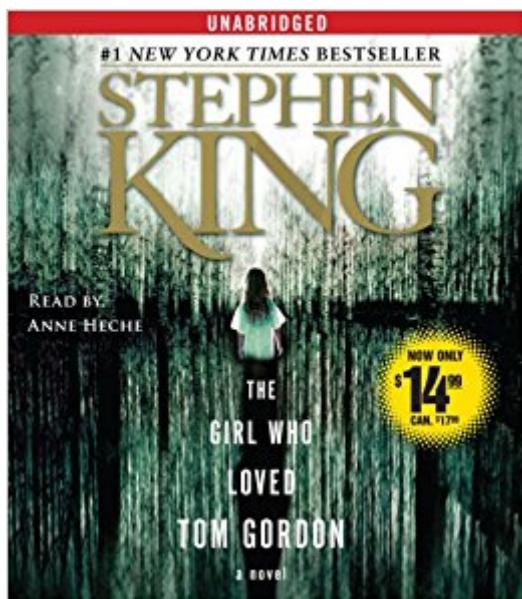


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# The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon



## **Synopsis**

What if the woods were full of them? And of course they were, the woods were full of everything you didn't like, everything you were afraid of and instinctively loathed, everything that tried to overwhelm you with nasty, no-brain panic. The brochure promised a "moderate-to-difficult" six-mile hike on the Maine-New Hampshire branch of the Appalachian Trail, where nine-year-old Trisha McFarland was to spend Saturday with her older brother, Pete, and her recently divorced mother. When she wanders off to escape their constant bickering, then tries to catch up by attempting a shortcut through the woods, Trisha strays deeper into a wilderness full of peril and terror. Especially when night falls. Trisha has only her wits for navigation, only her ingenuity as a defense against the elements, only her courage and faith to withstand her mounting fear. For solace she tunes her Walkman to broadcasts of Boston Red Sox games and the gritty performances of her hero, number 36, relief pitcher Tom Gordon. And when her radio's reception begins to fade, Trisha imagines that Tom Gordon is with her -- her key to surviving an enemy known only by the slaughtered animals and mangled trees in its wake. A classic story that engages our emotions at the most primal level. The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon explores our deep dread of the unknown and the extent to which faith can conquer it. It is a fairy tale grimmer than Grimm, but aglow with a girl's indomitable spirit.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

With a convincing mix of youthful optimism and world-weary resignation, reader Anne Heche adds resonance to this unabridged recording. Heche is especially effective as the 9-year-old heroine, Trisha McFarland, who makes a fateful decision during an afternoon hike with her dysfunctional

family. "The paths had forked in a 'Y.' She would simply walk across the gap and rejoin the main trail. Piece of cake. There was no chance of getting lost." As one might suspect, there is every chance she'll get lost--or worse--and taking the shortcut turns out to be a very bad choice indeed. At times Heche's reading may be too measured, but her narration is generally quite good and her steady portrayal of a young girl lost renders this tale all the more frightening. (Running time: 6.5 hours, 6 cassettes) --George Laney --This text refers to the Turtleback edition.

"The world had teeth and it could bite you with them anytime it wanted." King's new novelAwhich begins with that sentenceAhas teeth, too, and it bites hard. Readers will bite right back. Always one to go for the throat, King crafts a story that concerns not just anyone lost in the Maine-New Hampshire woods, but a plucky nine-year-old girl, and from a broken home, no less. This stacked deck is flush with aces, however. King has always excelled at writing about children, and Trisha McFarland, dressed in jeans and a Red Sox jersey and cap when she wanders off the forest path, away from her mother and brother and toward tremendous danger, is his strongest kid character yet, wholly believable and achingly empathetic in her vulnerability and resourcefulness. Trisha spends nine days (eight nights) in the forest, ravaged by wasps, thirst, hunger, illness, loneliness and terror. Her knapsack with a little food and water helps, but not as much as the Walkman that allows her to listen to Sox games, a crucial link to the outside world. Love of baseball suffuses the novel, from the chapter headings (e.g., "Bottom of the Ninth") to Trisha's reliance, through fevered imagined conversations with him, on (real life) Boston pitcher Tom Gordon and his grace under pressure. King renders the woods as an eerie wonderland, one harboring a something stalking Trisha but also, just perhaps, God: he explicitly explores questions of faith here (as he has before, as in *Desperation*) but without impeding the rush of the narrative. Despite its brevity, the novel ripples with ideas, striking images, pop culture allusions and recurring themes, plus an unnecessary smattering of scatology. It's classic King, brutal, intensely suspenseful, an exhilarating affirmation of the human spirit. 1,250,000 first printing; major ad/promo; BOMC and QPB featured alternates; simultaneous audiocassette and CD, read by Anne Heche. Copyright 1999 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Turtleback edition.

IÃfÃ¢Ã ª ¬Ã ª,Ã¢m getting back to my roots ÃfÃ¢Ã ª ¬Ã ª back in Junior High I took interest in reading through Stephen King, Isaac Asimov and Dean Koontz. Since graduating I have read little of their titles since, so am currently attacking KingÃfÃ¢Ã ª ¬Ã ª,Ã¢s back catalogue ÃfÃ¢Ã ª ¬Ã ª maybe to recapture my youth, but definitely reliving the fun I had when reading.

“The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon” was a great addition to my collection and a welcome distraction to many of the YA titles I’ve been reading of late. I really liked the play of perception and the POV of Trisha (Patricia) our protagonist, lending the interpretation of the story open to the reader to draw her or his own conclusions. Trisha has an indomitable spirit. I was really cheering for her and amazed at how she faced each challenge. Tom Gordon, the form of Trisha’s guardian angel, or inner strength was a great symbol to focus on. Though some of the baseball jargon got a little tiresome for me because I loath baseball it’s not really a big thing here in Australia. I appreciated it for what it was. A distraction and a coping mechanism to get Trisha from point A to point B. Our antagonist could fall under many forms – nature, fear fuelled imagination, her family; and I loved how it morphed from one to the other, never leaving you certain of anything. It took half the book to wind up and get interesting. I find every now and then Stephen King’s books do get a bit waffly in setting up the story and exploring the casts back stories. I know it is to get us to care about the characters and offer some perspective, but sometimes it feels a little long winded.

“The Girl Who Loved Tom Gordon” had the right amount of suspense and hair-raising creepiness. The second half of the novel was absolutely brilliant and I could not put it down. I enjoyed this a lot more than many other of King’s titles, because it was based on character development and an inner struggle rather than gory monsters and demons (though this could be argued). It was a psychological thriller instead of horror, and appealed to my survival instincts. I have found myself lost in the bush many times, having to trek a day or so to safety. It was so vivid, and the descriptions of the landscape - mysterious and beautiful at the same time. Nature can be astoundingly picturesque and the face of death at the same time. A great read that induces chills and makes you want to pull your feet up off the floor, with the hint of the disgusting and the unknown. Totally recommending this to all my friends who like a scare, but don’t want to feel like tossing up their dinner from gore.

If you’re a hiker or simply love to visit parks and enjoy nature (I am both), you’ve probably wondered at some point what it would be like to be lost in the woods (if you haven’t already had that experience). Either way, when you read this book, you will feel like you have been lost in the wilderness with Trisha McFarland. My favorite quality of Stephen King’s work is his ability to create an extremely detailed account of what his characters are seeing and feeling. I’ve read this book at least four times over the years because it’s easy to become absorbed in the process of getting lost

with Trisha as she makes choice after choice that takes her farther and farther into isolated, wild territory. It's also inspiring because she is very resourceful in her desperate bid for survival. Love of her family and a baseball team plays a part in shoring up the strength of her mental state, thus the title relation. This story makes you think about what you would do if you were suddenly cut off from everything you know and love. Who is the first person you would miss? What else would you feel you could not do without? You want to cheer for Trisha to get back to her life, which although imperfect as is everyone's, is perceptively dear to her. The story also starts to dip into the mystical, like looking into a fun house mirror, you wonder, along with the main character, if things really are what they appear to be or something else entirely, not of this world. I can say for certain this is my favorite Stephen King book and would fully recommend it to be enjoyed over and over again. I appreciate that there is not a lot of gore in it, which allows Stephen King's adeptness for creating rich verbal descriptions to stand alone without much of a shock factor. As readers and movie goers, we all know and love Stephen King for his scary tales, but I think it's important to appreciate his descriptions of environment and feeling on their own. He makes reading more vibrant and palpable. That's what draws me back to some of his books again and again. This would be a good read on a vacation to the mountains or woods! I'm going out on a limb here, no pun intended, but let's face it, sometimes we read to get lost and get away from the normal stress of life; well this book will help you get lost for a little while. Enjoy! Other books by Stephen King with similar attributes mentioned in this review are *The Long Walk*, *From a Buick 8*, and *Rose Madder*.

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