



Extra Credit

Maggie Barbieri

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Alison Bergeron has her doubts about hosting a birthday party for her twin stepdaughters, seeing as it'll include all of her new husband's ex-in-laws. Still, she's a good sport, and everyone has a great time, especially the girls, who receive \$10,000 from their estranged uncle, Chick.

The girls' father, NYPD Detective Bobby Crawford, and Christine, his ex, think the gift is too much. When Crawford swings by Chick's apartment to return it, he finds Chick dead, with roughly \$250,000 stuffed in his mattress. The death is ruled a suicide, but Christine isn't convinced, and even Alison can't help but admit that there must be a lot more to Chick's death than meets the eye.

Extra Credit, the latest in Maggie Barbieri's stellar Murder 101 series, finds Alison and Bobby delving into family secrets they'd both rather leave untouched.

Extra Credit Details

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Author : Maggie Barbieri

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James says

This is a part of a series starring Alison Bergeron, an English professor at a Catholic college in New York, and her NYPD detective husband, Bobby Crawford. As the plot opens, Alison is reluctantly hosting her husband's ex-in-laws during a birthday party for her twin stepdaughters. When the girls' estranged uncle shows up and gives them a lavish gift (\$5000 each), suspicions are rased as to where he got the money. When they try to return the money on the next day, they find him dead. Then the fun really begins. First, they find \$250,000 hidden in his bed. Then their uncle's ex-wife begins stalking them for the money. Some one breaks into Alison's home and poisons her dog. Lots of strange events start happening. The book is somewhat of a cozy, dealing with lots of interwoven family relationships. There is enough murder and suspense for those who like that. The ending is kind of anticlimaxic but satisfying. I would read another in the series.

Jim says

I strongly suspect most of the fans of this series are female.

Renee says

Wow.

This is the last book in Barbieri's Murder 101 series and I was hoping for the best. I was worried at first -- the plot is probably the oddest of any of Barbieri's books and that's saying something -- but I really needn't have. I'm glad I read it, I'm glad I was able to read it fairly quickly, and I'm feeling good with how it ended. I'm still sad that the series is over but Barbieri gets kudos for leaving me feeling satisfied. Well done!

Jeannie and Louis Rigod says

I tend to purchase this series as soon as it is published and then save it...treasure the coming read...until I know that it is time for a never to disappoint you time. So, although many have read this book timely...it was 'my' time the past two days.

Professor Alison Bergeron, is a character that is likeable. Alison, in prior novels (six) got married to a Homicide Detective, Bobby Crawford. This was a second marriage for both. Bobby didn't come alone...he came with two older daughters, both now in colleges.

Alison decides to throw the girls a Birthday party! Simple, right? Wrong, the ex-family is more than a handful and will lead Alison, Bobby, and Trixie, the Golden Retriever into danger, intrigue, kidnapping and more. Who? Why? How? When...immediately it seems to begin.

Ms. Barbieri is able to weave a gentle loving family story and lace it with danger and finally we have the completed craft...an afghan of of a victim, and why they became a victim, worthy of draping on your walls.

The writing is tight, strong dialog, funny situations, and a story worth remembering. Hopefully the next novel will be out soon as I have a spot waiting for it on my TBR (to be read) pile.

Nancy Rogan says

This is a good read - funny and a pretty good mystery. It's not particularly realistic from the law enforcement side, but it's entertaining and fun. The best friend who has to be coddled and gets mad if she's not the center of attention gets REAL old. She doesn't seem like much of a friend and I would tell the author that she should grow up. The hints that she behaves badly because she is worried about the main character getting too close to danger are pretty stupid.

Julie Akeman says

This book really had some great laughing moments, enjoy.

Michele says

Oh I'm so happy that this series made a great return after the last miserable book!
I really like the characters, and the last book was so awful I thought that we'd never recover the magic that the first two books provided.
THIS book is wonderful! The humor is back, the characters were on track and the plot is so tight and clean!
It is so hooking, it made me laugh out loud, and in parts i cried.
I am hoping the series continues, and at the bar that was set with this book!

Libby says

(E-Lib) I enjoyed this one much better than the last one. Even though I felt sorry for Max, I still think she's beyond selfish and needy. Too bad Mary Lou turned out to be a bad guy; I was hoping she could be a new bud for Alison.

*** Jennifer says**

I love this series so opening this book was like visiting with old friends. Alison's sarcastic wit is always a winner with me and I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book. The mystery was cleverly convoluted with no clear villain or really any serious contenders until Ms. Barbieri was ready for things to unfold (although I did peg one of the wrong 'uns early on, I had no idea how that character fit into the grand scheme of things).

This is a long book for a cozy mystery and while the dead body shows up right away, the story itself builds slowly, with a lot of sub-plots revolving around the lives of the characters and the changes taking place

within the family/friends dynamic. It reads a bit like it could be the final book in the series, and while I'd very much like to see another one in the near future, if Ms. Barbieri is indeed retiring Allison and Bobby, she's at least leaving us in a good place.

Barrett Mardre says

I love this series and am concerned that this is her last book starring Professor Bergeron. On her website, she says that her next book is going to be totally different. I love Professor Bergeron, Max, Detective Crawford, and I love Trixie best of all. I will miss Trixie! I have rarely been so frightened that a series is ending. Her books have made me laugh and laugh. This is not a very intellectual review, but these are my feelings.

Khandi Kane says

Outstanding.

Nancy says

Looks like I came in at the last scene in a long-running, popular play. No matter. Barbieri's writing is mega-entertaining, even if the "of course I just keep doing stupid things!" chick-detective meme wore a little thin.

What I liked: the ex-wife as sympathetic character which irritates Allison even more. The dialogue. The Catholic-college setting. The professorial life.

What I didn't like: the stupidity of otherwise rational characters, especially in the dramatic finale.

Julia says

Now married to hunky detective Bobby Crawford, Professor Alison Bergeron is also "kin" to his ex-wife's family. When missing Uncle Chick appears in time for the twins' birthday, cards full of money in tow, both Bobby and his ex-wife agree the girls need to return the cash. This is easier said than done, as Chick's death propels Alison into another murder investigation. The life of a college professor seems much more exciting than one would think.

Brett says

College professor Alison Bergeron continues to fumblingly make her best attempt at being a good stepmother in the latest addition to her series, & that leads her to once again do her fumbling best at crime detection as her husband's ex-in-laws get a whole lot more than they bargained for with the mysterious death of the family black sheep.

Alison doesn't know what she's letting herself in for when she reluctantly agrees to host a birthday party for twin stepdaughters Erin & Meaghan, but it's a whole lot more than just the awkwardness to be expected from

a roomful of your husband's ex-wife's family. The girls' long-lost Uncle Chick turns up, which makes the party a whole lot more uncomfortable, especially when he mysteriously gives each girl a card containing several thousand dollars as a birthday present - then turns up dead in a dingy little apartment a few days later, on a mattress stuffed with \$250,000 in cash. Just what has Chick been up to in the intervening years since he left the family fold? And was this a tragic suicide, or, as the girls' mother fears, something much more sinister? Alison is on the case, if for no other reason than to get she & her husband disentangled from his ex's family. But that's taking up an awful lot of her time, which seems to be more than usually upsetting to Alison's best friend.

A good mystery keeps the pages turning, & the characters continue to develop on their seventh outing. An enjoyable read.

Debbie Heaton says

In Barbieri's mystery novel, English professor Alison Bergeron hosts a birthday extravaganza for her husband Bobby's twin daughters. Family comes in droves, including Bobby's ex, who brings her second husband and four step kids for the ride. When the girl's uncle dies of an overdose leaving a suicide note and a quarter of a million dollars in cash stuffed in his mattress, the party comes to a screeching halt. With his death come many questions: Where did he get his hands on all this cash? Did he really kill himself, or did someone make it look like a suicide? Family dysfunction comes full circle when the deceased's stripper ex-wife joins the fun along with a poisoning, a break-in, and a federal offense. Determined to find the answers, Alison uses all of her detective skills to find a motive to fit the crimes.

Fast-paced addition to the A Murder 101 Mystery series.
