like honesty, forgiveness, and love. Not to mention stupidity -- because, without characters doing stupid things, it wouldn't be much of a story, would it?

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## Martha says

mom LOVES this series - sophisticated mysteries with spiritual themes and great characters

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## Red says

Aaah! ...and they're back! I was ready to quit this series, but no need. Everything that was missing in *All Mortal Flesh* is back in spades. In fact, *I Shall Not Want* almost swung too far in the other direction. The mystery was a little on the light side. So much so, that someone (publisher? editor? probably not the author) pulled the most action packed chapter from its normal place in the progression of the story, and made it the first chapter, then prefaced the rest of the story with "6 Months Earlier." All that did for me was make me wonder every couple of chapters how much longer until we got to the big drama. What would have been an edge of the seat nail-biter with a shocking conclusion of a chapter, was instead relegated to a "coming attractions trailer". Instead of the story building, building, building until it exploded in our faces, we got to the top of the precipice only to find a chain-link fence 10 yards from the edge with some postcards clipped to it, saying, never mind, you've already seen it all. Not the least bit satisfying, as far as story flow goes.

On the plus side, all of the emotional character development that we've been craving and and only been given glimpses of in the last few novels was spread out for us like a smorgasbord. Fabulous and delicious, extremely satisfying!

While I've been reading this series I started casting the characters.

Clare Fergusson: a younger Sigorney Weaver

Russ Van Alstyne: Russell Crow  
[image error]

Margie Van Alstyne: Debra Mooney

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## Abby says

Read this in just a few, short days. After the trainwreck of an ending in the previous book, I needed a break from Russ & Clare. I was caring too much about them. They're fictional characters for goodness sake! Yet I devour these books and laugh and cry along with them, page by page, as though they were living, breathing friends.

There have been many books and characters that have stuck with me though the years, but very few are the ones who I think might actually be real. Russ and Clare fit into that latter category and it's a huge testament

to the writing strength of Julia Spencer-Fleming.

In this latest installment, Russ and Clare have been studiously avoiding each other after the horrific incident that split them apart. Both nursing some pretty serious emotional wounds, you wonder if they can ever get beyond it. I'll admit, it seems pretty hopeless at first.

When Clare gets drawn into the plight of migrant workers and then "random" acts of violence begin happening to these men, Russ and Clare are thrown back together (again) and the body count starts rising (again).

Even though this is old hat for JSF, she makes it feel new. The raw emotion between Russ and Clare makes you weep in empathy, anger and frustration with them, as they are all too human.

The ending is less of a cliff-hanger than before, but whoa damn, it still leaves me hungering for the next installment.

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## **Sarah says**

I LOVE THESE BOOKS.

Such satisfying mystery and romance, set in a totally believable portrayal of a small, rural town. This one involved Hispanic farmhands without the proper paperwork (i.e. illegal migrant workers) working on dairy farms, and I found myself going "yes!" multiple times as Spencer-Fleming got the dynamics of that situation right.\* Add it together with fantastic characterization – her female characters are especially strong and believable – and the alternately frustrating and rewarding relationship between the two main characters, and wow! I love these books!

And it doesn't hurt that it made me laugh out loud more than once. For example:

Finally she said, "Thank you, God," and staggered to her feet. It felt like she'd been worked over with a lead pipe. Her poor car was totaled. Another one. She lifted her eyes to the hills. From whence my help cometh. USAA was going to cancel her. Her parishioners would start calling her the Reverend Stephanie Plum.

Hee! I know allusions to popular culture frustrate some people, and can date the work, but I don't really care, since I'm reading this contemporary to its publishing. So I will laugh, laugh, laugh at the idea of Clare Fergusson being called Reverend Stephanie Plum.

Though, I do have to say, living in an area that's pretty similar to Millers Kill, that these guys are way over their quota for really grisly murders. It's starting to get a little *Murder, She Wrote* up in there. Why do people keep coming to Millers Kill? Why do people keep inviting Jessica Fletcher places? Dead people everywhere!

I totally recommend these to people who like mysteries or people who like angst romance or people who like believable stories about rural towns/farm communities or people who like stories about believable, realistic characters. There's so much about this series that is appealing! Definitely read the first book, though: *All Mortal Flesh* and continue from there. They're not really stand alones, as a lot of the development of the characters over the course of the series would be lost, and the real appeal here is the characterization, not the

mysteries.

\*There were a couple times where the Spanish the characters were speaking seemed *wrong* to me, but I'm not sure if that was intentional awkwardness on the part of the Spanish-as-a-second-language characters, or if it was just me being a dummy.

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## **Jenne says**

Well, I finally caught up to the latest book in the series, and I can't believe I'm going to have to wait (how long???) to find out what happens next.

This was BY FAR the best one yet--what can I say, I'm a hopeless romantic, and especially a sucker for a bittersweet happy ending.

I also liked the Stephanie Plum reference--just what I was thinking.

ETA: I had to come back and say that I was thinking about it and the relationship in this series is basically the opposite of everything that drives me insane about the Stephenie Meyer books.

These people are adults, and have REAL reasons why they fall in love with each other, and REAL obstacles to being together, and actually behave in BELIEVABLE (and occasionally stupid) ways like REAL PEOPLE WOULD.

Sorry for the all caps; Stephenie just seems to bring it out in me.

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