

## Laced with Magic

Contributed by Barbara Bretton  
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With over five dozen books in her own hand, you'd think Barbara Bretton would know how to craft a great story. And you would be completely, totally right. And excitedly so. In last year's *Casting Spells*, centering around main characters Chloe Hobb and Luke MacKenzie, the book spins (ha!) the tale of a quiet small town in northern Vermont with a magical secret. Chloe owns New England's best yarn shop and is the town's acting mayor. When a murder happens in town, Luke, a cop from Boston, is called in to investigate. Sparks and spells fly like crazy as they track down the murderer. In *Laced with Magic*, Bretton returns to Sugar Maple, Chloe and Luke with a new twist: Luke's ex-wife enters the scene with a tale of her own, as well as throwing a wrench at the newly formed relationship of Chloe and Luke. Part mystery and part romance, with just enough fairy tale magic used in all new ways thrown in mixed with quick wit and enough knitting references to keep it interesting, this book exceeded all of my expectations for a sequel. The dialogue is just as tight, the setting seems more real and realistic, and Bretton just seemed so much more comfortable with letting the story tell itself. I, for one, am a total sucker when it comes to books written in first-person narrative. When you hand me a story that puts it in the first person point of view of three different people, while confusing at times, I got used to it very quickly. I look very forward to the next installment of the Sugar Maple series. This one leaves the series hanging to the point that there will be thousands of screaming readers demanding a third book. ~review by Jeremy Bredeson  
Author: Barbara Bretton Berkley Trade (Penguin Group), 2009 pp. 352, \$15