

The A-Z of Adam Fawley

By Cara Hunter

A is for...

Adam, of course. A newly promoted Detective Chief Inspector based at the St Aldate's police station. Around six foot, dark-haired. One of my early readers described him as 'kind, compassionate, clever and just that bit out of the ordinary', and I couldn't have put it better myself.

A is also for **Alex**, his wife, who's a partner in an Oxford law firm. They're very much in love, but there's a deep sadness in that love, because they lost their first child, Jake. This happened a few months before the start of *Close to Home*, and we don't find out till the end of that book what actually happened. But the pain of it – and the consequences - are still very real.

And finally, A is for DS **Anthony Asante**, a fast-track graduate entrant to the police, who started his career in the Met. His parents are very wealthy, and his father is a former Ghanaian diplomat. Adam once described him as "*Diligent, intelligent, technically excellent. He does what he's asked and he takes the initiative when he should. And yet every time I think I have him worked out, he manages to wrong-foot me.*"

B is for...

DC Andrew **Baxter**, the stalwart on Fawley's CID team. A touch on the heavy side (in every sense of the word), an Aston Villa fan, and rather a dab hand with computers: "he doesn't need to dig that deep to find his inner geek."

B is also for Sgt **Ian Barnetson**, who appears in a couple of the books. A stalwart member of the uniform squad at St Aldate's, he always seems to get the crap jobs, whether it's up to his waist in the Cherwell in *All the Rage*, or going down a septic tank in *Hope to Die*: "I really don't want to be standing as near as this to Ian Barnetson. Even the other side of the table is way too close. It's hardly his fault; in fact, he deserves props for quick thinking. But, Christ, he smells."

C is for...

Alan **Challow**, who's in charge of the CSI team. As Fawley describes him in *Close to Home*: "He started on the job a few months after I did. Hasn't aged that well. Too little on top, too much round the waist. But he's good. He's good."

D is for...

Daisy, the little girl who goes missing at the beginning of *Close to Home*, and returns in *Making a Killing*.

E is for...

DC Verity **Everett**. Loyal, dependable and not as confident of her abilities as she should be. "She may look like Miss Marple must have done at 35, but she's every bit as relentless. Or as Gislingham always puts it, Ev was definitely a bloodhound in a previous life."

F is for...

Frampton Road, the prosperous North Oxford road where a young woman and her child are discovered, locked in a basement, at the beginning of *In The Dark*.

It's also for Marina **Fisher**, the high-flying professor accused of sexual assault by one of her male students in *The Whole Truth*.

G is for...

DC Chris **Gislingham**. Hard-working, a bit cheeky, and a die-hard Chelsea fan. His son Billy was born prematurely during *Close to Home* and he's the apple of his dad's eye. "Every CID team needs a Gislingham, and if you were drowning, he's the one you'd want on the other end of the rope"

It's also for Bryan **Gow**, the profiler on the team: "train-spotter, mainstay of his local pub quiz team and amateur mathematician (don't ask me how that works – it's always struck me as the ultimate contradiction in terms)."

H is for...

Superintendent John **Harrison**, Fawley's boss. As Adam says of him in *No Way Out*: "It's only a suggestion but let's not forget who's making it'.

I is for...

In The Dark (what else?)

J is for...

Jake, the Fawleys' son, who was born after a long struggle to conceive, and whose death still casts such a long shadow.

K is for...

Kidlington, the Thames Valley Police HQ, where many of the scenes are set.

L is for...

Fawley's 'first **law** of policing': Liars always overkill. "I know I bang on about Fawley's law, but in my experience three answers to one question is never a good sign."

Also for **Lily Rose**, the Fawley's little girl, a miracle baby born when they'd both given up any hope of having another child.

M is for...

Nina **Mukerjee**, one of the members of the forensic CSI team.

N is for...

North London, where Fawley was brought up. "A dismal ribbon development that owed its entire existence to the Underground – a stop on the final stretch, thrown down randomly in what had once been meadows, but were long since concrete by the time we lived there. My parents chose it because it was safe, and because it was all they could afford. But it was horrible, all the same."

O is for...

Oxford, of course, where the books are set. As Fawley says, at the beginning of *In The Dark*, "If you've ever been there, you'll know: it's all or nothing in this place - when it rains the stone is piss-coloured, but in the light, when the colleges look like they've been carved from cloud, there is no more beautiful place on earth."

P is for...

The team **pathologist**: “His name is Colin Boddie. And yes, I know, that’s not funny. Only it is; of course it is. He’s heard the gags so many times he’s developed his own brand of pathological humour to go with it. It can sound crass, if you don’t know him, but it’s just a form of carapace. A way to keep the horror at bay.”

P is also for Gavin **Parrie**, the ‘Roadside Rapist’, who becomes the subject of a miscarriage of justice podcast in *The Whole Truth*. At his trial in 1999 “he was heard issuing death threats against the officer who had been instrumental in his apprehension, saying he would ‘get him’ and he and his family would ‘spend the rest of their lives watching their backs’. The officer in question, Detective Sergeant Adam Fawley, has received a commendation from the Chief Constable for his work on the case.”

Q is for...

DS Gareth **Quinn**. Cocky, confident, attractive, and ambitious. As Fawley says, “You know the look. Sharp suit and blunt razor.” Quinn is invariably his own worst enemy: “Gislingham has always been exceptionally good at knowing when to stop digging, but Quinn carries his own set of shovels.”

R is for...

Risingshurst, the 1930s suburb to the north-east of the centre of town, where Fawley lives.

It’s also for Camilla **Rowan**, the ‘Chameleon Girl’ at the centre of *Hope to Die*.

S is for...

Erica **Somer**. An English graduate who worked as a teacher before becoming a police officer. Her name is an anagram of ‘Morse’ – my small homage to Oxford’s greatest detective.

S is also for DCs Sarah **Stillwell** and Chloe **Sargent**, recent additions to Adam’s team, both of them tough cookies and rising stars.

T is for...

The **Thames Valley** police force – following in the fine tradition of Morse and Lewis.

U is for...

Another of Fawley’s catchphrases: ‘**UAU**’. Unless and Until

V is for...

Fawley’s **vehicle** – a Ford (not a Jaguar!), and his **vices**, of which he has only one – smoking. And perhaps one too many glasses of merlot every now and again,

W is for...

Wittenham Clumps, one of the key settings for *In The Dark*: “The hills command views of the Oxfordshire countryside for miles around and are rich in folklore. Castle Hill once boasted an Iron Age fort, and near the summit there’s a hollow, known as the Money Pit. A hoard of treasure is said to be buried there, guarded by a ghostly raven...”

X is for...

Fawley’s **ex-boss** (OK, I know it’s a bit of a stretch), Detective Superintendent Alistair Osbourne. “Al Osbourne was one of the legends of Thames Valley. Great copper, and a genuinely nice bloke too, and believe me those two things don’t always go together. More than one person in this station owes a crucial leg-up in their career to him, me included.”

Y is for...

Adam's **youth**. He grew up with his brother, Julian, but his childhood wasn't an easy one. He is adopted, but his parents have never actually told him so: "I found out when I was ten, rooting about in my father's desk where I knew I shouldn't have been. I knew, instinctively, the way children do, that this was something I could never raise with my parents and even now, I never have."

Z is for...

Zachary, one of the children found trapped in a burning house at the beginning of *No Way Out*.