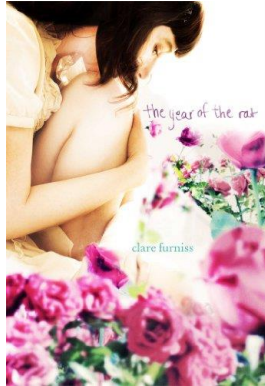


# Booklist Review

Books For Youth - Fiction



## **The Year of the Rat.**

**Furniss, Clare (author).**

Nov. 2014. 304p. Simon & Schuster/Margaret K. McElderry, hardcover, \$17.99 ([9781481420990](https://www.amazon.com/dp/9781481420990)). Grades 7-11.

**REVIEW.** First published February 6, 2015 (Booklist Online).

Fifteen-year-old Pearl learns how quickly life can change when her mother dies giving birth to her half sister, Rose. Pearl's loss consumes her to the point of avoiding her best friend, arguing with her loving stepdad, and harboring a decided distaste for Rose, whom she secretly calls The Rat. Pearl completes her exams under duress and barely cares about going back to school. But there are things she doesn't know, and although her mother appears and speaks with her often, some of the pieces don't fall into place. When Pearl leaves home and ends up on her never-met-before birth father's doorstep, hard truths tumble all around her. Pearl's emptiness over the loss of her mother, her inability to see Rose as anything but a reminder of that loss, and the rifts that threaten to tear best friends apart are realistically explored in this debut novel. Grief and the struggle to come to grips with it are a centerpiece that requires a box of tissues and the willingness to embrace another's pain.—*Jeanne Fredriksen*



## **Booklist Editors Recommend**

Titles similar to *The Year of the Rat*

- *Heartbeat*