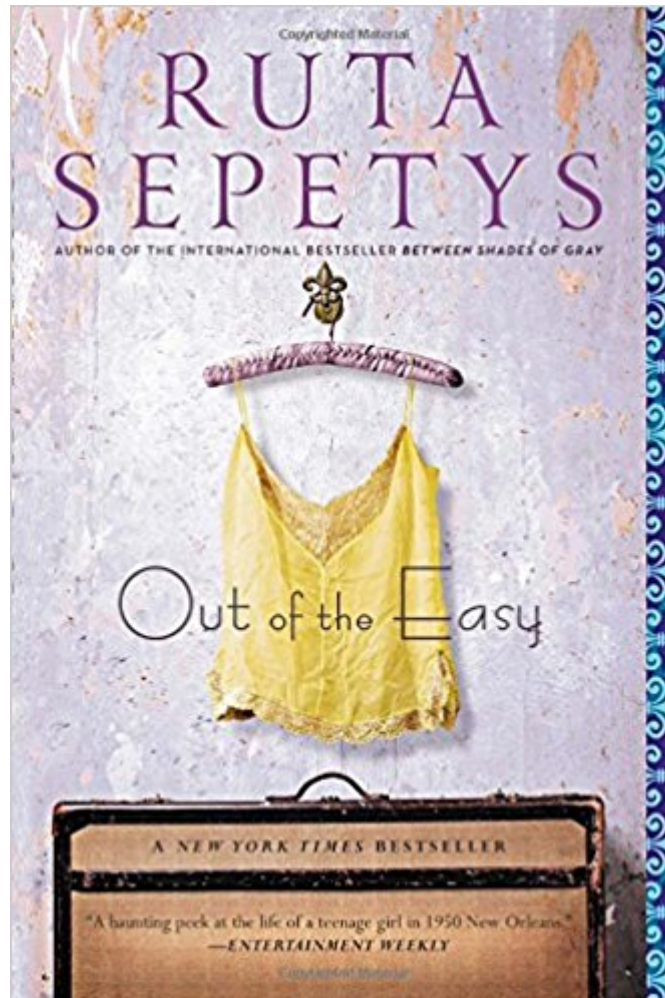




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Out Of The Easy



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Synopsis

“A haunting peek at the life of a teenage girl in 1950s New Orleans. Entertainment Weekly” “In 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 to 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 novel *Between Shades of Gray*, Ruta Sepetys skillfully creates a rich story of secrets, lies, and the haunting reminder that decisions can shape our destiny.

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Customer Reviews

Best Books of the Month, February 2013: The French Quarter of New Orleans in the 1950s calls from the pages of *Out of the Easy*, beckoning readers to enter a society of madams and debutantes, secrets and desires. “Sometimes we set off down a road thinkin’ we’re going one place and we end up another. So it is for Josie Moraine, the daughter of a prostitute rooted in the underworld of the Quarter. Josie wants, more than anything, to trade in the dangerous hand of jokers and pimps her mother laid out, for one filled

with books and a life away from the Big Easy. Populated by complex characters you come to love or loathe, but either way can't stop thinking about (even months later), Sepetys beautifully delivers romance and menace in equal parts and what looks to be a predictable ending turns out to be anything but. --Seira Wilson --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

Gr 9 Up-Against a vivid 1950s New Orleans backdrop, 17-year-old Josie Moraine is caught between the harsh reality of her negligent, prostitute mother's lifestyle and her desire to escape to a new life. Josie is smart, resourceful, and determined. Her support group includes Willie, the shrewd brothel madam who recognizes Josie's potential; Cokie, Willie's kind and devoted driver; Patrick, who runs the bookshop where Josie works; Charlotte, an upscale acquaintance who encourages Josie to join her at Smith College; and Jesse, the handsome motorcyclist neighbor who has eyes only for Josie. When a mysterious death leads police to Josie's mother and abusive boyfriend, the teen is drawn into the investigation and into an underworld of threats, violence, and retribution. After her mother skips town, Josie is targeted to repay her debt to a powerful criminal boss. As she tries to handle mounting adversity on her own, she struggles with fear, desperation, and her conscience. Stealing from Willie or hooking up with a wealthy john seem her only choices for survival. Overwhelmed, she reveals her predicament to Willie, who saves her in a final act of generosity. Josie's narrative features a Dickensian array of characters; the mystique, ambience, and language of the French Quarter; a suspenseful, action-packed story; and a coming-of-age realization that personal decisions ultimately shape one's future. With dramatic and contextual flair, Sepetys introduces teens to another memorable heroine.-Gerry Larson, formerly at Durham School of the Arts, NC (c) Copyright 2011. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

OUT OF THE EASY is a beautifully crafted novel with an intriguing plot and well-rounded characters. Josie Moraine lives above a book store in New Orleans, having escaped her prostitute mother when she was twelve. Josie has dreams of going to college and having a career, but the most important part of her dreams is leaving New Orleans. One of the prominent secondary characters is Josie's best friend Patrick whose father Charles, a well-known author, owns the bookstore where Josie lives and works. Charles' mental health has deteriorated, and Patrick is desperately trying to hide his disability from the world. Willie, the owner and proprietor of a house of ill repute, is one of Josie's stalwart supporters, although she hides her concern under a gruff exterior. Willie's "nieces" who work at the brothel could easily have become cardboard characters,

but each one is a unique individual. Other characters include Cokie, Willie's driver and Jack-of-all-trades, and her cook, Sadie, both of whom want Josie to succeed almost as much as she does. And there's Jesse, a part-time college student and mechanic, who wants to be more than Josie's friend. This rich cast of Josie's friends and mentors provides a contrast to the thugs and mobsters who threaten Josie's dreams and her life. This novel's plot is as meticulously crafted as its many characters, and readers will be captivated by the complex world Ms. Sepetys has brought to life. Highly recommended!

'Out of the Easy' is an easy read but then it is a coming of age novel for young adults. The author's style like like a old time fifties' detective novel, with very direct speaking by the protagonist, Josie. 'I spotted Frankie walking towards me on Conti Street.' Josie is essentially an orphan who raises herself, but surrounding her are angels in the form of mostly seedy characters who help her in any way they can. Since she is smart, she longs to leave New Orleans and head to college in the East. So many trials and tribulations are in her way. Will she ever get out?

So, so good. It can be dragging in the middle, but it still didn't stop me from finishing this book. It is a mix of murder-mystery, coming-of-age and a bit of romance, and I love how the author meshed these together to create the story of Josie in 1950s New Orleans. Josie, a daughter of a prostitute, cleans a brothel and sells books at a bookshop for a living. She believes that the only way out of New Orleans is to go to college in Boston. But she must deal with the circumstances of living in a place like New Orleans before she achieves the life she wanted. "Decisions, they shape our destiny" is my favorite quote from this book, and I think it applied to Josie, who has to go through tough decisions to survive in New Orleans. I love how flawed she is, and how the people around her helped her through. I especially loved Jesse Thierry. He's a motorcycle-riding badass that your parents warned you about, but the people close to him know him better as a charming and caring guy. The climax and ending threw me off a little bit, though, but it was still satisfying.

This review is posted at both [Amazon](#) and [Goodreads](#). This story is about a young woman, Josie Moraine, trying to find her place in the world. In the first chapter, Josie is 7 years old and has moved to New Orleans. We are introduced to the owner of a brothel and Josie's mom who is a prostitute. Both characters play critical roles in Josie's outlook on who she is and what she can become. The next chapter Josie has aged 10 years and is a young woman. By this time Josie believes the circumstances of her life have already determined her future. Josie works two jobs cleaning the

brothel were her mom works and in a bookstore where she has lived since she was 11. Two customers come into the bookstore making Josie question her beliefs that her future has already been set. The first is an out of state architect who tells her "Decisions, they shape our destiny". The second person is a young woman, a student at Smith College, who befriends her. Josie starts thinking about going to college in particular Smith College. As the story evolves Josie starts to act on her plan to attend Smith. What I really like about this story is Josie's journey. Josie transforms before our eyes from seeing herself as worthless and believing her future is defined by one's circumstances to a confident woman who goes after her dreams. There are so many well developed characters in this book. Characters that both help and hinder Josie's progress in attaining her dreams. There is one thing that I disliked about the book and that is the author, in a relatively short period of time, throws every kind of bad Josie's way to where it distracts from the story. I highly recommend this book and will definitely read more of this author's work. About the rating system I've used. I have read many excellent books which I would rate 3 or 4 stars saving 5 stars for something truly extraordinary.

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