



# The Body in the Cast

*Katherine Hall Page*

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Hollywood has come to town -- and Faith Fairchild has to feed it! Hired to cater meals for the movie crew that is filming a modernday version of *The Scarlet Letter* in the tiny New England village of Aleford, Faith is eager to treat the talented tantrum-throwers to the best of her culinary delights. But an accusation that her famous Black Bean Soup is poison has left a bad taste in Faith's mouth. Her exploration into the source of the nasty slander leads the amateur investigator behind the scenes to a shocking off-camera murder. And suddenly more than Faith's reputation is at stake -- her life itself could end up on the cutting room floor.

## The Body in the Cast Details

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Author : Katherine Hall Page

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### Nikki says

As *The Body in the Cast* opens, Faith Fairchild is back in Aleford, Mass. with her second child, baby Amy, safely born, and her catering business getting up and running again. It's a stroke of good fortune for her that an eccentric director has chosen Aleford as the location for his updated version of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and Faith gets the catering contract. Meanwhile, a local political race is keeping things humming among the townspeople. As misfortunes, some of them culinary, begin to bedevil the production, Faith must investigate to protect her business. Plot and subplot are woven together neatly, but not too neatly, and the character flaws of the villains lead to their undoing. I enjoyed the setting in a New England town which seemed very familiar, and the description of the film-making process rang true. I'm looking forward to more of Faith Fairchild's adventures.

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### Joan says

Faith is hired to do the food for a birthday party for a once famous Broadway producer. All the people who were involved in his last show twenty years ago, which was a colossal flop, will be there. Although Faith has misgivings about the project, she is offered a very large sum of money and she is curious to see the gorgeous mansion on a secluded property.

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### Jason says

I Had a hard time getting into the swing of this book, but once I did I really enjoyed it.

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### Nolan says

Ah, the joys of election time in a small New England town. All that energy and excitement can be overshadowed by only one thing—the making of a movie. This is a fun book where a New England town, an election, and the making of a movie come together in some, well, delectably murderous ways. Perhaps I should explain:

Faith Fairchild has been asked to cater for a movie company that has come to her small community to remake Hawthorne's classic *The Scarlet Letter*. Among those working for the company is a female high-school bully who had made Faith's life rather miserable during those years. Of course, many of the people in town are asked to play extra parts, and there's an election in the offing, too, which promises to be controversial indeed.

Early on, cast members suffer from food poisoning, very nearly ruining forever Faith's reputation and that of her fledgling catering company. But the food poisoning is nothing compared to the shocking murder of a 20-something-year-old girl who was hired initially to be a gopher but who proved she had just enough of an erotic look to be more than a little appealing on camera.

Surprisingly enough, the author drops the F-bomb in here a couple of times, and when one character engages

in excessive use of profanity, it's rather amateurishly done. That may have been the author's intent to demonstrate the instability of the character, but it made me feel as if I were eavesdropping on a playground in the '70s and the loud-mouthed bossy girl was heaving forth profanity by the mouthful. It just seemed a bit jarring and out of place for this series.

The series is rather formulaic; yet again, Faith's life is endangered, and she's forced to promise poor Tom, her husband, that she won't do that kind of thing again—but the next book in the series is buried on my hard drive somewhere, so we know how that promise turns out.

Still, it's a fun, albeit predictable, mystery. The magic of this series for me isn't so much the mystery as the characterization of Faith herself. The author skillfully writes the character such that your heart instinctively goes out to her. She is immensely likable and so realistically portrayed that you're pretty sure you could hear her voice and be captivated by her charm and propensity to both common sense and frilly things simultaneously.

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### **Sherry says**

BK 5 in Faith Fairchild series finds her winning the catering contract for the film shoot of A, a modern retelling of Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*. The town of Aleford is taken over by the egocentric director, cast, crew and all the extras, amid hotly contested election for town selectman. True to form Faith is in the thick of it from her Black Bean soup laced with Chocox, while trying to cater to all the diverse personalities, amid jealousy, lust, lies and nasty little tricks that turn lethal, and she trips over the bodies. Love the sly, dry humor and literary allusions that spice up the engaging writing.

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### **Heather Withington says**

1.5 stars. Such a shame as I loved the *Body in the Ivy* which was my first dive into the Faith Fairchild series but this one was tedious and I found it a slog to get through. I could not engage with the story, and the solution(s) are fairly obvious throughout. I also hated one of the reveals about one of the victims, as it seemed to come from left field and was not, I felt, dealt with in an appropriate manner. I thought it was put in for shock value and then brushed under the carpet when it could have been used so much better in this plot. The reasoning behind the why was also a disappointment.

However, I will say that it was nice to read about Faith and Tom again, I love their relationship and characters. I also liked the addition of the recipes at the end. I shall be trying more in this series and hope that the books go back to the *Body in the Ivy* level.

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### **Vickie says**

I enjoy the heck out of reading cozies, especially well written ones like the ones I've read in this series. I have chosen to continue reading them out of order and it hasn't diminished my enjoyment. Faith Fairchild is the wife of a minister, mother to two adorable younguns, owner and head chef of a catering firm, *Have Faith*. And she still finds time to stumble over dead bodies and mysteries galore in the small town of Aleford, Massachusetts.

This episode has Faith hired to cater the film crew of a possible blockbuster movie, A, based on THE SCARLET LETTER - Nathaniel Hawthorne. The town of Aleford is abuzz with the excitement of movie stars, a big named director and the local election heating things up.

Faith also has to contend with the possibility of having her catering business closed down due to some of the cast members suffering from food poisoning after having some of Faith's Black Bean Soup (recipe included in back of the book).

This is a nicely tight book with interesting characters that I liked and some I loathed just like I was supposed to.

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### **Sara Eames says**

I quite enjoy the Faith Fairchild mysteries but, unfortunately, this wasn't one of the best - it was let down (in my opinion) by the solution to the murder, which I found somewhat rushed and far-fetched. However, the characters were well-written and, for the most part, the plot was enjoyable. I will continue to read these mysteries.

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### **Julie Trapp says**

Faith has started up her catering business she had in NYC. She has been chosen to cater for the production crew of a movie being filmed in Aleford. The director is world famous. After a mysterious fire, a laxative being "added" to a dish, someone dying after eating her black bean soup, she starts to investigate also. Added to this is a local election in which half siblings are running for the same office. One is killed, the sibling disappears and Faith is up to her elbows in another investigation. She is still focused on brand names in clothing, shoes, everything that could possibly have a brand name. A bit snobby for a minister's wife.

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### **Theresa says**

Faith actually liked her children this time, which was good, and I just found it more interesting and to the point this time.

Note: I've read this entire series up to The Body in the Attic, and the best rating I've given any of them is 2 stars, which is sad and says a lot about the series. I kept reading because it really has potential but it never lives up to it, so save yourself the trouble and agony and try a different series, such as Carolyn Hart's Death On Demand series, most of which are fun and enjoyable, or stop after this one, which was probably the best of the series. That's my recommendation, anyway.

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### **Julie says**

I liked this one more than the previous installment, though the mystery was weak. Still, they are pleasant diversions when you are on a train for six hours!

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## Kathy Davie says

Fifth in the Faith Fairchild cooking mystery as this amateur sleuth investigates between catering jobs, family, and her minister husband.

### My Take

Well, duh, it took forever for me to figure out the relevance on the so-very obvious title! My first thoughts were broken arms, etc.

It's interesting but those shallow dips into the behind-the-scenes action of both the film and the campaign were ho-hum. Then the acceptance and rejection by John Dunne of Faith's detective abilities.

It's an enjoyable read, but not one of my favorites in the Faith Fairchild series.

### The Story

Have Faith up and running shortly after Amy's birth with a job catering to a movie crew shooting a new interpretation of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *Scarlet Letter*. With luck, Have Faith will survive those claims of poison!

A whole new can of worms opens up for the citizens of Aleford when an unexpected election is required.

### The Characters

**Faith Fairchild** has started up **Have Faith** now that **Amy** is born. **Ben** is her brother. **The Reverend Tom Fairchild** is Faith's husband.

**John Dunne** is a detective lieutenant with the state police force.

### The Title

The title is about the film crew when *The Body in the Cast* shows up.

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## Sheila says

I am enjoying this series.

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## Ivonne Rovira says

Faith Fairchild, caterer and wife of a New England minister, finds herself catering for a Hollywood update of Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* when a movie crew spends some weeks filming on location in Faith's village of Alesford, Massachusetts. The mystery is divided between the hijinks and hysterics of the Hollywood crowd and a local election for selectman. The resolution beggars belief, and some of the writing about the actors, director and crew veers into the cliché. I hope the next book in the series, *The Body in the Basement*, represents a return to author Katherine Hall Page's glory days.

The fifth installment in this clever cozy series is a bit more hackneyed than usual, but, a lackluster Faith Fairchild novel will still provide more fun than most of what else is out there. Still recommended.

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## **Andi says**

This series continues to get better and better. Nice that recipes are included now!

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