
THE
CARDTURNER
It's not about the hand you're dealt, but how well you play the cards

LOGLINE

When a directionless seventeen-year-old is pressed into service as his blind great-uncle's cardturner in tournament bridge, he finds himself at the center of a fifty-year-old tragedy, a girl with an extraordinary gift, and the chance to rewrite history before it’s too late.





STORY

The summer after junior year of high school looks bleak for Alton Richards. No girlfriend, no money, no job. At the urging of his mother (angling for a shot at a large inheritance), Alton takes a job as cardturner for his blind great-uncle Lester Trapp, a legendary bridge player now dependent on others to play his cards.

What begins as a summer obligation becomes something Alton never expected. He finds himself drawn into Trapp's world — the fierce competitive world of tournament bridge, the mystery of a fifty-year-old heartbreak, and Toni Castaneda, a girl with an extraordinary gift whose grandmother was the love of Trapp's life.

As Alton begins to understand what Trapp lost — and why — he faces a choice that will define him: stand aside as Trapp did, or step forward and fight for what matters before it's too late.

COMPARABLES



WHY THE CARDTURNER?

The Cardturner is based on a novel by Louis Sachar — author of Holes, winner of the Newbery Medal, with over eight million copies sold and a film adaptation grossing over $67 million worldwide. Sachar's track record proves that his work translates commercially and critically to the screen.

The Cardturner does for bridge what Searching for Bobby Fischer and The Queen's Gambit did for chess — transforms a specialized intellectual world into a universal story about talent, mentorship, and what it costs to be extraordinary.

Like Holes, The Cardturner takes us on a nonlinear journey into the past and connects it to the present in a fun and engaging way.

The role of Lester Trapp represents a rare opportunity for an A-list actor of a certain age — a complex, witty, emotionally devastating performance at the center of a commercially viable film.















LESTER TRAPP

79 / 29

A blind, razor-sharp bridge legend in the final chapter of a life shadowed by one unforgivable act of cowardice. Trapp moves through the world like a man for whom the visible world was always beside the point — his mind faster than the room, his wit sharper than his cane, his silences more articulate than most people's speeches. Beneath the formidable exterior lives a man still carrying a fifty-year-old heartbreak he never found the words to confess. Playing both the imperious, world-weary elder and the brilliant, passionate young man he once was, this is a role in two lifetimes — and the performance of one.

IMAGINING TRAPP



ROBERT DE NIRO



AL PACINO



BRIAN COX



JOHN LITHGOW

ALTON RICHARDS (17)

Earnest, funny, and quietly smarter than he gives himself credit for, Alton arrives in Trapp's world as a reluctant errand boy and leaves it as something harder to name. He starts the summer doing his mother's bidding. He ends it doing his own. The journey between those two points — through bridge tables, uninvited ghosts, and a girl he can't stop thinking about — is the kind of coming-of-age arc that only works when the actor makes you forget it's an arc at all.

CASTING SUGGESTIONS


MASON THAMES


WALKER SCOBELL


AIDEN GALLAGHER


OWEN COOPER

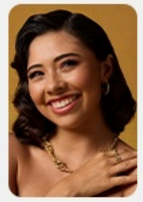


TONI CASTANEDA (17) & ANNABEL KING (early 20s)

Green-eyed, warm, and quietly fearless, Toni carries a secret that has defined — and endangered — every woman in her family for several generations. Her gift has brought her joy, connection, and a fifty-year-old friendship — and is now threatening to cost her everything. In playing Toni, the actress also embodies Annabel — the luminous, tragic young woman whose love story ended in an institution fifty years ago and whose unfinished business sets the entire film in motion. Two women. One actress who has to make you believe in both.

CASTING SUGGESTIONS


MALINA WEISSMAN


XOCHITL GOMEZ


MCKENNA GRACE


ARIANA GREENBLATT



GLORIA WEINTRAUB (60s)

Trapp's bridge partner of twenty years, Gloria is the human being he would never have become without someone to soften his edges. Warm, sharp, elaborately accessorized, and entirely unintimidated by him, she is the film's emotional anchor at the bridge table — the one who has seen everything, forgiven most of it, and kept showing up anyway. A small role with a large presence.

CASTING SUGGESTIONS



ANNETTE BENNING



SUSAN SARANDON



JEAN SMART



MAUREEN RICHARDS (40s)

Alton's mother is not a villain — she's a woman who ran out of options and started calling it strategy. Funny, a little desperate, and more self-aware than she lets on, Maureen navigates her way through the film with the confidence of someone who has convinced herself she's doing it for her children. She is. Mostly. Her arc from operator to genuine witness is one of the film's quiet surprises.

CASTING SUGGESTIONS



KATHRYN HAHN



MARIA GAY HARDEN



ERIN HAYES

PRODUCERS



MICHAEL SAMMACICCIA

Mike Sammaciccia began his career with Robert De Niro's ***Tribeca Productions*** and ***Miramax Films***. He became ***Walden Media***'s first creative executive, bringing in the book Holes and serving as executive in charge of production. He was the SVP of live-action for ***Viacom/Nickelodeon*** and then produced ***Survive***, starring Sophie Turner and Corey Hawkins. Sammaciccia then launched ***Afterglow Pictures***. Afterglow has over 15 active projects including films and TV series with ***HBO Max***, ***Ubisoft***, ***Fremantle***, ***Sony***, and ***Westbrook Studios***.



TONY GREENBERG

Tony Greenberg, MD, is the founder of Two ***Jacks Productions LLC***, a literary adaptation-focused production company with multiple projects in active development. He produced ***The Rideshare Killer*** (2022), currently streaming on Tubi, and his feature ***Lynda Flynn*** is scheduled for release in late 2026 or early 2027. Tony has spent a decade identifying and developing award-winning source material for the screen. ***The Cardturner*** represents his most ambitious project to date — a meticulous, years-long development process that has produced a script of genuine commercial and critical potential.



CONTACT

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