



The Ghost Road

Charis Cotter

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Ghosts, a family curse, buried secrets -- and two girls who have to figure it all out. A new book from an acclaimed author, for fans of *Coraline*, *Doll Bones* and *The Night Gardener*.

For the first time, Ruth is heading to Newfoundland to stay with family she's never met instead of spending the summer traveling with her dad. When she arrives, she finds Newfoundland is very different from her life in Toronto--people there are much more friendly, but also superstitious, believing in ghosts and The Sight and family curses. Ruth's cousin Ruby is also staying for the summer, and the two discover they have a lot in common: they both lost their moms when they were two years old, they're the same age and they even like the same food. But while Ruby believes in spirits and fairies, Ruth believes in science and cold, hard facts.

When they find ominous information on some tombstones in the local cemetery, Ruth and Ruby start investigating their family's past and discover that twin girls are born in every generation, and every set of twins dies young, leaving their children without mothers. What's more, one of the twins always has The Sight and can see the Ghost Road that leads to the mysterious lost settlement of Slippers Cove. What happened there? What does it have to do with their family? And who is the ghostly presence that keeps visiting Ruth late at night?

The answers lie somewhere along the Ghost Road . . . if they can only find it.

The Ghost Road Details

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Author : Charis Cotter

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From Reader Review The Ghost Road for online ebook

Kristen says

I was kindly provided with a review copy from the publisher thanks to LibraryThing.

Review can also be found on my blog.

I have mixed feelings about this book. On the one hand, it was well written and fairly interesting. On the other hand, I didn't love it.

Right away I was sucked into the story and immediately intrigued by the mystery surrounding Ruth and all the twins in her family. I was getting *Parent Trap* vibes at first, if *The Parent Trap* was having some kind of Halloween special or something. Anyway, the first 100 pages or so were a breeze. The chapters were some of the shortest I've ever seen, averaging only about 4 pages each. The story was fast-paced and it would probably be possible to read this in one sitting.

However, life got in the way for me. I inevitably had to put the book down. A day later when I picked it back up, I found myself getting lost left and right. A lot of the character's names are extremely similar. The two main characters are called Ruth and Ruby. I kept playing the which one is which game for a bit. Be also prepared to keep track of Meg and Molly, Lily and Lucy, Daphne and Dolly and Ed, Edd and Eddy... You get the point.

I liked the main character Ruth even though she felt very "self-insert" protag to me. She didn't have a ton of personality but what she did have was vague enough for you to see yourself in her. I liked the other MC Ruby at first, but she quickly got annoying. She was much more bubbly and spirited but all her dramatic exclamations got irritating after a while. By the end I was rolling my eyes at her dialogue.

Like I said, I do think this book was very well written. The written was borderline beautiful at times. Here are a few passages of prose from the book that I found particularly pleasing to the ear.

"Nothing can hurt you," said Ruby in a low voice. "You are the flame and the flame is you. You are filled with light, and you are protected."

The rain was still falling. If you could call it falling. More like siting motionless in the air, brushing against my face and hair like a damp curtain.

When I came across those lines in the book, I had to stop and reread them, they were so pretty. But I think this book could have been edited down 100 pages less and it would have had even more impact. The story felt needlessly long at times, especially for a Middle Grade story. For instance, there was an entire chapter devoted to picking flowers. That's not really vital to the story or interesting (at least to me) in any way. There were a lot of things in the book that just felt like filler to me and could have been left out.

To give you an idea of what I'm talking about here, at one point in the story, the girls decided to have lunch. Okay, that's fine. You can totally put that in your book. I'm not gonna complain. However, did you really need to go into such monotonous detail about what you're having?

"Half a chicken sandwich, one muffin and an apple," she said. "And some water. What have you got?"

*I had a whole sandwich and a muffin and an apple.
"We can save the muffins and apples for breakfast," said Ruby.*

Really?

?Don't be wasting the trees on that boring exposition.

On a more positive note, I did appreciate learning about Newfoundland traditions and their way of life. I can't say that I've ever had the chance to read about that culture before and it was interesting.

My next point is kind of a small one and you may even consider it nitpicking but I'm a reader and a reviewer and it's just kind of what we do. I was confused as to why the author decided to set her story in the 1970s since there is literally no other references to the seventies as a time period in the story other than flat out saying what year it is. I feel like she could have added so much more atmosphere by incorporating some of the cool things from that time period into the book. I'm not saying the MC should burn her training bra or become a flower child or anything but something other than "Hey, it's 1973!" would have been more enjoyable for me since I don't get to read a lot about that particularly interesting period of time.

Another complaint that I have is that a lot of the events that took place in this book happen so quickly, you aren't really given any time to let that sink in before it flashes to the next thing that happens. The super short chapters didn't really help in this regard.

Lastly, the ending, to me, was very unsatisfying and kind of made the whole things seem kind of pointless. Kind of like when a story ends with AND IT WAS ALL A DREAM and I die inside a little.

I recommend to Middle Grade readers only. Even though it was actually kind of dark at times for the intended audience. It's a little too shallow for most adult readers to appreciate fully.

Cathleen McQueen says

While reading Charis Cotters book, "The Ghost Road" I was overcome with many things. The spooky visions of its main character, Ruth, who sees images from the past. Many of them haunting, terrifying apparitions of ghostly characters or just hears calls of frightening words in the winds off Newfoundland. Frightening yes, but I imagine it would be delightful for pre-teens and teenagers, as it was for me.

Also striking of course, as in Cotters last novel, is her beautiful description of Newfoundland, our newest and I believe, spookiest Province. She has a wonderful way of describing that brings out the picture for me, from the houses to the hills and shores, right down to the beautiful little wildflowers. I see it all clearly even now after finishing the book. The hills and shores that Ruth and Ruby play on in Newfoundland now seem almost as familiar to me as the hills and shores I often visit in Newfoundland!

But what stood out for me most strongly in this book was the story of family. The two cousins in it who are the main characters, Ruth and Ruby, work to solve a family problem (and a personal problem) with the help of family ghosts from the past. These two little girls show the strength of all women. They go out, find the issue, find the facts, and then work for a solution. It's not simple, it's dangerous and frightening... but they see that it's necessary.

Their family fights them, tells them to leave things as they always have been, to behave as ordinary little girls. But not Ruth and Ruby. They are determined and love their family enough to cross the lines, to 'fight the good fight'.

This is an excellent book for ages 11 – 99. It's exciting, spooky and a good look at the Family and all its

issues.

Amanda Work says

This is the perfect ghost story for youngsters who are beginning to broaden their literary experiences to include the darker side of the human condition. The ghosts in this story are presented to Ruth, the young protagonist, as benevolent and helpful apparitions who want to help Ruth overcome a family curse and lay a Dar past to rest.

The story is compelling with a smooth narrative from Ruth's point of view. The author gently reminds the reader that children are both stronger, smarter and braver than most adults admit it realize.

Katelin says

* received ARC from publisher in exchange for an honest review *

ACTUAL: 4.75/5

Set in 1970's Newfoundland, Ghost Road is a spooky middle grade tale by Canadian author Charis Cotter. Ruth's first adventure to the east coast is full of dark secrets, ghost stories, and a curse threatening her family.

Despite being a middle grade novel, it had a well developed complex plot and was full of suspense. I loved the detailed family history, and the villainous curse that followed the members for generations was a great mystery. Readers will be engaged throughout the story as Ruth works to handle the mysterious occurrences around the town, and piece together what truly causes the set of twins every generation to die young. The author also writes at a quality middle grade level, that will appeal to older readers. The dialogue was simplified a bit due to the target audience and historical time period, but it flowed well and the plot twists were excellent.

Ruth's character is well written, and it's heartwarming to see her grow throughout the book. Her structured city girl character is tested in the rural outskirts of town, she learns how to live like the rest of family - on the farm, helping in the house, and other activities.

Overall I adored Ghost Road. The concept was unique and it was to easy to read. I recommend it to anyone who is a fan of mysterious middle grade reads!

Books, Cooks, & Hooks says

A ghostly presence in the night, a family curse, and a road only a select few can see, make this the type of delightfully spooky book that will keep you up at night, no matter what age you are.

Ruth has had the same nightmare for as long as she can remember. She is on a sinking ship and her late mother is shouting her name. She thinks it's just a dream until she visits her mother's hometown for the summer. She realizes there's more to the dream than she thought, and that it may not be a dream at all. Together with her cousin Ruby, she investigates an ancient family curse that has plagued her relatives for centuries. Will she break the curse before time runs out for her too?

The publisher sent me a copy of this book to review, and it couldn't have come at a better time. I adore books like this. It tells a great, spooky story, and it also highlights the importance of family and loving each other despite past mistakes. This would be a great read for elementary and middle grade children.

Lisa (Remarkablylisa) says

MY REVIEW: 4/5 STARS

I received an ARC in exchange for a honest review from Penguin Random House Canada!

Do not judge a book by it's cover nor should you ever judge a book by it's direct audience age. I must admit when I first received the copy of *The Ghost Road*, I was very skeptical. I wondered if I would actually enjoy it because young readers or middle school age novels weren't really my thing. I find the writing to be too simplistic at times but Charis Cotter has a way with words that made it a perfect blend of middle grade and young adult level of writing. The cover may not be the most attractive thing you've seen but it's really the inside that counts! I'm serious.

The Ghost Road follows the tale of Ruth. Her mother has passed away since she was very young so she has little to no memory of her. Ruth lives in Toronto but during the summer, when her father decides to travel overseas to study flowers with his new wife, she's sent to Newfoundland and Labrador to meet an aunt and cousin she knows nothing about. There's mystery surrounding Ruth's mother. Although Ruth's mother grew up in NFL, she hardly mentions it to Ruth. Ruth knew nothing about the province on the east coast of Canada. She didn't know any of the folklore, her identical looking cousin, Ruby, knows so much about and she doesn't know anything about the family history. Apparently, Ruby's mother was a twin sister of Ruth's sister. What was strange was that they both happened to die at the same time and same day. Meanwhile, Ruth and Ruby look exactly alike and I forget, but I think their birthday was significant as well.

This all built up to the idea that in the family line, one twin will be gifted the sight. The Sight allows them to see the infamous Ghost Road. Meanwhile others can't see it for the life of them. It was definitely some spooky and scary stuff that left me turning the pages and wondering what in the world was actually going on!!

I found this book to be so entertaining. The chapters were short so it kept me intrigued and wanting to sit through and binge ten chapters at a time. And Charis did an amazing job at leaving each chapter on a hook that made you want to read more. As more chapters went on, more secrets and clues were revealed that allowed readers to piece together an idea of what was going on. Of course, I didn't! And I couldn't pin down the exact answer to things.

MY RECOMMENDATION

Definitely pick this one up for Halloween. It's spooky!!!

Wensday says

This was an amazing ghost story. The story has so many plot twists and exciting moments, it will keep any reader engaged. The characters in the book are brought to life by Charis Cotter, even the ones gone long ago. I suggest this for anyone that enjoys a great mystery and ghost story.

I received the ebook from NetGalley for my honest review.

Literary Soirée says

THE GHOST ROAD tells the tale with engaging text and beautiful illustrations of two girls desperately trying to uncover a secret that has haunted their family for generations. Atmospheric and highly suspenseful.
5/5

Thank you to the author, Penguin Random House Canada and NetGalley for the review copy. Opinions are mine.

#TheGhostRoad #NetGalley

Vikki VanSickle says

Another fantastic, atmospheric ghost story from Charis Cotter. Satisfies that family curse, twins are creepy, Irish ghost stories are the best ghost stories kind of itch. Also doubles as a love letter to Newfoundland, complete with partridgeberry desserts!

Cat says

This was an enjoyable ghost story! I love the fairy stories I've read about in Newfoundland and thought this one might be entertaining as it too takes place there! I wasn't disappointed. It's a good solid story of a ghost trying to take care of unfinished business with the help of two young girls Ruth and Ruby. I think 5th grade up would enjoy this tale. It's really quite a good story! Even teens may enjoy it.

I received a Kindle Arc in exchange for a fair review from Netgalley.

Shelly Seward says

I received an eARC from NetGalley and Penguin Random House Canada in exchange for an honest review.

I just love Charis Cotter's storytelling. Whenever I read her books I am so happy that I am living here in Newfoundland and immediately want to find out where these ghost stories took place. Her stories are so atmospheric and just pull me in every time. Her descriptions of Newfoundland landscape are impeccable. Even though her books are geared to middle graders, I think any ages can read them. I personally love them. (My younger daughter and I have previously read *The Swallow* and *The Painting*. I will be picking up a copy of this one for her when it comes out.)

The Ghost Road is a story about ghosts, a family curse, buried secrets -- and two girls who have to figure it all out. The answers lie somewhere along the Ghost Road . . . if they can only find it. I won't bother to include the whole synopsis of the book. You can read that under the description. The whole story; you'll just have to read it to find out.

Stephanie Ward says

'The Ghost Road' is a fantastic new addition to the middle grade paranormal genre - and one that fans of the genre are going to want to pick up. I really enjoyed this book, more than I anticipated actually, and every aspect of it was done wonderfully. I loved Ruth and Ruby as main characters and getting to know both of them was fun. The story is told from Ruth's point of view (the first person) which is my favorite writing style, so that was a huge plus for me personally. I think the reader gets to connect more deeply with the narrator when the story is written in the first person - and I think that's exactly what happens here with Ruth.

The plot was tons of fun and addictive. I actually ended up reading the whole book in one sitting. There's so much happening that you don't want to stop reading - secrets, ghosts, curses, and more serious topics like family and overcoming your differences. It's a great book for readers of all ages, not just middle grade. I definitely recommend it for fans of middle grade fiction, fantasy, paranormal and contemporary.

Disclosure: I received a copy of the book in exchange for an honest review.

Heather-Amie says

[Check out my full review here](#)

The Ghost Road was a beautifully written, whimsical story that I loved.

Ruth is visiting Newfoundland for the summer to spend time with family that she has never met. She is shocked at the differences in Newfoundland compared to her life in Toronto. But, things soon change and she realises that Newfoundland has more to discover than she originally expected.

I really loved the characters in the book. Ruth and Ruby were my favourite characters and I really enjoyed reading about their interactions with one another. They quickly become friends despite having only just met and begin to rely on one another a lot. I also really loved the mysteries surrounding the two of them and, in particular, the mystery of why the two look so alike.

The storyline was fantastic and Charis Cotter did a wonderful job. I loved the ghosts and the more paranormal aspects of the story as well as the many secrets that Ruth and Ruby worked to uncover. I had

chills during the moments with the ghosts that only Ruth could see and the secret room that the ghost helps her uncover.

This book may have been written for a more middle-grade audience, but I think this is a book that can be enjoyed by all.

Laura says

Why do ghosts haunt? Because they have unfinished business. Because there is something that keeps them on earth until they have completed their mission.

Ruth has gone to Newfoundland for the Summer to visit her cousin Ruby, who she discovers looks very much like her. It is almost as though they are twins. But that is not the weirdest thing. Because although Ruth doesn't believe in ghosts and visions and having the Sight, she starts experiencing the moment she gets to her Aunt Dolly's house, starting with a ghost that comes to visit her the first night.

With Ruby's help, the two girls learn what the ghost is trying to tell them, despite the fact that Ruth keeps saying she doesn't believe in ghosts or curses or any of this stuff.

An interesting take on a middle grade ghost story. Both Ruth and Ruby seem like very real children, set in the 1980s Newfoundland. Good descriptions of the landscape, and the flowers.

#TheGhostRoad #NetGalley

Thanks to Netgalley for making this book available for an honest review.

Zoë Danielle says

I love to read books with Canadian settings so picking up *The Ghost Road* by Charis Cotter, a ghost story set in Newfoundland which has been compared to *Coraline* (which I adored), was an easy sell. In this lovely middle grade novel, Ruth travels to Newfoundland for the first time, while her dad is on his honeymoon. Ruth is spending the summer with her cousin, Ruby, and it turns out their moms were twins who died young, due to a curse. Ruth and Ruby are looking to find the truth about the curse, and hopefully break it.

I really love stories about twins, being one myself, and I thought it was a great element to this story, even if it's a scenario where all the twins die young. There were some fun twists to the plot, and while the writing was a bit too simplistic for me at times, given the target audience, that's probably for the best. My favourite thing about *The Ghost Road* was certainly the setting, it was a charming introduction to Newfoundland in the 1970s, and I loved the little bits about the native flowers (and wish there had been a little more of that, since Ruth's father is a botanist). I thought Ruth was a great character, a realistic blend of courageous and scared. I would certainly recommend *The Ghost Road* for anyone looking for a new middle grade novel with a paranormal twist and fantastic Canadian setting.
