



BOOK RESUME: OUT OF THE EASY

BOOK SYNOPSIS

It'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 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.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "A Dickensian array of characters; the mystique, ambience, and language of the French Quarter; a suspenseful, action-packed story. With dramatic and contextual flair, Sepetys introduces teens to another memorable heroine." —*School Library Journal*, starred review

★ "With a rich and realistic setting, a compelling and entertaining first-person narration, a colorful cast of memorable characters and an intriguing storyline, this is a surefire winner. Immensely satisfying." —*Kirkus*, starred review

★ "[A]nother taut and charged historical novel... Sepetys has also built a stellar cast. Readers will find Josie irresistible from the get-go and will devour the sultry mix of mystery, historical detail, and romance." —*Publisher's Weekly*, starred review

"Ruta Sepetys's novel set in 1950 New Orleans not only captures that time and place with literary distinction, but is populated with wonderfully realized characters in a story that is at once gritty and full of hope."

—*Cooperative Children's Book Center (CCBC)*

"A page-turner that noir romance fans will gobble up. The legions of fans that Sepetys earned with her best-selling debut novel will all be lining up for this."

—*Booklist*

Updated 6.20.2025

Penguin Random House

Contact BannedBooks@penguinrandomhouse.com

*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

"Street-smart, literary and compassionate... Atmospheric and assured...nicely paced novel." —*Wall Street Journal*

"A satisfying novel, bringing to life the midcentury French Quarter...Sepetys writes with rawness and palpable emotional unease."
—*New York Times Book Review* (Editor's Choice)

"A haunting peek at the life of a teenage girl in 1950s New Orleans."
—*Entertainment Weekly*

"Like her debut title, Sepetys's latest is full of transporting writing, drawing you into a past that is fully reconstructed by her superb imagination." —*Boston Globe*

"Unforgettable." —*Toronto Star*

"This suspenseful novel...proves Sepetys's extraordinary versatility as a storyteller." —*Shelf Awareness*

"Rough-edged and glamorous by turns, this is a wild ride worth taking."
—*Bookpage*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- An Amazon Best Book of the Year 2013
- A *Kirkus* Best Book of 2014
- A Goodreads Best Young Adult Fiction Book of 2013
- A YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults Top 10 Selection
- A Carnegie Medal Finalist
- A CCBC Choices Selection
- A Junior Library Guild History Selection
- A Connecticut Nutmeg Book Award selection
- An Illinois Abraham Lincoln High School Award selection
- An Indiana Eliot Rosewater Indiana High School Book Award selection
- A Michigan Thumbs Up! Award selection
- A Missouri Gateway Readers Award selection
- A New Hampshire Flume Teen Reader's Choice Award selection
- An Oklahoma Sequoyah Book Award selection
- An Oregon Battle of the Books selection
- A Pennsylvania Young Reader's Choice Award selection
- A Rhode Island Teen Book Award selection
- A South Carolina Young Adult Book Award selection
- A Tennessee Volunteer State Book Award selection
- A Texas Tayshas Reading List selection
- A Virginia Readers' Choice selection
- A Wisconsin Battle of the Books selection

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MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Teachingbooks.net resources](#)
- [Penguin Classroom Educator Guide](#)
- [Penguin Classroom *Out of the Easy* Discussion Guide](#)
- [YALSA- The Hub Author Interview](#)
- [We Are YA Author Interview](#)
- [Mackin Community Author Interview](#)
- [Politics and Prose Author Interview](#)

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