



## The Reluctant Detective

*Martha Ockley*

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) ➔

# The Reluctant Detective

*Martha Ockley*

## **The Reluctant Detective** Martha Ockley

Faith was a cop, and a good one. She and her boss (and boyfriend) Detective Inspector Ben Shorter tackled criminals and solved crimes across south-east England. They were a good team. But Faith grew disillusioned with Britain's tough police culture. As her disquiet grows, she starts to ask bigger questions - and ends up as a priest in the Church of England, a job from which she considers she can do more good than any police investigation. In the process she and Ben part company: he can't stand God-botherers, and she finds his convictions-at-any-cost attitude treads on too many vulnerable people. Faith may have quit the world of crime, but crime has not let her go. Newly ordained, she arrives in the village of Little Worthy, near Winchester, to look around the parish. Within an hour of her arrival she witnesses the sudden shocking death of a fellow priest. To her distress, the DI assigned to the case is Ben. At the Bishop's urging, Faith stays on to look after the improbably named parish of Little Worthy. As she meets her parishioners she learns some surprising details about her apparently well-loved predecessor, and starts to suspect a motive for his death. The cop may have donned a clerical collar, but the questions keep coming. How will she reconcile her present calling with her past instincts? Is she in danger herself? What should she do about Ben? Faith's adventures continue in *The Advent of Murder*. Watch out for further installments! Martha Ockley lives in the North-East of England and has close links with the church, having grown up as the daughter of a minister. She is a full-time author, writing both fiction and non-fiction.

## **The Reluctant Detective Details**

Date : Published November 19th 2014 by Lion Hudson (first published October 22nd 2010)

ISBN : 9781782640684

Author : Martha Ockley

Format : Paperback 256 pages

Genre : Mystery, Cozy Mystery, Christian Fiction, Fiction, Crime

 [Download The Reluctant Detective ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Reluctant Detective ...pdf](#)

**Download and Read Free Online The Reluctant Detective Martha Ockley**

---

# From Reader Review The Reluctant Detective for online ebook

## Penny says

This is the first in a series where Faith Morgan - a vicar in England and previously a police woman - gets swept up in a murder investigation in a little village near Winchester. To complicate matters the man leading the investigation is Faith's ex partner, Ben. They parted ways several years before following an investigation that went wrong - although this is not fully revealed. Faith appears to receive some kind of calling from God to leave her career and become a priest. This aspect of the book is somewhat 'fluffy' but it is difficult to write a believable and yet spiritual account of someone's relationship with God. I also found the repeated little asides to God throughout the text a bit off-putting.

There is an element of 'Vicar of Dibley' to start with. Faith is visiting an idyllic church in Little Worthy. The cast of characters, curators, church wardens, busybodies were all very familiar - and yet they are well done and feisty enough to draw us further in to the mystery. The romance between Faith and Ben is prickly and awkward and is left hanging which allows for further friction in the next book. Ben himself is supposedly good-looking and desirable if you go for the arrogant swagger type! Our Faith is a little more deep than this and is perhaps mature enough to want more than our Ben can give.

We get a fair bit of background with Faith's family - her sister and her nephew, and her mother. Presumably these characters will re-appear.

The mystery is fun, gentle and zips along. I guessed who did it but not too early on.

In all, this is a good starting episode of a series with some scope for development. I would like a little more grit and a little less romance but that's always the case with me.

This was sent to me by the publishers - my review is my own thoughts without any input from them.

---

## Stephen says

I read this book out of order. In it, British author Rebecca Jenkins, writing under the name of Martha Ockley for no apparent reason, introduces Faith Morgan -- a former police detective who has taken Holy Orders and is now a vicar in the Church of England. While it is customary to read the first one first, I happened to read the second in the series first and thought it wise to go back and see if I missed anything important by skipping the beginning. Faith Morgan comes to St James' Church in the rural village of Little Worthy near Winchester to assess the possibility of filling in for the vicar who is retiring. The beloved priest drops dead during the Sunday celebration of the Holy Eucharist. The former police officer detects the smell of poison in the chalice from which he has just drunk. And the pursuit is on. This is made all the more complex by the assignment of Faith's former lover as the principal police investigator in the case. The push and pull between her role as pastor and her role as detective is interestingly explored as is the push and pull between her heart and her head caused by her forced relationship with her ex. This is not "The Vicar of Dibley" but there are enough interesting and eccentric villagers to satisfy. A plain truth is that in villages everybody knows everybody else's business. The mystery is a cozy; there is nothing much in terms of blood and gore. One of the most interesting parts of the book is the manner in which Faith talks to and with God. It is the most realistic description of the sort of all-day every-day prayer with which I am most familiar that I have ever seen in fiction. The book is recommended for those to whom it sounds delightful.

---

## **Susan B says**

3.5 stars

---

## **Jill says**

Faith Morgan is a former cop turned preacher. A murder takes place while she is visiting her possible new church. Ex-boyfriend Ben is the lead detective on the case.

Much is alluded to on why they broke up but it is never fleshed out. Perhaps, the details will come in book two or three of the series. Set in the English countryside, the language in the book and general terms are sometimes quite different than American English. It took me a bit to get engrossed in the book; however, I am so glad I stuck with it. I like Faith and her struggle with the human side of faith and understanding God. I like how she deals with those in the church and those who are not believers.

I look forward to reading book two.

---

## **Damaskcat says**

This is the first book in a series of mysteries featuring Faith Morgan, former detective and now Church of England vicar. She is visiting the church at Little Worthy incognito as she has been offered the living, when the current incumbent collapses at the altar during the Eucharist. Faith immediately suspects foul play and insists that the police are summoned as well as an ambulance. The vicar has been murdered.

Faith finds herself in contact again with DI Ben Shorter, a former colleague and lover with whom she split up acrimoniously when she decided she wanted to be ordained. She is also torn two ways in wanting to protect her flock and also investigate the crime.

I liked the interaction between the characters and the portrait painted of village life in which everyone knows everyone else's business. I didn't see the ending coming but when I looked back all the clues were there and the conclusion made sense. This is an enjoyable read with an interesting background.

---

## **A. Lieberson says**

The Reluctant Detective: A Faith Morgan Mystery was written by Martha Ockley, pen name for Rebecca Jenkins, who writes the Jarrett mysteries. Faith Morgan has left her career as a police detective to become a vicar. She arrives at St. James church in Little Worthy for the Sunday service where the present vicar dies after drinking the communion wine. Faith's first reaction is to examine the body and take control of the situation when she smells the poison on the vicar's mouth. When the police arrive, Faith is surprised to see her former partner and lover, Ben Shorter. While trying to stay out of the investigation, Faith struggles between her old profession as a police detective and her new profession as a vicar. Ockley has good character development even with the secondary characters. The plot is well paced and the mystery well managed. A delightful English cozy!

---

## **Dale Harcombe says**

Picked up at the library just on the off chance, I really enjoyed this book. The main character is Faith Morgan who had been a policewoman and then later entered the ministry. At the start of this novel she has come to check out St James, Little Worthy, as a possible church to take over as vicar when the current minister retires. But then the current vicar dies after drinking the communion wine. Faith's earlier police instincts are aroused and she realises this is murder. It brings her back into contact with Ben Shorter, who had been not only her police partner but lover as well, before she felt God calling her to change her life.

I liked the character of Faith and the interesting, and at times irritating, busybody characters in the congregation at Little Worthy were well portrayed and reminiscent of some people I have met. It gives a great picture of village life. Faith is torn between trying to care for the people in the village and find the murderer, despite Ben's insistence that she stay out of the investigation.

This was just the sort of easy read I wanted while I wasn't feeling well. Yes, I picked the murderer fairly early on but since that is par for the course for me, it didn't deter me from reading on. I was so interested in the Faith and the village inhabitants, that I did something I rarely do and went straight onto the second book in the series. Anyone who likes cosy mysteries and well-drawn characters and setting should enjoy this.

---

## **Judith Graham says**

I really enjoyed this book. It is a light hearted murder a la Midsomer Murders. I like the character of Faith Morgan she seems to very much in tune with her calling and the people around her but cannot forget her previous role as a detective. I didn't work out who the murderer was and I thoroughly recommend this book. An ideal "light read" if you have just read a "heavy" book.

---

## **Chelle says**

I skipped ahead through this, I prefer mysteries penned during the golden era as opposed to ones written in modern times. Looks like the author is setting things up to get the Priest and her atheist ex., a DI, back together. Not the flavour of cosy-mystery tea I like to sip from, too many violent mental health issues (slashing/ a 'violent' suicide/ someone with a religious psychotic disorder) to count as a cosy read, and the Church of England setting felt a bit off to me, not sure why it just did.

---

## **Davis says**

(This was first posted at <http://brofessionalwriter.wordpress.c...>)

Faith Morgan, an ex-policewoman who left the force to get ordained, is trying to find the next step of her life. She attends a church in Little Worthy and during the service the vicar dies after he drinks poisoned wine doing the Eucharist. This homicide forces her to deal with the police force and her ex-boyfriend, Ben, as she tries to decide whether she would be in police work or church work. The subtitle "A Faith Morgan Mystery"

speaks truthfully in two ways, as Faith must assist the police force in solving the mystery of the murder, but also because Faith must solve the mystery within herself: to be a priest, or to be a cop?

I have three main issues with this novel. First, the narrator tells more often than shows. It is a rare circumstance when the reader is able to feel the emotion within a scene for themselves, and often the narrator has to assist the reader by telling them what they should feel. Often the reader is told how people are feeling, and I suppose we just have to take the narrators word for it. The narrator has all the right in the world to decide how these characters are feeling, but the impact is lost as I do not feel it for myself. Most of the novel feels like a “You had to be there” kind of a story. Second, when the narrator attempts to provide figurative language for a feeling or an action, it is often weak in effectiveness and crude in craft. Similes and metaphors are few and far between, and due to this they bring heightened attention to themselves when they appear. Third, the novel is wearisome because the syntax is repetitive. Many times pages will look like a bullet-point list as a great number of paragraphs are single-sentences. This is not inherently bad as a device, but when overused it becomes drab. And when paragraphs are longer, many of the sentences are simple sentences only. All in all, the prose of the novel is unsatisfactory.

Regardless of the low rating this book deserves, it also deserves to be praised for multiple elements. First, Martha Ockley seems to be balancing on the border of opposing styles of writing: “stream-of-consciousness” and plot-based. Faith’s inner monologue, although it can be confusing to follow at times, allows for the psychological aspect of her character that is necessary for the reader to relate to her. At the same time, action does occur which will keep the reader interested in the story. The mix of the two styles still needs a great deal of refining to be sublime, but it is an honorable venture. Second, as a religious novel, the book deserves praise in it’s attempt to include the voice of God in the “stream-of consciousness” style. Most Christians will be able to sympathize with this mystical element to our faith, and I admire the efforts. However, because personal revelations are, well, personal, it is hard to convince the reader of the impact of such a revelation. Ted Dekker does this in his novel, *Black*, when his main character interacts with the God figure for the first time. As a fellow Christian I understand the effort, but it just does not communicate well on paper the way it is presented in these two novels. Deeper figurative language would be necessary to create the desired effect.

If you have seen and enjoyed the television series *Midsomer Murders* then you will most likely enjoy this, as it seems to have been influenced a great deal by the TV show. It is set in Little Worthy, a fictional town which exists within the world of *Midsomer Murders*. Fellow WordPress blogger and book reviewer *citycoastbookclub* has noticed this as well, as they wrote: “This book has a feel of “*Midsomer Murders*” to it, set in an idyllic English village with an array of characters from Bishops to busybodies” in a 2012 review on the novel. (<http://citycoastbookclub.wordpress.co...>)

Or if you just enjoy rudimentary detective novels with a hint of religion and culturalism, then this would make a nice “summer reading” book for you.

If you’re looking for a higher class of detective fiction, I would recommend Anthony Horowitz’s *House of Silk*.

Happy Reading!

I received this book for free from Lion Fiction for this review. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission’s 16 CFR, Part 255 : “Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising.”

---

## Victor Gentile says

Martha Ockley in her new book, “The Reluctant Detective” Book One in the Faith Morgan Mystery series published by Kregel Publications introduces us to Faith Morgan.

From the back cover: “Couldn’t resist touching the body, eh?” observed Ben. Faith was defiant. “I had to check for a pulse.”...

Faith was a cop, and a good one. She and her boss (and boyfriend) Detective Inspector Ben Shorter tackled criminals and solved crimes across south-east England. They were a good team. But Faith grew disillusioned with Britain’s tough police culture. . As her disquiet grows, she starts to ask bigger questions – and ends up as a priest in the Church of England, a job from which she considers she can do more good than any police investigation. In the process she and Ben part company: he can’t stand God-botherers, and she finds his convictions-at-any-cost attitude treads on too many vulnerable people.

Faith may have quit the world of crime, but crime has not let her go. Newly ordained, she arrives in the village of Little Worthy, near Winchester, to look around the parish. Within an hour of her arrival she witnesses the sudden shocking death of a fellow priest. To her distress, the DI assigned to the case is Ben.

At the Bishop’s urging, Faith stays on to look after the improbably named parish of Little Worthy. As she meets her parishioners she learns some surprising details about her apparently well-loved predecessor, and starts to suspect a motive for his death. The cop may have donned a clerical collar, but the questions keep coming. How will she reconcile her present calling with her past instincts? Is she in danger herself? What should she do about Ben?

Then a further horrifying event deepens the mystery...

Poisoned communion wine what a way to go. Obviously someone didn’t like him. Faith started out her career as a cop, now she is a priest how do the two careers go together? And should they? Faith Morgan, to me, is one of the most interesting characters in detective fiction. I mean, come on, a lady priest who used to be a detective and had a boyfriend. How much more unique can you get? And I have never heard of poisoned communion wine before and enjoy this to no end. Faith just cannot let go of the mystery and feels she must solve it so she and her ex-partner, Ben, set out to find the motive. They feel that once they find the motive for murder they will find the murderer, however the murderer is none too keen about being discovered. Faith Morgan has a keen observant eye that catches all the little things that even I missed, and I was watching for them. Martha Ockley is an extremely talented writer who really knows how to tell a story that will grab you and keep you flipping pages until you reach the end. “The Reluctant Detective” is a very exciting book that will keep you engrossed in the characters as Ms. Ockley puts them through their paces. I am so looking forward to the next book from this very talented author.

Disclosure of Material Connection: I received this book free from Kregel Publications. I was not required to write a positive review. The opinions I have expressed are my own. I am disclosing this in accordance with the Federal Trade Commission’s 16 CFR, Part 255: “Guides Concerning the Use of Endorsements and Testimonials in Advertising.”

---

## **Sarah Bailey says**

This is book 1 in the Faith Morgan Mystery series, I've already read and reviewed the second, The Advent of Murder, so in reading them backwards I would have liked to read them in order as I think this one sets the stage for book 2. I'm going to start by saying that I enjoyed this book – I liked the mystery of the who-done-it, the setting of a not-so-quiet English village called Little Worthy and even the dialogue between some of the characters kept the book rolling along at a good clip. If I hadn't been down with a migraine I would have finished the book sooner than I did – it took me two days or there about to finish it – but it could have easily been done in less than a day. While I enjoyed it, I did feel the book was too short to really delve into all the relationships that Faith Morgan has – such as how she and her sister relate to each other, how she and her mom relate, Ben who is her ex-live in boyfriends, and then all the people Faith comes into contact with in Little Worthy and work as vicar.

After having read this book I'm going to have to chose my selections from England a bit more carefully, even though I noted that were some cuss words in The Advent of Murder, it seems there were a few more in this and Faith even uses some exclamations and then blames the use of said phrase on Ben. There was another issue, that didn't arise when I read the second book, for whatever reason – vicar is a reverend and it's my opinion based on Biblical reading that women really shouldn't be ministers – and so that is what Faith is. It is within the Anglican church and I believe they are bit more liberal in who they ordain as their ministers. That said there were a lot of misses in the book such as when one main character who is divorced due to her husband's adultery also mentions sleeping with a married man and then when she comes to Little Worthy she and the retiring vicar plan on marriage. No where does Faith counsel her on marriage, divorce, repentance or any such thing. Faith also makes light that as a vicar she did live with her ex-boyfriend Ben for three years – maybe she had repented but in the book it's not taken away that she ever feels sorry or repentant and puts herself in some tight situations with Ben at least once in the book.

Again, while I liked the overall plot and mystery in the book – I really had no idea up until the end who was the real suspect and when I figured out who it was things were quite shocking so Martha did a lovely job in keep up the suspense till the very end. While I'd like to see more of Faith Morgan I may have to reconsider after reading this one because of the lack of Biblical guidance – I know it's a mystery but even it can lend itself to Biblical guidance especially when a vicar is shown to be counseling someone in their parish. It's hard for me to read a book that is reported to be Christian but then almost everything I read goes against what I know and believe to be Biblical truths, if it had been listed as a secular book with a vicar as a main character I probably wouldn't be so harsh in my thoughts towards this book.

\*\*I was provided a copy of this book from Kregel Publications in exchange for my honest opinion, no other compensation was given.

---

## **Kaity-Jane Culbertson says**

I accidentally got this book. Okay, actually it was purposeful but I totally missed the whole "Reverend Faith Morgan" thing. I'm not quite sure how. I mean, it's written right in the description. Lol. But regardless, I dove



into this book, hoping for a good, clean, suspenseful mystery. Sadly, I have to say I was disappointed in each of those areas. While I don't believe in women being priests and such, I was willing to give this book a try and see what it held, hoping that perhaps there would be a moment where she decided to not be a priest. Well, that didn't happen and that's okay - her being a priest wasn't a huge part of the story and it would have been easy to overlook it. But I didn't really want to overlook it. Knowing that she was a priest, I had expectations for her...expectations she didn't meet in the least.

While Faith was a nice character, I had a few problems with her. For one, she had lived with her boyfriend for three years before breaking up with him and leaving. For me, at least, I wasn't sure if this was before or after she went to college to be a reverend, but there was still no signs of repentance. Faith also did very little praying and scripture quoting, and, in my opinion, gave rotten advice. I won't go into detail, but I had expectations for Faith as a priest which she did not meet. She also was a pretty big fool. She put herself in situations she knew she'd be weak in with her ex boyfriend - one of them being alone in her sister's house. What started out as a kiss nearly turned into something more before Faith put a stop to it. I will be honest and say I was angry at Faith a lot during this book. But, to give her some credit, she did have a big heart and tried her best to see the good in people. I did like that and related to her in that.

Ben I didn't like at all. He just seemed like a big jerk, and it wasn't until the end that I started to feeling anything but resentment towards him - and then it was sorrow. I felt kinda bad for him cause Faith was leading him on when she wasn't going to commit to anything, and didn't want to.

The content was a bit more than I usually like in books. The D-word was used twice - once thought by Faith, a priest, herself! I was appalled! Another thing is that, as I mentioned before, Faith lived with her boyfriend before marriage for 3 years, and there was so sign of repentance or acknowledgment that that was wrong. There was also a confession made before Faith about a lady whose husband committed adultery who she later divorced, and then slept with a man whom, she didn't know at the time, was married. She regretted these decisions and repented, but it still was brought up and Faith mentions how sometimes it's difficult, especially when there's "sexual attraction". There's also a scene where, as I mentioned before, Faith finds herself alone with Ben and they start kissing. It says she "felt the pressure of Ben's arm shifting her weight towards him, beneath him.". The scene ends there when Faith finally snaps to her senses and pushes him away. Other than that, there's was nothing more than a few minor things mentioned here and there - nothing great enough for me to remember.

To sum it up, I was disappointed with this book. It wasn't even just the content or stuff I've mentioned, but also the mystery reveal was kinda a letdown. But I do think that some people would find this book enjoyable - and in fact, after reading many other reviews I've found that many people enjoyed it greatly! So if you enjoy mysteries, you may like this one!

---

## **Marianne says**

The Reluctant Detective is the first book in the Faith Morgan Mystery series by British author, Martha Ockley (aka Rebecca Jenkins). When the Vicar at St James's in Little Worthy plans to retire, Reverend Faith

Morgan (isn't that a perfect name for a vicar?) is asked by her bishop if she is interested in the position. Her sister lives there, and the quiet parish might be a welcome change from the "gritty, uncertain, challenging chaos of the urban parish she was thinking of leaving".

But on the Sunday she arrives in Little Worthy to check it out, Vicar Alistair Ingram drops dead in the middle of the service. And while Faith is no longer a police detective, her instincts cannot help but kick in as she mentally notes important possible clues that point to murder. And just to complicate things, the senior officer in charge of the case is DI Ben Striker, her ex-lover. And someone she really was hoping not to run into: there's a bit of emotional baggage there...

What a marvellous start Ockley has made on this cosy crime series! Her protagonist is very likeable: a vicar who is definitely not "holier than thou", not smug, and far from perfect. The supporting characters are just the sort one meets in a small town, at church functions and in the local shops. Their dialogue is believable, and this is a community that would be a pleasure to belong to, despite their occasional nosiness.

Ockley's plot may be a classic, but there are enough red herrings amongst the clues to keep it interesting. An astute reader may settle on the right suspect before the halfway mark, but the how and why will keep the pages turning until the exciting climax. Luckily, there is more of this clever clergywoman. Readers can look forward to *The Advent of Murder* and *A Saintly Killing*. Very enjoyable!

---

## **Carole Jarvis says**

Reviewed at The Power of Words: <http://tinyurl.com/m5vurchb>

I am glad to have discovered the writing of Martha Ockley because *The Reluctant Detective* is a well-written British cozy mystery that I thoroughly enjoyed. No scary suspense or blood and gore, just an entertaining and well-plotted whodunit. Similar to other cozies with its charming English village setting, amateur detective, and quirky characters, spiritual depth and characterization go deep. *The Reluctant Detective* won't fit into the evangelical mold that some readers demand, as there is a little social drinking and mild profanity a couple of times, yet there is a spiritual depth that felt comfortable and inspiring.

Essential to any good cozy mystery is an idyllic English village, and Martha vividly brings the fictional village of Little Worthy, Winchester, to life with its historical church, village green, and surrounding farms. Enchanting, yes, but not quite as idyllic as one would expect. The beauty and history of St. James's church, Faith's first congregation, are also vividly conveyed.

The mystery is well developed, with humor and a strong ensemble cast. Clues are dropped along the way, but I didn't figure out the murderer's identity until fairly close to the end. In fact, I read murder mysteries for the enjoyment of characterization and plot, rather than trying to figure out who's guilty.

Faith Morgan is a complex character that I really liked. Prior to being ordained into the Church of England, Faith had worked as a police officer for several years and been in a long-term relationship with Detective Inspector Ben Shorter. Even now as one of the clergy, she still likes investigating and is quite good at it - "talking to people, analyzing their expressions, reading their body language, peering into their lives; fitting together the broken puzzle of what they said and didn't say, and why."

Faith witnesses a murder upon her first visit to St. James's and Ben is assigned to the case, which creates great romantic tension. It's hard to imagine all the reasoning, effort, and discipline it must have taken for Faith to break it off with Ben, leave the police force, and pursue the ministry. What a contrast is given between these two: "Ben, who thought of God and redemption as childish fantasy; she, the woman who had given up so much to live by that belief." I am eager to see how Martha develops these two characters in future stories.

I liked the description of how Faith had gradually been drawn into the ministry: "She had first found faith in faces; in people transformed by faith. She thought of the bereaved mother of a teenage knife victim she had met in her third year in the police force. She remembered the woman's sorrow, her flashes of wit; her extraordinary forgiveness and hope."

The Reluctant Detective is an enjoyable and satisfying mystery, and I look forward to more adventures with Faith Morgan. Recommended to fans of British cozy mysteries and detective novels. 5 stars in comparison to other books in this genre.

Thank you to Lion Fiction for providing a copy of this book in exchange for my honest review.

---