



## The Cardturner

By Louis Sachar

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The summer after junior year of high school looks bleak for Alton Richards. His girlfriend has dumped him, he has no money and no job, and his parents insist that he drive his great-uncle Lester, who is old, blind, very sick, and very rich, to his bridge club four times a week and be his cardturner.

But Alton's parents aren't the only ones trying to worm their way into Lester Trapp's good graces. There is Trapp's longtime housekeeper, his alluring young nurse, and the crazy Castaneda family.

Alton soon finds himself intrigued by his uncle, by the game of bridge, and especially by the pretty and shy Toni Castaneda, as he struggles to figure out what it all means, and ultimately to figure out the meaning of his own life.

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## **The Cardturner By Louis Sachar Bibliography**

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 8 Up—Alton Richards is resigned to spending a slow summer on his own after his girlfriend leaves him for his best friend and he finds himself with no money and no job. Unfortunately, his mother insists that he become his blind great-uncle's chauffeur and cardturner at local bridge tournaments. Though the 17-year-old has only met Lester Trapp on a few occasions, his mother hopes that this connection will inspire the wealthy old man to write the family into his will. Alton reluctantly agrees, even though he knows nothing about bridge and has no interest in learning the game. He meets Toni Castaneda at the tournaments and soon discovers that he's not the only long-lost relative intent on winning over Trapp and his inheritance. What transpires is an intriguing glimpse into a crazy family full of secrets and unusual quirks. The characters are well limned, and the narrative is laced with Sachar's trademark wry humor. Most teens have very little knowledge about bridge, a fact that Alton acknowledges several times throughout the novel. At times, the story line becomes thick with technical game descriptions, though he does offer an option to skip these sections by providing a symbol to indicate more in-depth card instructions. This well-written novel contains a rewarding intergenerational friendship and a sweetly appealing romance in the making. Nonetheless it may require an additional nudge to hook readers. It's a nudge worth giving for motivated teens and those who enjoy Sachar's novels.—*Stephanie Malosh, Donoghue Elementary School, Chicago, IL*  
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From [Booklist](#)

\*Starred Review\* With his latest novel, the Newbery-winning author of *Holes* (1998) fulfills a need the world probably didn't even know it had: the great teen bridge novel. Alton Richard's great-uncle Lester Trapp is rich and ailing, a combo that leads Alton's parents to hatch a plan for the teen to cozy up to the old man and carve out a chunk of inheritance. Though blind, Trapp is a brilliant, world-class bridge player and needs someone to read him his cards and make his plays. Enter Alton, who wouldn't begin to know how to decipher questions like "One banana, pass, pass, two no-trump. Is that unusual?" But he withstands the constant barbs from his irascible uncle and grows more intrigued by the game (in no small part due to the cute, kind-of-crazy girl who also plays). Sachar liberally doles out detailed commentary on the basics and then nuances of the game, and in a nod to the famously dull *Moby-Dick* chapter on the minutiae of whaling, a little whale image appears when the bridge talk is about to get deep so readers can skip right ahead to a pithy wrap-up. But don't be fooled: it is astonishing how Sachar can make blow-by-blow accounts of bridge not only interesting but exciting, treating each play like a clue to unravel the riddle of each hand. An obvious windfall for smart and puzzle-minded teens, this is a great story to boot, with genuine characters (save the scheming parents) and real relationships, balanced by casual, confident storytelling. Grades 9-12. --Ian Chipman

Review

'Louis Sachar is one of the few masters of American fiction' Independent on Sunday 'This is Sachar, owner of the most distinctive, clever, funny, philosophical voice in children's fiction ... a whale symbol on the page warns of forthcoming bridge analysis, which the readers can skip if they want. But they probably won't. Because this is Sachar' The Telegraph 'In Alton Richards, Sachar has created a credible and funny teenage lead ... The human drama is gripping' Financial Times 'The genius of Sachar's prose is that it's so plain and unshowy you don't notice the daredevil artistry of his storytelling until it's too late. You don't know you've been cut in half until you try to walk away ... As Uncle Lester might say, nicely played, Louis' Frank Cottrell Boyce, Guardian

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Claire Underwood:**

The book *The Cardturner* make one feel enjoy for your spare time. You can use to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can to be your best friend when you getting anxiety or having big problem together with your subject. If you can make reading through a book *The Cardturner* to be your habit, you can get considerably more advantages, like add your personal capable, increase your knowledge about many or all subjects. It is possible to know everything if you like available and read a e-book *The Cardturner*. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science book or encyclopedia or other people. So , how do you think about this guide?

#### **Virginia Mack:**

A lot of people always spent their particular free time to vacation or maybe go to the outside with them family members or their friend. Were you aware? Many a lot of people spent they will free time just watching TV, or maybe playing video games all day long. If you need to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read a new book. It is really fun to suit your needs. If you enjoy the book that you read you can spent 24 hours a day to reading a publication. The book *The Cardturner* it is very good to read. There are a lot of folks that recommended this book. These were enjoying reading this book. In case you did not have enough space to create this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book out of your smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book has high quality.

#### **Jennifer Wetzel:**

*The Cardturner* can be one of your starter books that are good idea. Many of us recommend that straight away because this publication has good vocabulary that may increase your knowledge in vocab, easy to understand, bit entertaining but still delivering the information. The article writer giving his/her effort to get every word into pleasure arrangement in writing *The Cardturner* but doesn't forget the main place, giving the reader the hottest and based confirm resource information that maybe you can be one of it. This great information can easily drawn you into brand new stage of crucial imagining.

#### **Duane Harden:**

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