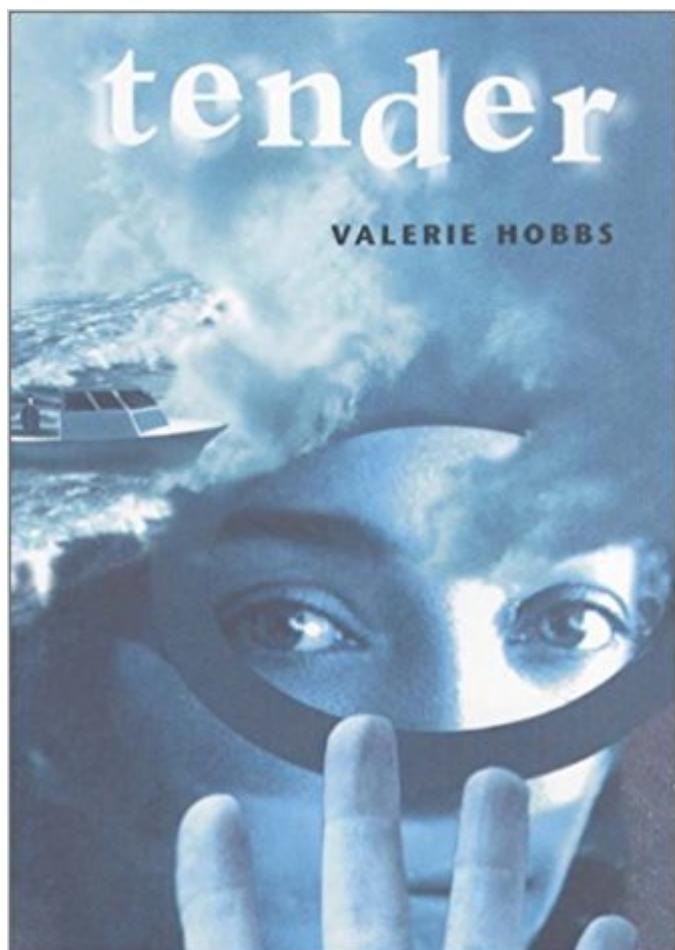


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# Tender



## Synopsis

A hopeful -- and tender -- look at family and growing up. When Liv was born, her mother died. Her father, Mark Trager, handed her over to her grandmother "like a bundle of laundry." Now her beloved Gran has died and Mark is the only family Liv has. All she knows is that he lives in California and dives for abalone. She has to leave New York to live with him, but that doesn't mean she has to forgive him for abandoning her. Samantha, his girlfriend, is an unexpected gift, someone Liv can really talk to, but even Sam can't bring father and daughter together. There's Brian Spinuchi, too. He's her father's tender, responsible for his lifeline as he dives, but not the type she could ever fall for. Or is he? When Spinuchi breaks his arm, Liv, a city girl, must become her father's tender. Once the two head out to sea, they find themselves confronting a reality that will change their relationship forever. Valerie Hobbs's latest novel is about overcoming the fears that isolate us.

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

In this sensitive novel, Hobbs (Carolina Crow Girl) chronicles the insecurities of a New York teen whose life is turned upside-down after a family tragedy. At the start of the novel, 15-year-old Olivia Trager, whose mother died the day she was born, loses her beloved grandmother, the woman who raised her. With nowhere else to turn, Liv heads to California to be with her father, Mark, an abalone diver who has neither spoken nor written to his daughter since she was a baby. Luckily, his

gregarious girlfriend, Sam, is more welcoming than her reticent father and his shabby apartment. Liv opens up to Sam, but remains distanced from her father until he literally puts his life in her hands by making her his "tender," the person responsible for watching his lifeline while he dives. Introducing a cast of complex, convincingly vulnerable characters and possessing a keen understanding of adolescent moods and concerns, the author creates a taut psychological drama. Liv, her father and Sam grow closer together as they weather several crises including a boat collision at sea and Sam's discovery that she has cancer. Those seeking a thought-provoking, emotionally stirring read will become intimately involved in Liv's quest to understand herself and the man who abandoned her at birth. Ages 12-up. Copyright 2001 Cahners Business Information, Inc.

Gr 8 Up-Fifteen-year-old Liv's life undergoes seismic upheaval when her grandmother, the strong, urbane woman who raised her, dies and leaves her to reconnect with her estranged father. Understandably bitter as well as grieving, the teen must leave New York City, her best friends, and her usual haunts and habits to meet the man who deserted her when his wife died in childbirth. The tiny coastal hamlet near Santa Barbara, CA, and her father, an abalone fisherman of extraordinarily few words and apparently fewer emotions, present Liv with so many psychological and physical challenges that looking back becomes a luxury. As she did in *Carolina Crow Girl* (2001) and *Charlie's Run* (2000, both Farrar), Hobbs gives readers a strong and personable protagonist caught in a complex series of events that offers contemporary echoes of folkloric themes. Here, Liv is a kind of banished princess, but it is her father who must be awakened from a 15-year-long disenchantment. As she struggles to come to terms with her new home, Liv befriends her father's girlfriend as well as a young man her own age who may or may not offer a romantic possibility in the future. The title, besides the obvious play on the characters' emotions, refers to the job she takes aboard her dad's boat. Hobbs's storytelling pace is quick without feeling rushed, drawing readers in immediately and inextricably. Each character becomes a person whom teens will understand, whether with sympathy or hesitation, and by book's end, Liv's future looks as though it will continue to be interesting. Francisca Goldsmith, Berkeley Public Library, CA  
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In the beginning of "Tender" the main character, Liv is a slightly hard edged, judgmental teenager. You may not like her at first, but by the end of the novel you will love her. The novel takes you on Liv's journey where she will discover the power and reach of her own heart. Abandoned at an early age to her Grandmother, who dies early in the story, Liv suddenly finds her life in upheaval. With no

one to take care of her, she is shipped to the west coast to live with the father she never knew. It is this slowly unfolding, conflicted, often oppositional, but poignant relationship that makes up the heart of the story. Reluctantly, Liv agrees to work as a "tender" on her father's abalone boat. Here she will learn the nature of hard work, the beauty of the sea, and face the ultimate crisis of having her father's life in her hands. I won't tell you what happens. Read the book. It's a great one.

I loved this book. The characters were very believable and grabbed your interest. I could not put it down.

Great shape, came in good time, I believe (truth is it was order and received a few months ago so I don't really remember much, however still very please). I first discovered this book when my brought it home from the library, and since then I kept asking her to pick it up from the library so I just decided to buy, it's one of my absolute favorites.

I read this book when I was in high school, and have wanted to re-read the book for years. It's still as emotional and powerful as I remember. Although, sometimes the sentence structure was choppy and there were spelling and grammatical errors. I would have loved to see more character development from the dad and more problem solving from the main characters, but the author did a good job of showing a dysfunctional family come together and try to find a life together amidst the angst and resentment from past mistakes.

I love this book, I got it as a free book from the library! I have read it so many times now I think I could recite the book by heart. I really recommend it!!!

In my own opinion, *Tender*, is a detailed, engaging book for teens. It is great for young readers if they like in depth, page turning novels. *Tender* is the story of fifteen year old Liv Trager who struggles living her life. Liv's mother passed away when she was just a baby and her father gave her up. She now lives with her adored Gran in New York, who passes away suddenly. Now Liv has to move to California to live with her stern father, Mark, who is practically a stranger. On top of Liv's new life style, Mark needs Liv to help him out with his abalone diving job. Since his tender broke his arm, he needs Liv to keep tend for him. Once they are at sea, Liv is in control of her father's life. There is no turning back. Will Liv complete her job properly or let her father die?

When 15-year-old Liv must go to live with the father who deserted her at birth, she feels an anger bordering on apathy toward him. Yet, over time, as she works for him as his "tender" on his abalone boat, the bruise that is their love for one another - - deeply sore and oh-so-tender still after all these years - - begins to heal, and a tender relationship is born. Hobbs has written a powerful, poignant novel about a love lost, rediscovered and reclaimed. The voice of Liv, and her initial actings out of rebellion, are right on target for young adults. The writing is vivid, the climax exciting, the characters' changes are believable, and the last line will bring tears to your eyes: a description of a patient, painstaking, tender act that reveals the father's love to be as beautiful as the pearly insides of an abalone shell.

Valerie Hobbs is a master of her craft. Her greatest gift, perhaps, is the creation of vivid, memorable characters. This talent is clearly displayed in *TENDER*. Liv is a struggling, often impulsive teenager with rough, believable edges. Her beloved grandmother has just died, and she is forced to live with the father who deserted her at birth. She doesn't know him. She doesn't want to know him and certainly doesn't want to love him. But she becomes his "tender" on the fishing boat--he's an abalone diver. *TENDER* is the moving story of a relationship; it's also a powerful story about change, growth, and the power of love. Hobbs is unflinching writer -- she tells her truth and her characters breathe real air. *TENDER* is for teenagers, but adults will revel in it too.

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