



Ship of Magic (Liveship Traders Trilogy Book 1)

By Robin Hobb

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Ship of Magic (Liveship Traders Trilogy Book 1) By Robin Hobb

Bingtown is a hub of exotic trade and home to a merchant nobility famed for its liveships—rare vessels carved from wizardwood, which ripens magically into sentient awareness. Now the fortunes of one of Bingtown’s oldest families rest on the newly awakened liveship *Vivacia*.

For Althea Vestrit, the ship is her rightful legacy. For Althea’s young nephew, wrenched from his religious studies and forced to serve aboard the ship, the *Vivacia* is a life sentence. But the fate of the ship—and the Vestrits—may ultimately lie in the hands of an outsider: the ruthless buccaneer captain Kennit, who plans to seize power over the Pirate Isles by capturing a liveship and bending it to his will.

BONUS: This edition includes an excerpt from Robin Hobb's *Mad Ship*.

Praise for Robin Hobb and the Liveship Traders Trilogy

“Fantasy as it ought to be written . . . Robin Hobb’s books are diamonds in a sea of zircons.”—**George R. R. Martin**

“A truly extraordinary saga . . . The characterizations are consistently superb, and [Hobb] animates everything with love for and knowledge of the sea.”—**Booklist**

“A major work of high fantasy, reading like a cross between Tolkien and Patrick O’Brian . . . one of the finest fantasy sagas to bridge the millennium.”—**Publishers Weekly**

“Rich, complex . . . [Hobb’s] plotting is complex but tightly controlled, and her descriptive powers match her excellent visual imagination. But her chief virtue is that she delineates character extremely well.”—**Interzone**

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

Robin Hobb, author of the Farseer trilogy, has returned to that world for a new series. *Ship of Magic* is a sea tale, reminiscent of *Moby Dick* and Patrick O'Brian's Aubrey/Maturin series in its details of shipboard life. It is also a fantasy adventure with sea serpents, pirates, and all sorts of magic. The *liveships* have distinct personalities and partner with specific people, somewhat like Anne McCaffrey's Brain ships and their Brawns, though these are trading ships and have full crews.

Hobb has peopled the book with many wonderfully developed characters. Most of the primary ones are members of the Vestrits, an Old Trader family which owns the liveship *Vivacia*. Their stories are intercut with those of Kennit, the ambitious pirate Brashen, the disinherited scion of another family who served on the Vestrit's ship, and *Paragon*, an old liveship abandoned and believed mad. The sentient sea serpents have their own story hinted at, as well.

Though *Ship of Magic* is full of action, none of the plotlines get resolved in this book. Readers who resent being left with many questions and few answers after almost 700 pages should think twice before starting, or wait until the rest of the series is out so that their suspense won't be too prolonged. But Hobb's writing draws you in and makes you care desperately about what will happen next, the mark of a terrific storyteller. --*Nona Vero*

From Library Journal

The untimely death of Old Trader Ephron Vestrit deprives his daughter Althea of her inheritance and places her ambitious brother-in-law Kyle in command of the live ship *Viveca* and the family fortunes. The author of the Farseer trilogy (*Assassin's Apprentice*, LJ 3/15/95; *Royal Assassin*, Bantam, 1996; *Assassin's Quest*, Bantam, 1997) launches a new series set in a world of sentient ships, merchant traders, ruthless pirates, dangerous treasures, seagoing dragons, and a mysterious elder race. Hobb excels in depicting complex characters; even her villains command respect, if not sympathy, for their actions. Most libraries should purchase this exotic, nonstandard fantasy.

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From [Booklist](#)

Hobb follows the well-received Farseer trilogy (*Assassin's Apprentice* [1995], *Royal Assassin* [1996], *Assassin's Quest*) with the first volume in what promises to be a truly extraordinary saga, *The Liveship Traders*. The basic concept is that, in Bingtown, ships built of wizardwood become sentient beings after three generations of their owning families have died aboard them--sentient but not docile. When Althea Vestrit is driven off her family's liveship *Vivacia* by her ruthless brother-in-law, trouble soon swarms thick and fast. She has to disguise herself as a boy to get back to sea, *Vivacia* is menaced by the pirate Captain Kennit, the Vestrit family's debts and pubescent daughter Malta threaten to create yet more problems, and Althea's nephew Wintrow is virtually kidnapped from the priesthood of Sa to become a sailor with little more status than a slave. Hobb makes the plot complex but doesn't let it become convoluted, sees to it that the characterizations are consistently superb, and animates everything with love for and knowledge of the sea. If Patrick O'Brian were to turn to writing high fantasy, he might produce something like this. Kudos to the author and encore! *Roland Green*

Users Review

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