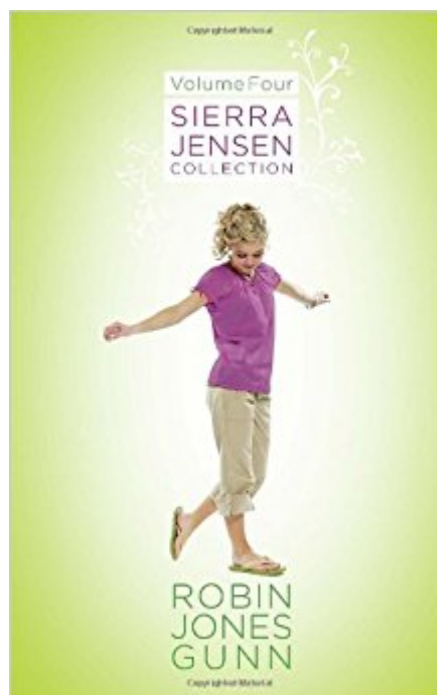




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# **Hold On Tight/Closer Than Ever/Take My Hand (The Sierra Jensen Series 10-12) (Sierra Jensen Collection, Volume 4)**



## Synopsis

College on the Horizon She's the bold, free-spirited type. She's young, she's fun, and she's following God. She's Sierra Jensen's •Christy Miller's good friend in her senior year of high school with college fast approaching! In this fourth volume of the popular Sierra Jensen series, Sierra's life becomes a roller coaster of decisions as she strives to Hold on Tight through choices about friendship, honesty, and college. Then, with high school graduation Closer Than Ever, she eagerly plans for Paul's visit and can't wait to know where everyone will be going to college. Finally, in Take My Hand, a misunderstanding with Paul means Sierra must start college hurt and confused. Is the damage to their relationship as final as it feels? Christy Miller knows a good friend when she meets her, and so will you! • Sierra Jensen is better than ever! Hold On Tight Decisions, decisions. That's all Sierra's life is lately. Eager to escape the stress, she can't wait to join her brother and a few friends on a road trip as they visit a university in Southern California and tack on a day at an amusement park. It'll be great! But right from the start, things go wrong. And suddenly Sierra's trip is full of more twists and turns than any roller coaster. There's only one way to handle a wild ride like this: hold on tight, trust God to keep her safe and scream for all she's worth. Closer Than Ever Paul is coming home! What's more, he's coming to Sierra's graduation party. She spends every spare moment planning after all, his visit has to be perfect. Then, more good news! Sierra and Randy are accepted into Rancho Corona University. Sierra couldn't be happier until she hears Vicki hasn't received an acceptance letter. Does that mean Sierra and her friends won't be in college together? But the worst news of all comes on graduation night. There's been a terrible accident. With limited information, Sierra fears the worst. Can she let go and trust her dreams to God? Take My Hand What a year! Not only is Sierra starting college, but her older sister, Tawni, is engaged to Paul's older brother, Jeremy! As the two families prepare for the wedding, Sierra's excitement grows. At last, she and Paul will be together face-to-face! But their longed-for reunion is marred by a costly misunderstanding that turns Paul away and sends Sierra off to college hurt and confused. Only the gentle wisdom of Sierra's good friend, Christy Miller, helps her face a difficult decision. But is it too late for Sierra and Paul? Story Behind the Book "After writing the twelve-book Christy Miller series for teens, a new teen character showed up on the pages of the final novel. Her name was Sierra Jensen, and she was such a compelling character that readers began asking for a series about Sierra in order to hear more

about her life choices. Our family had just moved to Portland at the time, and I found it easy to picture a sixteen-year-old like Sierra shopping at the local vintage clothing stores, hanging out with friends at a garage band concert, and serving at the homeless shelter on weekends.

—Robin Jones Gunn

## Book Information

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Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

## Customer Reviews

Robin Jones Gunn is a God-lover who has been telling stories all her life and writing them down for publication the past twenty years. A world traveler and mom of a grown son and daughter, Robin confesses she's still crazy about her husband after twenty-nine years of doing life together.

SIERRA JENSEN STEPPED INSIDE Mama Bear's Bakery. She had worked here for almost a year but never tired of the fresh fragrance of cinnamon and warm bread that greeted her as the tiny bell over the door announced her entrance. This clear spring afternoon she wasn't working. She was meeting friends. Glancing at the empty corner table by the front window, Sierra realized she was the first one to arrive for the Monday afternoon gathering. For months she and her friends Vicki and Amy had bent their heads close together over that same table every Monday at four o'clock. They shared secrets, settled arguments, gave free advice, and teased each other mercilessly. Mrs. Kraus, the owner of Mama Bear's, called to Sierra

from behind the counter. "I just pulled out a pan of fresh rolls. Will you girls be sharing your usual large one with an extra dab of frosting?" "I'm sure we will," Sierra said. Six other customers were seated in the bakery, and Mrs. Kraus appeared to be the only person working in the front of the shop. "Would you like me to get the tea for us?" "No, I think I can remember what you always have. I'll get it." The cheerful, round Mrs. Kraus turned to greet an older woman who had entered the shop. Sierra settled her slim frame into her usual chair, welcoming the stream of sunshine that spilled through the window and cascaded down her long, blond curls. She loved the feelings of promise this time of year brought, especially this spring. It was her senior year in high school, and endless possibilities stretched out for her future. That was probably why she felt impatient for Amy and Vicki to show up. She had a very promising possibility to tell them about. Across the street a battered old Volvo pulled into a metered parking space. Sierra watched as petite Amy flipped her sunglasses onto the top of her head and fingered the ends of her short, dark hair at the base of her neck. Amy glanced right and left and then hurried across the street. Her dash had a slight zigzag pattern to it. She kept her head down and didn't watch where she was going. That's the way Amy approaches life, Sierra thought, zigzagging with her head down. I'll have to tell her that. "Personality observations" is what Vicki had first labeled these insights, when she communicated to Sierra that the way Sierra bit her lower lip was a sign of worry. Sierra accepted the observation with grateful surprise. She had never realized she bit her lower lip. Amy, however, wasn't interested in observations lately. The openness she had demonstrated in February was gone by the beginning of March, and it didn't seem to be returning. Sierra was just glad that, even though Amy hadn't been saying much during their get-togethers, at least she kept coming. Sierra had nearly lost her friendship with Amy once, and she didn't want that to happen again. When Amy entered, Sierra smiled and waved. The pair had certainly experienced their ups and downs in their year of friendship. In spite of their differences, they respected and deeply cared for each other, and that's what kept them close. "Vicki's not here yet?" Amy said, slipping into a chair across from Sierra. Sierra shook her head. "When I saw her at lunch, I told her I had something to tell you guys, so I thought she would be the first one here." "Guess you'll have to tell me first, then," Amy said, her dark eyes glancing at Sierra's outfit. "I like that shirt. When did you get it?" "Believe it or not, I found it stuffed in a bag Mom was taking to the Salvation Army. I think it was Tawni's. I'm actually wearing something my sister liked!" Amy reached over and felt the sleeve of Sierra's

lavender chenille top. "I like this material. It sure brings out the blue in your eyes." Amy smiled as she added, "If you get tired of it, you can always toss it in my direction." Mrs. Kraus arrived at their table, balancing a tray with their snack. Sierra reached for the mugs of hot tea, and Amy grabbed the plate with the cinnamon roll. "It's my turn to pay," Amy said. "I'll bring it up to the register, Mrs. Kraus." "No hurry. Just enjoy," Mrs. Kraus said. The bell above the door announced Vicki's arrival. She swished past Mrs. Kraus and, with a flushed face, began to talk before she even sat down. "Sorry! I was almost out of gas, and I didn't have any money, so I had to go to the bank, and the line at the drive-up was terrible and, oh, you already ordered? I wanted iced tea today. I think I'll get myself a glass of ice and turn this into iced tea. Anyone else want anything?" Both Sierra and Amy shook their heads. Vicki swept past the tables to the counter. Watching her, Sierra thought about the contrast between her two friends. If Amy zigzagged through life with her head down, Vicki moved through her days at full speed, with her chin to the sky and the wind in her long, silky, brown hair. That zestful optimism eventually had linked Sierra and Vicki, even though Sierra originally had interpreted Vicki's bold approach to life as conceit. Of course, when they first met, Vicki did have an overly active bent toward flirting and was far more interested in developing relationships with guys than with girls. Amy pulled off a corner of the cinnamon roll. "Do you suppose we can start eating without Vicki? I'm starved." "Sure. She'll be right back." Sierra pulled her peppermint tea bag out of the mug. With a glance at Vicki, she wondered how her friends would describe her approach to life. Did they see her as a zigzagger or as someone with her face to the sun? She felt she had changed a lot during the past year, and she knew that Vicki and Amy had changed, too. What would they be like a year from now? Or even six months from now, when they all would begin their freshman year of college? The instant Vicki returned to their table, Sierra spilled her news. "Okay, are you both ready for my big announcement?" "It can't be that huge if you didn't tell me at lunch today and made me wait until now," Vicki said, carefully pouring her steaming tea over the glass of crushed ice. "I wanted to tell you both at the same time." "I appreciate that," Amy said. Amy had changed schools this year after her parents' divorce. She was at a public high school now, instead of at Royal Academy, the small, private Christian school where the three originally had met. "So?" Vicki prompted. "Last night my brother called and told me he's going to Southern California next week. He's pretty sure he wants to attend Rancho Corona University for his master's degree, but he wanted to check out the school

before he made a final decision. "That's your big news?" Vicki asked. Her pretty face took on a teasing grin. "You definitely could have told me that at lunch." "Wait," Sierra said, her enthusiasm unruffled. "He's going to drive down there next week, and he asked if I wanted to go with him, and my parents said yes!" "Good for you," Vicki said. "Bring back a surfer for each of us." "Didn't you go to California last year for Easter vacation?" Amy asked. "Yes." "And you also flew down there for your friends' wedding last summer." Amy turned her lower lip into a friendly pout. "How do you expect us to be happy for you again? You keep going on these adventures, and we don't go anywhere. I've never been to California ever in my life. I've only been to Seattle once." "I hope you have a good time," Vicki said cheerfully to Sierra. Sierra broke into a wide grin. "You mean you hope we have a good time." "We're meaning you and Wes?" Vicki ventured. "Or we're meaning the three of us?" "All of us!" Sierra spouted. "My brother is driving my parents' van down, and they said I could invite my friends to go. We should be able to get an excused absence from school, since it's a college scouting trip. Wes said he would let us check out as many different campuses as we want, as long as he can spend a day at Rancho Corona." "I'm in," Vicki said without a moment's hesitation. "What kind of colleges?" Amy asked cautiously. "Amy!" Vicki nudged her arm. "You just said you never get to go anywhere. Accept the invitation and say thank you." Amy hesitated a moment before saying, "It would be kind of fun." "When do we leave?" Vicki asked. "Wednesday after school," Sierra said. "I'm going to drive the van down to Corvallis, and then Wes and I will take turns driving from there. It's going to take us at least twenty hours, so we'll sleep in the van. In Los Angeles, we'll stay with a couple Wesley knows." "Where is Rancho Corona University?" Vicki asked. "I don't know. Someplace down there. It's about an hour's drive from where my sister lives, so we might stay with her the next night." "This is going to be so much fun!" Vicki sipped her iced tea and glanced at Amy for a sign of enthusiasm. "When do we come back?" Amy asked. "Late Sunday night. It'll be a really packed couple of days, but I think it's going to be great. You do want to come, don't you?" Amy nodded, but she still didn't look overly excited. "I'll have to get off work and clear

everything with my mom. "Me, too," Vicki said. "But that shouldn't be a problem." "Thanks for reminding me," Sierra said. "I forgot I have to ask Mrs. Kraus for the days off." "She always lets you adjust your schedule," Vicki said. "I'm sure she'll be her sweet self and give you the time off. Now let's just pray my boss is as understanding." Sierra laughed. "Your boss? Why wouldn't he be?" "Vicki's boss was her dad. Mr. Navarone owned a large car dealership in Portland, and Vicki worked there part time doing clerical work." "I know," Vicki said. "He'll let me off. My dad is going to be thrilled I'm showing serious interest in going to college. He'll probably not only send me off with his blessing but also with enough spending money to treat everyone to a trip to an amusement park down there." Amy's expression lit up. "Could we go do that? Really? How about Universal Studios? Do you guys think we could squeeze in a trip to Universal Studios? Or at least to Hollywood?" "I don't see why not," Sierra answered. "We said we could plan whatever we wanted." The three friends bent their heads close. As the spring sunshine lit their little corner of the world, they pulled apart their cinnamon roll and began to make plans for their upcoming road trip. Sierra felt a gleeful rush of anticipation and knew the next week and a half couldn't speed by fast enough for her.

My 14 year old daughter absolutely loves this series. She read the 3 books in this volume very quickly. She begged me to order the next volume each time she finished a volume. She was very sad to finish the last book and felt very connected to these characters. I felt good knowing she is reading about characters who are living out their Christian values.

Love these books. I am working on reading through all of Robin Jones Gunn's books. I read the Christy Miller series when I was younger and I think I read the Sierra series but I couldn't remember so I am reading them again. I am now working on her adult series. I can't get enough.

The Sierra Jensen Collection volume 4 is really amazing. This book in particular has taught me to do what's best for me. This whole series has made me strengthen my relationship with Christ and to slow down and think before I do. This volume has made me want to "fill my piggy bank" with all the cherished moments with that special one. I love this series. Along with the Christy Miller series. Thank you Robin Jones Gunn.

Love these books! Robin Jones Gunn is incredible. The way she writes just sparks something inside me... She's wonderful! I know you'll love her books.

great

I am a school librarian and needed this book to complete "The Sierra Jensen Collection". It was just as described and arrived so quickly it surprised me.

I bought this for my daughter as I loved this series myself.

it was a great book, I have read the whole collection and it was wonderful, great book at a great price

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