



## TEEN SERVICES COMMUNITY SERVICE TEEN BOOK REVIEW

### *Goldfish* By Nat Luurtsema Reviewed by Vanessa Aurigue

**Name:** Vanessa Aurigue

**Grade:** 8

**Book Title:** Goldfish

**Author:** Nat Luurtsema

**Number of Pages:** 232

**Rating (on a scale of 1-5):** 5/5

#### **Character List:**

- Louise Brown - Louise is a 15-year old girl who is quirky, freakishly tall, an ex-swimmer, and a social outcast. Most people just call her "Lou" or "Goldfish".
- Hannah - The best friend of Louise who strives to become an Olympist as a swimmer and ends up going to High Performance Training Camp in Dorset in order to achieve her dream, leaving Lou behind.
- Gabriel - Gabriel is a 16 year old who is goofy, funny and has an illness called myalgic encephalomyelitis, which causes him to be tired all the time and to be absent at school, but recently he's been attending school.
- Roman - Roman is Gabriel's older, protective brother who is 17. He's popular with the ladies due to his good looks but acts rude around them.
- Pete - Pete is a man in his early 20s who dropped out of school in the previous year and smokes. He is a little bit rude and impolite, but when you get to know him he is funny and kind.

#### **Review:**

Let me introduce you to Louise Brown: She's hilarious, really tall (5'10" to be exact) and she loves to swim. But after she failed her race to qualify for the High Performance Training Camp, she's stuck attending high school as a social outcast while her best friend, Hannah, will be attending the camp. After suffering her failure for the rest of her summer and the first few days of school, she goes to the public pool after her ignorant and strict ex-swimming coach, Debs, and her swim team are finished with their practice. After Lou does some water acrobatics, she unexpectedly meets three boys named Gabriel, Roman and Pete, after they checked to see if she drowned in the pool and were impressed with her moves. After they talk to each other, she ends up being their swimming coach/choreographer in order to train for the audition of Britain's Hidden Talent, which is a TV program that the three boys had auditioned for once and failed, but are determined to pass the audition this time with her help. Will she be able to help the boys succeed in passing the audition? What will it take to do so? Will coaching these three boys change her life forever? What obstacles will come in their way?

Goldfish is a story that is comedic and realistic. This tale shows the meaning of friendship, the emotions of jealousy, loneliness, anger, sadness, joy and it shows how determined one can be when they have their mind set on something. It takes you through a rollercoaster of events that involves breaking into an aquarium at night, having to visit

the hospital, and other crazy circumstances. Just as multiple characters repeat throughout the book, “You swim no one’s race but your own,” and Nat Luurtsema clearly conveys the message through all the hardships and challenges the characters face and eventually overcome. *Goldfish* encompasses relatable topics such as friendship, family situations, self-acceptance, and it includes a ton of jokes that just make you smile and laugh every time. Thus, this book is a phenomenal read for middle schoolers and high schoolers.