



# Chasing Augustus

*Kimberly Newton Fusco*

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**Chasing Augustus** Kimberly Newton Fusco

**A sweetly satisfying novel about a girl and her lost dog, perfect for fans of Jennifer E. Holm and Kirby Larson.**

Rosie's led a charmed life with her loving dad, who runs the town donut shop. It's true her mother abandoned them when Rosie was just a baby, but her dad's all she's ever needed. But now that her father's had a stroke, Rosie lives with her tough-as-nails grandfather. And her beloved dog, Gloaty Gus, has just gone missing.

Rosie's determined to find him. With the help of a new friend and her own determination, she'll follow the trail anywhere . . . no matter where it leads. If she doesn't drive the whole world crazy in the meantime.

Kimberly Newton Fusco's tender story brings to life a feisty, unsinkable, unstoppable, unforgettable girl who knows she's a fighter . . . if she can only figure out who's already on her side.

Praise for Kimberly Newton Fusco's *Beholding Bee*:

"Fans of Kate DiCamillo, Jennifer Holm, and Polly Horvath will find this an enjoyable and engrossing read."  
--*School Library Journal*

"[A] really terrific, hopeful story. . . . This could be my favorite middle-grade novel of [the year]." --*The Christian Science Monitor*

"A modern twist on fairy godmothers [with] strong, supportive women who don't need to provide a Prince Charming to make dreams come true." --*The Horn Book*

## Chasing Augustus Details

Date : Published September 19th 2017 by Alfred A. Knopf Books for Young Readers

ISBN : 9780385754019

Author : Kimberly Newton Fusco

Format : Hardcover 336 pages

Genre : Childrens, Middle Grade, Realistic Fiction, Family, Animals, Dogs

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# From Reader Review Chasing Augustus for online ebook

## Kathie Jackson says

One of the best books I have read in a long time! (Note I didn't qualify this as one of the best "Kids" or "Children's" books!) For fans of *Because of Winn Dixie* and *The Hard Pan Trilogy* (Higher Power of Lucky), this book has the similar feel of a quirky cast of characters living a hard-scrabble life in a gritty podunk town. Quite literally a gritty town in this book: it is a sand quarry town, and "if you leave your windows open at breakfast, you'll be able to write your name in the grit on your kitchen table by dinner." Ten year old Rosie narrates: her mom took off for her career and another man when Rosie was a baby. She was raised by her loving dad until he suffered a near-fatal stroke a year ago. Mom reappeared briefly, not to take Rosie and raise her, but to sell the house, deposit Rosie with her cantankerous paternal grandfather Frank, and to give away Rosie's beloved dog Augustus without telling her. Rosie is quite justifiably angry, pretty much all the time, and in many ways is not what would appear to be a sympathetic character, but somehow the author makes her steal your heart. Grandpa Frank is a retired Marine who's as tough as an old boot and he and Rosie knock heads constantly. The primary plot device that moves the story forward is Rosie's obsessive search for her beloved dog, Augustus, aka "Gloaty Gus," but there is a rich tapestry of other believable characters in her orbit, each with fascinating and frequently heartbreaking backstories. The author writes lyrically and makes liberal use of physical metaphors to telegraph emotion: hornets buzz when Rosie is enraged and she feels many things in her toes. Aside from the discussions you can have with readers about this wonderful story filled with moral dilemmas and life lessons, you could also talk about the imagery and other writing devices the author uses. I laughed hard and cried several times throughout the reading of this wonderful book. Highly recommended for middle grade through middle school readers.

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## Laura Gardner says

???????/5 for *Chasing Augustus*, which I received from the MA YA devices blog in exchange for an honest review.

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It's summertime, but Rosie is ornery and mad. Her dad had a stroke and is in a home and her mom moved back to California after giving away her dog. Now Rosie lives full time with her equally grumpy grandfather who is running her father's donut shop and attempting to care for Rosie. Rosie spends all her days on her bike looking for her dog, Augustus or Gloaty Gus. She forces her new friend Philippe, a foster kid from next door, to help her in her mission. Will she ever find her dog? And more importantly, will she ever find happiness?

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The language is incredibly descriptive in *Chasing Augustus*; you can hear and smell the scenes while reading. I love Rosie's insults, turns of phrase like "clay-brained boar-pig" or "loathsome toad" she and her dad came up with after reading about the middle ages. Readers will love seeing how characters grow and change throughout the book, not just Rosie, but also her grandfather, her friend Philippe and the town pariah, Swanson. Rosie's pain is visceral in parts; my heart hurt for her. This book is a wonderful read if you like to lose yourself in someone else's problems. It's always hard to read a book with an unpleasant main character. Once readers understand where Rosie is coming from, though, they will sympathize with her and forgive her vinegary personality.

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## **Ms. Yingling says**

E ARC from Netgalley

Rosita (Rosie!) has had some challenges. Her mother moved to California when Rosie was a year old because she just couldn't be a mother. Rosie's father ran the local doughnut shop, but when he has a serious stroke, Rosie has to move in with her grandfather Harry. He's an irascible old coot who subsists on sardines and crackers, and doesn't want to be saddled with a grandchild. He and Rosie's mother have also given away Rosie's dog, Augustus. The dog, also known as Gloaty Gus, was smelly and ill-behaved, but Rosie loves him and makes every effort to find her dog. With the help of a neighbor boy, Phillipe, she manages to track down her dog after a lot of searching, finding him with an unlikely new owner. Can she convince Harry to bring the dog back home, and will Gus' presence make her life any better.

Strengths: Dogs are very important, and Rosie's longing for her dog is completely understandable. Readers who like sad stories will enjoy the gritty, horrible town and the difficult, somewhat unpleasant characters. Rosie's mother, in particular, is not a nice person.

Weaknesses: This was quirky and sad, but also rather slow moving.

What I really think: As much as I love my dog and understand the need that Rosie has to find hers, there were too many unpleasant characters in the book for me to really connect with any of them. Readers who want sad dog stories may still want to take a look at this.

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## **Tanja says**

A sweet and feisty "unsinkable" young girl, left by her mum, a dog she loves more than anything else... sounds familiar? A popular theme in kidlit novels, I agree. Yet, this story is unique in its very own way; the cast of characters, each and everyone so special, so real. Rosie touched my heart right from the start; she is such a fighter. Her determination to find her dog, to find happiness again while being stuck in a difficult situation, is heart-wrenching and heart-warming at the same time. There is so much hope in this story that eventually all will be alright, that it is worth fighting for those we love and for what is important to us in life. I have no doubt, this will become a popular title in our Primary School library.

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## **Liesl Stach says**

I found it extremely difficult to empathize with the main character, Rosie. Her father had a stroke and her mom gave her dog away and now she lives with her grandfather who doesn't really understand how to care for her, all of which you would assume lends itself to empathy, or at least sympathy. And I understand that she is a child going through a hard time and she doesn't quite have a handle on her emotions. But Rosie so whiny and ill-tempered and just plain mean to everyone in the book, even when all they do is try to help her. Most of the characters, now that I think about it, have a short fuse -- flying off the handle at the smallest inconvenience or challenge. It was hard to get through the book, even though it does have a relatively happy ending.

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## **Patrick says**

Started a few pages the other day but when I sat down tonight and really got into the book, I couldn't put down. Loved Rosie, her dog, her grandfather, and her two sidekicks. What a great and emotional story. Such strong writing!!!

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## **Cindy Mitchell \*Kiss the Book\* says**

Fusco, Kimberly Newton Chasing Augustus 326 pages . Alfred A. Knopf (Random House), 2017. \$16.99. Language: G; Mature Content: G; Violence: G.

Rosie has a hole in her heart as big as the sun. It's been there since the day her mom gave her dog away. Her mom has been nothing but a disruption in her life since she left when Rosie was a baby. Her father has been her guiding light, but now that he's had a stroke, it's just her and Grandpa Harry. Though grumpy and irritable for getting stuck raising his grandchild, Rosie eventually begins to see the difference between her grandfather and her mother. With all the disappointment in her life, Rosie has one goal. She will stop at nothing until she finds the dog that filled her heart. Going on a tip that "crazy lady" Swanson has her dog, she sets out every day with a plan to steal back her dog.

Rosie is a spunky, hard-headed, independent, quirky 11-year-old that will stop at nothing to find her dog. Despite all that, it's hard not to love her. In fact, all the characters are lovable despite their flaws due to the author's superb writing. This is a fresh, new book that is sure to please the animal loving crowd, especially those who loved Shiloh and Because of Winn-Dixie. There are few books that I have a hard time putting down. This was one of them because the characters are so fully developed and interesting.

EL, MS – ESSENTIAL. Reviewer: Valerie McEnroe, Media Specialist  
<https://kissthebook.blogspot.com/2018...>

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## **Pam Page says**

3.5 stars. This book was beautifully written with an interesting setting - a dismal, gritty town. The characters are full of sadness and perhaps this story was just too sad for me. But I questioned how children will feel reading the book. There were characters I just disliked (Rosie's mother, her grandfather) and it seemed that Rosie really had no one in her corner. I almost abandoned the book at one point but wanted to discover if Rosie found her dog. I found the ending satisfying but maybe it ended a little too pat.

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## **Barbara says**

After her father has a stroke, Rosalita (Rosie) must move in with her grandfather, Harry. She misses the way things used to be, but what she really misses is her beloved dog, Augustus. She has no idea where Gus is since her mother gave him away when she visited from California in order to get things sorted out for Rosie. She doesn't even remember where the dog went. Harry has no clue how to handle a girl Rosie age, and he's not exactly what one would call nurturing, at least in the traditional sense of the word. With help from

Philippe and Cynthia, two friends that seem more troublesome than helpful at times, Rosie rides her bike all around the area, determined to find Gus and bring him home. Along the way, Rosie loses herself but finds herself again as she and her allies come to realize that help can come from the most unlikely places, even from Swanson, the neighbor that everyone seems to avoid and demonize. There are many unresolved aspects to the story, including Rosie's avoidance of her father while he is hospitalized and how she deals with her mother, but many intermediate readers will be moved by this story of how several misfits find acceptance with one another. Rosie might be hard to like, but it's impossible to resist her loyalty to her dog and how, in many respects, she helps her grandfather figure out how to embrace life more fully.

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### **Bari says**

Great book, I loved it. I highly recommend it.

Rosie is a wonderful character that you get attached to quickly. She's spunky, stubborn, doesn't have the easiest life and is currently living with her grumpy grandpa. Her mother gave away her beloved dog Augustus and Rosie is determined to find him and bring him home. Along the way she recruits some help and gets it some sticky situations.

No spoilers here, you have to read it for yourself.

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### **Valerie McEnroe says**

First of all let me say that this is my #1 book for upper elementary for 2017. In all honesty it deserves an award. Rosie is the perfect protagonist. She is stubborn, independent, feisty, and rough around the edges, but you can't help rooting for her. With a narcissistic mom who prefers to be a lawyer, a kindhearted, loving father who has just had a stroke, and a grandfather who doesn't want to raise another kid, Rosie endures. She's a fighter. When her mom comes back to town to settle things after her dad's stroke, she just makes everything worse. She gives away the one bright spot in Rosie's life. Her dog. Being a fighter, Rosie is determined to get her dog back. On her dad's hand-me-down bike she races around town every day looking. When she finally gets a tip that "crazy lady" Swanson may have her dog, she is fearless. She schemes and plans a way to get her dog back. When one plan fails, she comes up with a new one. Nothing will stop her, especially stories about a crazy lady who shoots squirrels in her barn.

The cast of characters is superb. From her militaristic, cantankerous grandfather, to the shy, Monopoly-loving foster boy next door, and all the characters in between, Fusco has worked magic. These characters come alive. The author airs their dirty laundry in full view, but does it in such a way that you can't help but feel empathy. You will come away feeling like you want to meet these characters. They are described so perfectly that you will think they must really exist somewhere, that maybe this book is really a memoir.

There is so much to learn from this book. First of all, every kid needs a dog. There's a reason they are man's best friend. After you read this book, go get your kid a dog. Secondly, don't think you know what's really in a person's heart. Both Rosie's grandfather and the town recluse are not who they appear on the surface. They are both storing a mega load of love that is difficult to see until you really get to know them. Rosie learns all of this by the end of the book. A true gem and a must for every school library.

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### **Margie says**

When your family unit is shaken to its core you enter a form of suspended reality. As a child when the only parent who has cared for you is suddenly removed from your life, it is particularly devastating. The only place you have ever called home now belongs to someone else.

To make an unbearable set of circumstances even worse, your beloved dog is gone. *Chasing Augustus* (Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children's Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC, September 19, 2017) written by Kimberly Newton Fusco is the story of a girl weighed down by unbearable sadness but fueled with grim determination to find the other half of her soul. Nothing is going to stop her. Nothing.

My full recommendation: <http://librariansquest.blogspot.com/2...>

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### **Cindy says**

I loved this book! The story is about a young girl (5th grader) named Rosie who has to go live with her "tough-as-nails, anchovy-eating grandfather." Her father has had a stroke--a father with whom she was very close--and her mother left when she was very young. The mother, who is now in California, has recently started calling to suggest that Rosalita (she refuses to call her Rosie) come to live with her in California. Rosie is not about to do that. She is especially angry at her mother because she came back from California briefly and gave her beloved dog, Augustus, away. Rosie's mission in life now is to find her precious "Gloaty Gus" and she faces many struggles along the way, including a rickety bicycle, an unexpected friend (who is also facing his own challenges, including being neglected by his mother which leads to him being placed in foster care), and a grouchy, stubborn grandfather. Rosie is a stubborn, gritty, angry, and sad girl who is trying to figure out how to navigate life without her dad. There is also a bit of a sub-story where she is asked to write in a journal for the teacher whose class she hopes to be in next year.

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### **Angelique says**

I picked this book up because of the dog on the cover. It's a children's book, but deals with some weighty topics in such a sensitive, yet strong way. It's sad at times, sweet at times, funny at times, and ends well!

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### **Allison says**

A wonderful tale about a feisty little girl who feels like she has been abandoned by everyone who matters. Her beloved dog was given away. Her mother took off for California and her father had a stroke and can no longer speak. Rosie lives with her crabby old grandfather and is on a crusade to find her missing dog. There's lots of hardship in this hardscrabble mining town where they live but Fusco fills this middle grade book with such humor and so many likeable characters that it had me laughing at their crazy antics. I loved this book.

