



Out of Reach

Carrie Arcos

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How do you find someone who doesn't want to be found? A girl searches for her missing addict brother while confronting her own secrets in this darkly lyrical novel.

Rachel has always idolized her older brother Micah. He struggles with addiction, but she tells herself that he's in control. And she almost believes it. Until the night that Micah doesn't come home. Rachel's terrified—and she can't help but feel responsible. She should have listened when Micah tried to confide in her. And she only feels more guilt when she receives an anonymous note telling her that Micah is nearby and in danger.

With nothing more to go on than hope and a slim lead, Rachel and Micah's best friend, Tyler, begin the search. Along the way, Rachel will be forced to confront her own dark secrets, her growing attraction to Tyler...and the possibility that Micah may never come home.

Out of Reach Details

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From Reader Review Out of Reach for online ebook

Samantha says

If i had to choose my absolute favorite book of 2012, it would be this one. Out of Reach was so perfect and amazing i couldn't help but to just marvel in its amazing-ness after i read the last page. i can't totally pinpoint what about this book that made me love it, maybe because i can kinda relate to the situation that Rachel is going through. maybe i love this book because of Micah, God i loved him. No, i didn't love the Micah that came to be i loved the Micah before. With every glimpse back i just loved him more and more. you could tell how much he loved his family and his life and it just broke my heart every time i learned more about the new Micah. Maybe because i loved Rachel, i understood her so much and i understood everything she did and why, what it must of felt to go through the pain of watching the person you love spiral out of control. Maybe i loved this book because of Tyler, whether he went there to find Micah or as a way to get closer to Rachel whatever the reason i knew that he loved Micah just as much as Rachel, that he cared about him way more than he ever let on. Maybe i loved this book because of the writing style, even though it was simple it was engaging and fast paced and made me want to read this book over and over again from start to finish, made me want to go back and read every passage of the old Micah to commit him to my memory where he would always be the boy who had dreams of going to LA and play music for anyone who would listen. To remember the boy who defended his sister against the asshole who did her wrong, to remember the boy who carried his sister on his back for over a mile because she was hurt even though he knew he wasn't strong enough. Maybe i love this book because to me the ending was perfect. Even though it wasn't the ending i so hoped for, it was the ending that had to be. When you love someone who is an addict there is never a happy ending. Yes they may come home when they are ready, and they might change but the person you loved before will never come home, their gone. you have to spend time trying to fit this new person into your life, even though you know that they are the same They really aren't. I don't know why i love this book, i just do. It is the most perfect and honest book that i have ever read in my life. While people always tend to look at addiction from the viewpoint of the addict, it was refreshing to look at from the perspective of people the addiction also affects, the family. My favorite quote in this was book was: "Nah, you would have found a way. if you had the chance, you would have saved me" Rachel did have the chance and she did try to save him but she couldn't not yet but when his is ready he will find his way home.

Nalle says

Honestamente esperaba otra cosa de este libro; quizá algo mas a fondo o profundo. Esta es una parte de la historia de Rachel, cuyo hermano Micah lleva rato metido en las drogas y cada vez se hunde mas. Acompañamos a Rachel durante 24 horas en la búsqueda de Micah y por medio de recuerdos vemos al Micah "limpio" y somos testigos del deterioro de él y su familia. Rachel solo encuentra pedacitos de su hermano a través de gente que lo conoció en la ciudad a donde va a buscarlo. Como dije, quizá esperaba una visión mas general de lo que sucede alrededor de una persona adicta y por ello este libro no acabó de convencerme

Tabitha (Bows & Bullets Reviews) says

The review is also available on my blog, [Bows & Bullets Reviews](#)

WARNING: This review may contain, foul language, spoilers, general rantiness, and an over use of angry

gifs.

I really wanted to like this book. Truly, I did. But it pissed me off and I can't say that I will be recommending it to anyone. In fact, I have already told several people to steer clear. Let's do the basics first. Out Of Reach is the story of Rachel's journey to find her wayward brother. She enlists the help of his bestie, Tyler to assist her and they head out to search in the areas she thinks he might be. A few weeks before, she received an anonymous email stating that her brother was in a lot of trouble and she should come and try to help. Why she thinks she will be able to find her brother by simply looking on street corners in a single day was beyond me, but hey, more fucking power to her misguided hope.

I started off really enjoying this novel. Rachel didn't seem so bad and I was intrigued by Tyler. There was obvious chemistry between the two though Rachel does her best to deny it. Plus, I was hoping she would find her brother, bond with Tyler over the experience, and things would end more or less happily.

I know, it was a goddamn pipedream, but I try to start every novel from a happy place....unless I'm reading it because I want to be depressed, but that is a different matter entirely. The further I got into this book, the more irritated I became. The more I read about Rachel, the more my dislike started to creep in. She gives these flashbacks from when they were younger and her and Micah (her brother) were just ssssoooo close. But here is what I don't get, if you were so bonded and lied to your parents for each other and all this other shit, then why did you wait all goddamn summer to start searching for him?

Micah disappears at the very beginning of summer and you just write it off, knowing his a goddamn drug addict, because your parents assure you he is fine and you don't think you should waste your time on it?!?!?!?

And now you are all of a sudden worried because you got an email? Lady, I just can't even begin to describe how much this angers me. This bitch ends up being one of the most self-center, egocentric, moronic heroines I have ever read about...and that statement includes Bella fucking Swan. Oh yeah, I went there. Anyway, a whole lot of shit goes down, they ask around drug dealers places and look on the beach and such, then Miss Whiny-pants car gets stolen. Well, geez, you leave a Honda Civic (one of the most stolen cars in the US) parked on the wrong side of town, what the hell did you think was going to happen?

Then there is the ending, which leaves a lot to fucking be desired. Rachel and Tyler end up finding her car and stealing it back, then head home, sans Micah who is still MIA. Then they kinda sorta discuss their feelings and it's (lightly) implied that they'll date soon. Rachel writes an email to Micah, which she doesn't know if he'll ever get and sends it out into the universe, basically saying that she isn't going to worry about him anymore, she's just going to live her life. Cold hearted bitch. You spent ONE DAY searching.

This novel really was just a whole lot of fuck ups. In retrospect, I realize that I guess the author was trying to write a "realistic" portrayal of the impacts drugs have on the lives of family and friends, but she should have picked a heroine who really cared about the drug-addled brother. I was expecting her to search for several days to find her brother and then drag him home or have him tell her to fuck off or SOMETHING. Whether it be dragging his ass back home for rehab or having an epic confrontation that ends in her leaving him to rot on the side of the street, I wanted something to happen. I would call the ending anti-climatic at best.

Despite all the complaints, I did like how much information the author gave us about meth addicts. It did seem like she did her research on that, but that just wasn't enough. If that was all I wanted, I could have gotten a pamphlet from my local health department. All in all, don't bother with this unless you want a big letdown. Do I recommend it to anyone at all? I'll let Cas answer that one for you.

Tamar says

The actual story of this book is interspersed with the narrator's memories and recollections about her brother & the drug that has claimed him. The actual search for him was okay, but left completely unresolved. The flashbacks just read like drug-awareness brochures & AA anecdotes that have been poorly rewritten in the style of the narrator's voice. So while the book probably would've been alright, the bulk of it is inauthentic and disengaging. Most of the time I just hoped that everyone would die on the boardwalk.

Melannie :) says

GIMME GIMME!

I want this book so bad.

JeanBookNerd says

Carrie Arcos' *Out of Reach* is an incredible story of understanding, clemency, and finding romance along the way. It gives detailed accounts of how substance abuse can have dangerous lasting effects not just on the user, but also the people around them. When Rachel's brother Micah goes missing, she feels she's responsible for his disappearance. Micah, who she idolizes, has been besieged with addiction but Rachel is convinced that his life is unaffected by it. Rachel and Micah's best friend, Tyler, embark on a search that will have Rachel challenging her own dark secrets and having a developing fascination to Tyler. In search of her brother with nothing much to go by, she realizes that it is a possibility that Micah may never come home.

The authenticity of the story is what makes this book really appealing. This is an occurrence that happens all the time and it can literally happen to anyone. Although it centers on the dangers of addiction, it explores the toll it puts on people who are affected by it. Even with Micah gone missing, author Carrie has a unique way of providing readers on the kind of person he is from Rachel's collection of memories of her brother. Readers will grieve with Rachel as new information regarding Micah's whereabouts seems to always be a dead-end. Carrie's writing style is beautiful and precise. Envisioning the travels that Rachel and Tyler embark on comes almost effortless. She provides rich details right down to characters' inner emotions. While Rachel kept her brother's secrets, he may have left because he felt he had let her down. No matter what the truth is, *Out of Reach* is an authentic voyage of a person who is trying to reconnect to someone close to them caused by substance abuse.

Jan Wollet says

Started out much better than it finished. Surprised it was a National Book Award Winner, would not of been my pick.

Cara says

I would first like to point out the cover of this book. Cool right? It has nothing to do with the book, from what I can gather at least. At no point is a girl lying on the street in clothes like that (the book is set in summer and the girl on the cover is wearing fall/winter clothes), but you know what? The cover is one of the reasons I picked up the book. I know shameful but it's the truth. What can I say? I really liked the outfit the girl was wearing.

Rachel has an older brother that is a meth addict. A meth addict who has run off before he even graduated high school. There is so much Rachel feels she could have done, but at the same time she's angry at her brother Micah. How could he put her and their parents through so much pain? Waste all his potential? And mostly all the lies that were exchanged to hide an ugly truth, that the Micah they knew was gone. After a couple of months since Micah has left, Rachel receives an email. The email says Micah is in some deep trouble and that he is playing his guitar on the streets of Ocean Beach. At first Rachel doesn't know what to do about it. She decides to call Tyler, a band member and close friend of Micah's, and tells him about the email. They decide to look for him and see if maybe they can find him and... maybe bring him back home.

It took me no time at all to get invested in this story. Rachel is a character I believe a lot of readers will be able to identify with. She is considered the "good" kid of the family, but of course she is more complex than that. Right now she is dealing with a tremendous amount of guilt, and she is worried about her brother. Recently she had a sort of messy break-up with her ex-boyfriend, and can't help but feel like she let herself be trampled on by this guy. I'm glad she wasn't depicted as someone with a tremendous amount of strength and insight from the onset of the story. People work up to be those strong people, and deal with a lot of crap before that happens.

The aspect I enjoyed the most was the gradual change of Rachel's and Tyler's interactions. I do want to emphasize that the book's main focus for most of the story was the search for Micah and Rachel's emotional journey while trying to find him, but there was this nice sub-plot of Rachel's growing attachment to Tyler. They talk about Micah and the memories they have of him before meth basically took him away from them. It's **hard** to read about Rachel's memories of Micah and see just how different he was before the drug, and how nobody could have imagined this would happen. And as a sibling I loved seeing how much Rachel and Micah care about each other even if they didn't always show or say it. It's a different and unique bond, and the author was able to show a little of what that bond is about.

The book does deal with a lot issues so sometimes I felt like not everything was explored enough, but that really is a little quibble. Oh and how much smoking there was. I honestly felt like hacking up a lung, but this is a book about the search for a drug addict so what did I expect?

Out of everything though the **ultimate** strength of the book for me was how I felt I knew the characters so well in about 250 pages, especially Micah. He was presented as more than just a person with an addiction. He was a son, brother, friend, student, musician, and drugs are the horrible vice that took all those worthy titles away from him. At the same time though you know Micah is responsible for his downward spiral because, like Rachel points out in the book, he makes the conscious decision to keep going after the first hit.

This author is one to watch for because she has the realistic young adult feel down pat.

Jacquelyn says

I was a bit hesitant going into this book. I was reading some reviews before starting and I definitely lowered my expectations before going in. I have a goal for this year to read more backlist (older releases) titles so this definitely fit that goal but it wasn't all that great.

One major problem that I had that many other reviewers that I saw also had was the one quote about the girl who "got herself" date raped when she was drunk at a party. That really rubbed me the wrong way and that was only 50 pages in.

The plot didn't really go anywhere in my opinion. By the end, I felt like I had totally wasted my time. I read the whole book waiting for this one piece of information and we never got it. I felt really let down and disappointed, which definitely can be seen by my low rating.

Although this was only 250 pages, it felt like it dragged on and on. I would read a chapter, watch a YouTube video, read a chapter, go on Twitter. I never really got to just sit down and read it because it was too boring and wasn't going anywhere interesting. Although I hadn't heard magnificent things about this book, I had thought I maybe would have liked it so this was a letdown for me.

Isamlq says

3.5/5

I know Rachel's story. I've lived bits of it: how you've got your anger and your hurt and this inability to comprehend why things so good at first go to shit so fast. **Except things don't actually happen fast**, as she so clearly explains. Rather it's choices that pile up on top of another and it's knowing things then ignoring some of it when more convenient, when easier. What's most accurate is her wanting out of things and wanting to wash her hands of the situation; then that feeling of relief that's the one I grasp the most (sometimes, I feel like I'm still living that part of it.)

Out of reach is HONEST, painting an accurate picture of how those on the side are part of things though not completely. Most parts of it, (ignore that budding romance that's obviously a sweet addition to lighten the load,) are right on. Seeing someone go from one thing then become something else and then wondering WHY. Contrast the then to the now, and see a striking difference that allows for even more confusion on how things could so drastically change. Then the guilt from her feeling she could have done more and how she feeling bad about certain other feelings. Then there's the anger about how come she has to feel all these things and how come she's the only one who seems left to deal with things.

It's an authentic look because it's not just the bad that you contend with, there's the good too, the memories of the good, the things that link you to them. And of course there's,

"Life is not determined by 'probablys' and 'would haves'"

because it really isn't.

Belle says

With each new height, I closed my eyes and pictured myself flying away, like I used to as a kid. I wished I could go back, be a kid again, when everything was simple and the bad guys existed only in movies. Where there were no ex-boyfriends, no drugs. Where Micah and I were innocent and pure.

This was a deep, meaningful read that I am really glad I came across. It deals with the issue of how drugs can ruin the life of a person so easily and how easily that can negatively effect those around them. This book did an amazing job at handling this issue of addiction, and I felt portrayed a very truthful and realistic picture of how easy one try of a drug can lead and make a persons life spiral out of control. It shows just how people around them deal with this.. some with anger, others with acceptance and most with ignorance. The book was narrated by the sister of an addict, Rachel, and showed how she had to learn to deal with the regret, guilt and anger she feels towards her meth addicted brother, Micah. She blames herself for Micah's deterioration, and reflects upon the number of times she had the chance to do something but didn't.

After an anonymous tip of the whereabouts of her brother who had returned from rehab, relapsed and then disappeared, Rachel sets out to find him. Micah's best friend, Tyler, joins on her on this journey. But can she really find someone who doesn't want to be found ?

Throughout the book, we see flash backs from Rachel's life. We see other issues touched upon in this, such as cheating, false marriages, homelessness, abuse, depression, addictions, cancer, disease, alcoholism etc. Each story Rachel tells further enhances the story, and allows us to truly delve into her mind.

I thoroughly enjoyed this book. Although, quite heavy in the content, it is a book I am sure a lot of us can relate to.. Drug addiction is a major issue, that many people witness or experience. The main lesson learnt in this book, is about self-acceptance and most of all that ignorance is not bliss. Instead, if we see something we can do to help another person we should do whatever we can to help them, and not simply just turn a blind eye.

Only tidbit was how the book ended up in the air a bit.. (view spoiler)
I give the book a 3.5/5

“You laugh just like your brother,” Tyler said.?“I know,” I said, and smiled.

bird says

There are books meant to get your heart racing with action, your stomach turning from the gore, and your heart thumping from the romance.

Out of Reach was not any of those books. Carrie Arcos wrote a beautiful, tragic, emotionally and gut-wrenching story that was all too real.

Sarah's older brother is a drug addict and she sets off on a journey with his best friend to find him and bring him home.

Mixed with heartbreaking pieces of back-story and the sometimes funny, sometimes sad, sometimes sweet journey to find Micah.

I connected so much with Rachel, the story, and especially the emotion. The author captured my feelings and the thoughts that have swirled in my head over and over again.....she made them real. It's not very often that I can say that.

Nothing was sugar coated in this book, but I appreciated that. SO many people make drug addiction seem like something harmless, and it's not. I'm sending my love to the author for making drug addiction real instead of hiding the facts for people that can't take reality.

Out of Reach was just amazing. I don't know if you'll connect with Rachel or the storyline if you don't have any idea how painful it is to watch someone you love destroy themselves.

But if you have any idea what it's like? Read this book. I promise you that even though it will rip your heart out, by the end you'll be in tears. The writing to Out of Reach was simply beautiful. I loved every second I spent reading it.

This was amazing....review to come when I figure out how to write one....

Drew says

“It’s so hard,” she said.

“What’s that?”

“When you love someone. It’s hard to let them go.”

This was so sad. If you don't like raw, honest, brutal books, then Out of Reach isn't for you.

Though this wasn't the best realistic fiction novel I've read, I liked how **personal** it was. It took an extremely up close look at Rachel's life, who is on a mission to find her brother, Micah, a meth addict who was just released from rehab and has now run away from home.

The story is told in a past and present format. Micah's addiction became more and more apparent through flashbacks and it was revealed that Rachel was one of the first people to know about it; to find out about her brother's problem, how serious it had grown, and how she felt completely powerless because **she didn't know how to help him.**

Rachel's guilt drives her to search for her missing brother. She leaves town with Micah's close friend, Tyler, and the two embark on an exhausting, seemingly endless hunt. Together they track down clues and missing, broken pieces from Micah's past, and Rachel ends up learning more about her brother than she ever knew.

This was an emotional—if not depressing—book. I felt the strain Micah's disappearance had taken on Rachel, her immense stress and worry, **her need to find him.** The ending wasn't what I expected or wanted and it made me frustrated because there were so many loose threads left open.

But in this case, I think the ambiguous ending worked. After I'd set down the book for a few hours, I thought about it and realized **this wasn't a perfect story and was never meant to be**, so the realistic, unhappy ending fit perfectly. Of course I would have liked to know more, but I think this book was more about the journey, about Rachel coming to terms with Micah, and showcasing how his decisions effected his whole family.

Besides some problems I had with stiff characterization and awkward dialogue, this was a solid contemporary about a girl indirectly suffering from the effects of a drug addiction. **A touching, impressive debut.**

Michelle Wrona says

This review can also be found on A Thousand Lives Lived, check it out for more!

3.5 star rating

This book was actually a '*National Book Award*' finalist, and I really do believe that it deserves that specific award. With Carrie Arcos' short but defining tale, *Out of Reach* gave me an understanding of what it's like to be in the place of someone, a character, with no hope or faith left inside of her when everything slowly begins to fall apart from her angle. It's not everyday when we get to see an experience like this, even in literature, but I can tell you that it's so magical to read about a story like this when we've never seen anything like it beforehand. **That's the utter power of writing.**

Arcos immediately throws readers into a pile of something special—a risky story. Writing something that may be upsetting to some readers or may be totally difficult to write because it takes time for a story like this to build up and strengthen. **It's a story of belonging, of friendship and finding the right person to make you feel welcomed and loved.** By looking at its simple cover, the mood reflects a darker, deeper story that might sadden readers, where it kind of did, in a way.

"Just like a tapeworm, sometimes a lie has to be physically removed. The problem is, most of us still carry the lie around inside a jar like a souvenir." (14)

You see that quote above? **It speaks to me.** Carrie Arcos' writing contained so many relatable phrases like that throughout this whole novel, and I could literally feel the pain that the characters were giving off, especially Rachel's. Her story may not be the most unique and divergent in the YA lit world, but it was nice to read about a good sister-brother relationship like she and her brother, Micah, once had. It's not everyday when you read about a sister willing to do anything to save the person she looks up to the most in her life when he's gone.

No, this isn't about death. It's more of a mystery, kind of like John Green's *Paper Towns*, where Micah has left the clues for Rachel, begging for her to save him in ways that us ordinary people cannot even fully comprehend. That's a big part of the novel, with a hint or two of romance between Rachel and Tyler, because hey—she has to be happy, too. It would've been so miserable if the story just focused on her finding her drug-abused brother somewhere living on the streets. *cries*

This was written in a super high pace and something was missing. Are stories not supposed to be written with slow-moving paces and beautiful writing when they are about *these kinds of subjects*? Something was missing here. Yeah, I finished the book in a matter of hours and ended up pleased, but I needed a little more from this whole situation to give it a great rating. The writing is quick, meaningful, but I bet that the romance and all of the other themes used kind of jumbled up together to give readers something less than ordinary. (And not in a good way, either.)

Yes, there could have been improvements. Yes, I would have liked a better love interest. Yes, there were issues! But, guess what? I really do not care because I enjoyed reading my first Carrie Arcos book so much. There is a lot in this story that many teens can relate to, and was a total interesting journey that made my heart jump at some moments of fear and/or happiness. I would definitely, definitely recommend this to you if you are a contemporary reader, as I am myself. A perfect read to have with a hot coffee by your side during the autumn season!

Kelly says

Rachel's brother Micah is a meth addict. He's disappeared, and she carries the weight of knowing of his addiction and the guilt of not telling her parents before it was too late. She's received a message from him, telling her he's not too far away. That he might be in trouble. Rachel waits a couple weeks -- scared and worried about what the message meant -- before she contacts Micah's friend Tyler and asks him to join her in looking for him.

Arcos's book is an exploration of what addiction does to a family and about what addiction does to an individual.

Unfortunately, this book fell flat for me on many levels. I never once felt the emotional heft of the story, nor did I feel like Rachel herself felt it. While she talked about the guilt she carried, that was all it was: talk. There was a lot of flashing back, of sharing stories of when she'd noticed changes or problems in Micah, but there was virtually nothing in the present that gave insight into how she acted and reacted. She waited two weeks to seek out her brother because she was afraid of what she might find, but while she and Tyler sought him out, I never got a sense of her fear or why it was important she look for him. (view spoiler)

There was a moment when (view spoiler)

The problem is this: nothing in this book is ever at stake. (view spoiler)

Is this a well-constructed portrayal of the consequences addiction? Absolutely. But there is never a story here. There's nothing at stake because everything that could be at stake has already happened. There's never character growth because Rachel's already grown and accepted things as they are. And since (view spoiler)

Other books have done these sorts of stories better and have upped the stakes and consequences so that readers emotionally connect to the characters and the potential outcomes. I'm a bit unimpressed. This reads like a debut novel -- and that's not a dig on debut novels, but rather a comment on how there was much that could have been done stronger, better, and made a more compelling read. I think Arcos certainly has talent and her writing is serviceable. But that, along with the flatlined story, didn't make this knock out or memorable.

(view spoiler)

There might be a longer review to come.
