

## Sample review for A Tender Reed

Abandoned by her parents and raised by a grandmother who viewed her presence as punishment for some sin she had unknowingly committed, Michelle Hurley has learned to depend on no one but herself. Twenty years later, Michelle lives alone on the family farm. Her personal life is nonexistent. Romance and family never cross her mind. She drives a sports car, talks to her dog as though it can understand every word she says, and makes the maximum contributions to her retirement plan. She is perfectly happy in the niche she's carved out for herself.

Michelle's self-contained world is turned upside down the morning she finds her sister's two small children under her lilac bushes without even shoes on their feet. How could this have happened to her? She never bothered anyone. All she wants is to be left alone.

With no other choice, she brings the children into her home. Surely the situation will be rectified soon, she consoles herself. Her sister will come back, and her life can go back to the way it was. But days turn into weeks and weeks into months, and still no Nicole.

Slowly, Michelle begins to see her niece and nephew's intrusion into her life as a blessing instead of the curse she first suspected. She begins to wonder what she'll do when her sister comes back. How can she let the children go? What kind of legal or moral rights does she have to them? They belong with their mother. She never wanted children in the first place. So why does the thought of losing them tear her apart?

Into Michelle's life, comes an old beau, Kyle Swann. She immediately realizes her feelings for him are as strong as ever. But she knows picking up their past relationship is out of the question. He is the pastor of a church, and she is determined to distance herself from the hollow religion of her childhood. Can Michelle ever see the difference between Grandma Catherine's version of Christian charity and the true meaning of love and Christ-like servanthood? Will she learn that sacrifice brings its own reward? Will she realize the wall she built around her heart to keep others out has also locked her in?

A Tender Reed by Teresa Slack will have readers laughing and crying throughout this story of love and reconciliation, forgiveness and letting go of the past.