



Spellbound by Murder: A Mystic Hollow Bookshop Mystery

Stacie Ramey

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In Stacie Ramey's cozy mystery novel *Spellbound by Murder*, a single mother and her teenage daughter return to their family bookstore, facing murder and magical secrets.

Veronica and Phoebe leave Florida for Mystic Hollow to help Gran at her aging bookstore, where Veronica spent summers as a child. En route, Veronica hears from Almira, a rival bookseller who hints at trouble with Gran's store, which is set to host a literary festival. Once in town, she notices inexplicable changes in the bookstore, including a self-healing roof leak and extraordinary upticks in inventory. She thinks that Phoebe, Gran, and Kim, a store employee, are hiding something, and she wonders about the town's magic.

Veronica also becomes the festival lead. When the keynote cancels, she recruits a famous but controversial author as a replacement. The festival opens to enthusiastic attendees, vendors, and the author's rousing speech. Not long after, he is dead, and Veronica is the suspect. Searching for the real killer, she rediscovers her ability to trust and realizes that she and Phoebe are home.

Veronica, a writer with ADHD and a single mother, has little interest in romance; her relationship with Mack, the sheriff who works at his sister's diner and offers vegan specialties to Phoebe, is refreshing. Phoebe, who had no real friends in Florida, buddies up with Kim, bonds with Gran, and sometimes parents her mother. Several women in their seventies are among the centered cast, including Gran and a librarian, Cassandra—depicted as active, fashionable, and culturally aware, saying “Good thinking, you” and “slide into his DMs.” The bookstore itself, referred to as “she,” and the magic of the town vivify the story further.

A delightful cozy mystery novel, *Spellbound by Murder* follows difficult situations that deepen family relationships and foster true friendships.

LYNNE JENSEN LAMPE (March / April 2026)

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