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Fool's Return Reviewed by Valerie Porter

By [Valerie Porter](#)

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[General Fiction](#)



Reviewer Valerie Porter: Valerie is a freelance magazine writer and co-author of 5 books. She has also been a freelance book reviewer for a weekly Los Angeles newspaper and has written her own book blog.

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Fool's Return is an intriguing first novel that blends romance, mystery and elements of spirituality.

Its main character, Gabrielle, has a good job as a managing director at Venture Inc., a technology company. She's married, with a young son. On the surface, it seems like her life has all the ingredients to make her happy, and perhaps it once did. But increasingly, her marriage isn't going well and her job leaves her feeling confined and thinking that she's missed out on opportunities.

Her boss sends her to the coast of Maine to attend a meeting with his stepdaughter Reagan, who's invented a new form of energy technology. Far from believing in it, he tells her he thinks it will fail – in fact, he secretly wants it to fail. Gabrielle's mission is to drive to Maine, put in an appearance at the meeting to appease Reagan, and then return quickly to her job.

What should be a quick trip, though, takes a sudden and mysterious turn when she drives down the town's quiet main street and nearly hits a woman and her cat. No one is injured, and the only one truly shaken up is Gabrielle. The woman she nearly hit, Fiona, invites her to have a cup of tea at her shop, which happens to specialize in tarot card readings. Gabrielle hesitatingly allows Fiona to do a reading for her, and is amazed and slightly frightened by some of the information revealed. Before the reading has concluded, she realizes she's been so involved in the impact of the tarot cards that she's about to be late for her meeting.

The meeting centers around the demonstration of a unique battery designed to completely change energy technology, which sounds promising - until it explodes during the demonstration. Gabrielle sees the potential behind the technology, though, and it excites her in ways that her current job does not. She decides to stay overnight in the tiny town after staying so late in the meeting. On her way out, she encounters an attractive man in the parking garage and feels an instant and intense romantic pull, which he apparently feels, too. Suddenly her

business and personal life have been super-charged, in the space of an afternoon. What's more intriguing is that there were hints of this in the tarot card reading.

Since Gabrielle is remaining in town overnight, she asks Fiona to complete the tarot card reading and shades of past life information are revealed, perhaps linking her to the very town she's visiting.

The town almost holds her captive while she works out the lessons she's apparently meant to learn from that past life. She makes two unsuccessful attempts to leave but gets no further than the city limits before car problems force her to turn around.

This wife, mother and dutiful employee has her life completely turned on end as images from a past life swirl around her in her dreams. What is the connection between Gabrielle and this town? What must she work out before she is "allowed" to leave...and how does she face the powerful attraction that sizzles between her and Alexander, the man from the parking garage?

Her career is being challenged, too, when she realizes that the battery might just revolutionize the world, and she could have a hand in making that happen.

It might help readers to keep an open mind when reading Fool's Return, since it leans heavily on new age elements. But author Chervil writes so convincingly that it's easy to become immersed in the magic and mystery of the book.