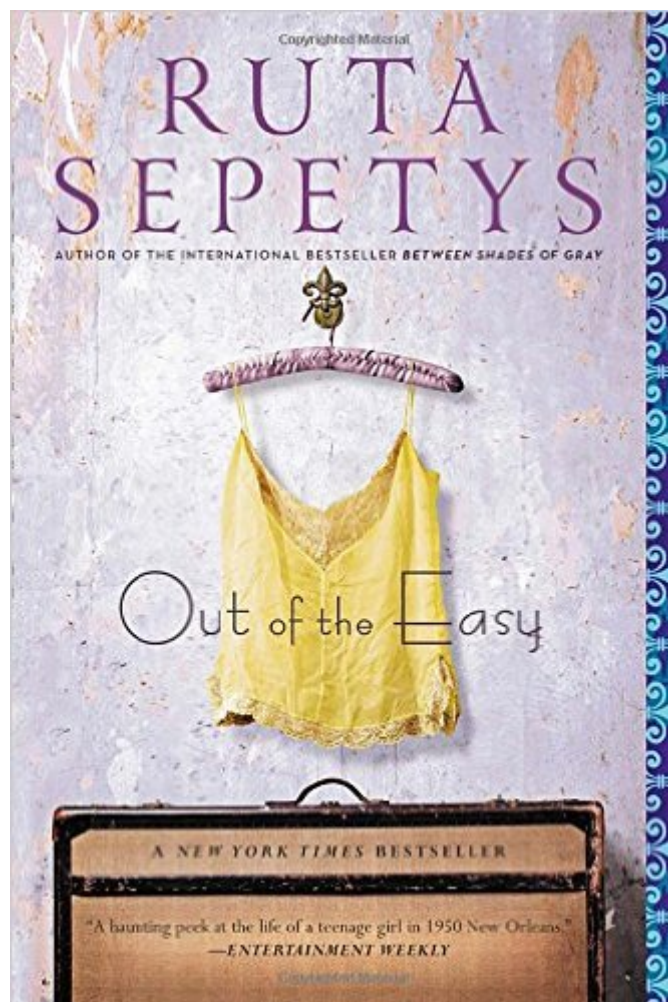


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# Out Of The Easy



## Synopsis

â œA haunting peek at the life of a teenage girl in 1950s New Orleans.â •--Entertainment WeeklyItâ™s 1950, and as the French Quarter of New Orleans simmers with secrets, seventeen-year-old Josie Moraine is silently stirring a pot of her own. Known among locals as the daughter of a brothel prostitute, Josie wants more out of life than the Big Easy has to offer. She devises a plan get out, but a mysterious death in the Quarter leaves Josie tangled in an investigation that will challenge her allegiance to her mother, her conscience, and Willie Woodley, the brusque madam on Conti Street. Josie is caught between the dream of an elite college and a clandestine underworld. New Orleans lures her in her quest for truth, dangling temptation at every turn, and escalating to the ultimate test. With characters as captivating as those in her internationally bestselling novelÂ Between Shades of Gray,Â Ruta Sepetys skillfully creates a rich story of secrets, lies, and the haunting reminder that decisions can shape our destiny.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This is the second book I have read by Ruta Sepetys and I must say she is quickly becoming a favorite author to me! This is a well researched, beautifully written 1950's historical. You really get the feel of being in New Orleans in 1950. Josie (Jo) is a very well written character. She is strong, intelligent and very realistic. She is an extremely believable character with a good blend of strengths and flaws. She is a teenage girl who lives on her own, and wants desperately to get out of New Orleans and go to college. With a prostitute for a mother and no known father her goal seems to be a pipe dream. A sick friend, and a murder mystery just adds to her troubles. Her mother is an evil

piece of work. I loathe her. One of the most self-centered ladies ever! What she does to Jo in this book butts the word awful to shame! Then there is Willie who runs the whorehouse where Jo cleans and her mother sells herself. It took the longest time to make up my mind about her. I like her no nonsense attitude but I always felt that she was hiding something. Then there is Cokie. I loved Cokie. He is the driver for Willie and acts like a uncle and friends to Jo. I think I could have a great time hanging out with him, sweet and fun as he is! There is a bit a love triangle between her, Patrick and Jesse. Jesse is the ladies man mechanic of the Quarter with a bit of a 'bad boy' edge. Patrick is the son of the owner of the bookstore where she lives and works. The smart intellect, caring for his ill father. Now while I say love triangle it is very mild through a lot of it. It is not drawn out like so many other books these days. Very simple and plausible. The way everything is written out is perfect. From the clothing, the whorehouse, the Quarter in general....

Source: Received an ARC from the publisher in exchange for an honest review. So I knew this was set in New Orleans but I didn't realize it was historical, set in 1950. Other surprises included the setting of a brothel and menacing mobsters. Our heroine is Josie Moraine, daughter of a prostitute, who has pulled away from her mother, earning an honest living at a bookstore and dreaming about a college education away from the town where everyone knows she's a prostitute's daughter. But she also cleans the rooms of the brothel and is deeply reluctantly attached to the madam, the canny Willie and the other women in the house. When a visiting prominent Tennessean businessman is killed in the French Quarter, Josie mourns, having met the sweet guy at the bookstore. What she doesn't expect is the role that her mother may have played in his murder nor the crooked people who are involved nor the actions it may force her to take. I don't know how to properly explain my feelings about this book. I'll admit that I didn't enter it with the highest expectations. Yes, Sepetys had already scored with her excellently personal *Between Shades of Grey* but who thought she'd do it again with such a different story? Plus the South and the 1950s have never been among my favorite reading topics. But this book was absolutely amazing. I kept saying to myself, "I'll just read one more chapter..." until I reached the end and there was no more. I think most of the credit goes to the delightfully sensitive Josie. Although she's been let down by her good-for-nothing selfish mother and essentially nonexistent father, she has acquired a family of her own including the aforementioned Willie, other workers at the brothel, her bookstore coworker Patrick, and local mechanic and hottie Jesse.

*Out Of The Easy* is a gloomy yet - in many ways - inspiring book that explores themes such as

poverty, prostitution, mental illness, abandonment, murder, abuse and making one's own destiny. It's a story of a girl who dreams of a normal life - a life that doesn't involve cleaning brothels, sleeping in a book store and constantly trying to appease her abusive, Hollywood-star-wannabe prostitute mother. An engaging, thoroughly captivating tale full of phenomenally depicted settings and masterfully fleshed-out characters that you'll never forget. 17 year-old Josie Moraine has never had it easy. Her mother, a self-absorbed and thieving prostitute in a Conti Street brothel, has made it clear to her that she was nothing more than a burden and a mistake. Her father is unknown, he could be any one of her mother's many clients. Despite being abused, neglected and unloved, Josie's determined to get away from the filthy streets of French Quarter and make a good life for herself. She dreams of attending Smith College in Northampton. She's saving every hard-earned penny, hoping to one day escape from the Big Easy. When her mother leaves for California with a brutal criminal, Cincinnati, Josie is worried, but also relieved. But before long, she learns that her senseless mother managed to make a mess out of her life yet again, leaving her with a dead-man's watch, a mob debt and entangled in a high-profile murder case. Well-read, street-smart and strong-willed, Josie is a phenomenal lead character. Her story really pulled on my heartstrings. She's the kind of girl you can relate to, even though your lives and personalities are worlds apart. She's kind, understanding, giving, but she can also be fierce and unstoppable. She's gone through so much!

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