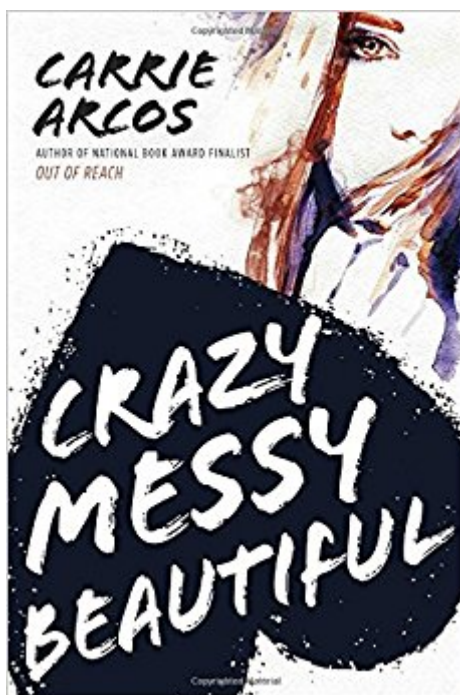


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# Crazy Messy Beautiful



## Synopsis

From National Book Award finalist Carrie Arcos--a fresh take on happily ever after, and friendship, that is anything but a love story. When your namesake is Pablo Neruda--the greatest love poet of all time--finding "the one" should be easy. After all, sixteen-year-old aspiring artist Neruda Diaz has been in love many times before. So it's only a matter of time before someone loves him back. Callie could be that someone. She's creative and edgy, and nothing like the girls Neruda typically falls for, so when a school assignment brings them together, he is pleasantly surprised to learn they have a lot in common. With his true love in reach and his artistic ambitions on track, everything is finally coming together. But as Neruda begins to fall faster and harder than ever before, he is blindsided by the complicated nature of love and art in more ways than one. And when the relationships he's looked to for guidance threaten to implode, Neruda must confront the reality that love is crazier, messier, and more beautiful than he ever realized and riskier, too, than simply saying the words. Praise for *Crazy Messy Beautiful*: "This satisfying and unconventional love story explores the various meanings of the word." --Kirkus Reviews "Arcos has written a classic story of a budding artist finding out the reality behind the artifice, and does so while keeping a wonderful sense of humor." --Booklist "Arcos capably probes the mysterious without attempting to solve it as Neruda discovers the difference between crushing on someone he doesn't know and loving someone he does, learning that friendship, too, is a kind of love." --Publishers Weekly "With readily relatable characters who, nonetheless, surprise readers as they tackle life's many challenges and gifts, *Crazy Messy Beautiful* . . . explores the complexities of human emotions, aspirations, creativity, and relationships. This eminently readable book will appeal to male and female readers alike." --VOYA "The thematic thread of love as work between flawed people is woven through both language and situations, its subtlety affording different readings; romantics like Neruda will empathize with his frustration and failures, while more pragmatic readers may feel wryly superior and even slightly amused at the ways his heightened expectations butt up against modern high school life and characters." --BCCB

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

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Carrie Arcos ([carriearcos.com](http://carriearcos.com)) was born in Albany, New York, and still mourns the day her family left for the West Coast. She earned an MA in creative writing and English literature and writes young-adult fiction. She has taught English both high school and college. Carrie lives in Los Angeles with her husband and three children. She is also the author of National Book Award finalist *Out of Reach*, and *There Will Come a Time*. You can follow her on Twitter [@carriearcos](#).

I wasn't expecting to fall in love with the main character, Neruda by page 19, but it happened. Vulnerable, artistic, and awkward, Neruda is in love with love. He's studied it in the poetry

of his namesake, but he's never experienced it until now. He thinks he knows how it works, but the reality of love is crazy, messy, beautiful. People surprise and disappoint you. Love falters when you expect it to soar, it endures when you expect it to die.

I've loved Carrie Arcos' previous two books and the third did not disappoint. I found myself quickly drawn into the story and stayed up way past my bedtime because I just couldn't put it down. A must read.

This book is a contemporary work, I was never been found of contemporaries but this one made me love contemporaries. The way it was written is really impressive, I really love the author's style on writing, such an easy read. You can finish the book in one sitting because the story is really interesting. I fell in love with the characters of Neruda and Callie immediately. This book is about friendship, love, family and art. One thing I love about it is that it shows me how love changes people, how art give life to anything to anyone. A book full of art is so magnificent it gave. I am motivated by this book to do more art because since I went to college I've been busy and stop doing art but this book brought back the magic in me. Thank to the author for giving it back. About the ending, I'm satisfied how the story end it might not what others expected but I really think it's the perfect ending for such a great story like this. I'm trying my best not to say parts that might spoil you guys. I highly recommend this book to everyone. All of you should check out this book.

This is my first book by this author and she did a great job on writing this story. I really enjoyed reading this and I want to read more of her books. The writing style of this book is beautifully well written. I fell in love with this story. This is a story about friendship and love. Neruda falls hard for Callie but does she like him the way that he does? The characters are very well done. I feel like I could connect with Neruda. The details of the writing you can imagine being in the book and seeing what was happening with Neruda and Callie while doing their English projects together. Everything was good about this story. A job well done. Recommend to ya readers and readers who love a good story. I received a ARC of this book to give an honest review.

Critically acclaimed author Carrie Arcos's newest novel features an endearing hero looking for his one true love. In this unconventional story of friendship and love, we meet Neruda who falls hard for

Callie as they work on an English project. But does she feel the same way? "Like all tragic love stories, she left me....for kindergarten at a different school. On the last day together, Ella gave me a kiss on the cheek. I was embarrassed and ran and hid from her refusing to come out and say good-bye. I never saw her again." There is something so incredibly endearing about Neruda and his view on life. His namesake, Pablo Neruda, is widely known for his intoxicating and lush views on love, romance, and soul mates. Neruda follows suit and believes that if he can just find love, he will have it all. But in real life, sometimes love isn't the end all be all or the end result. "Because Pablo Neruda was not just one of the greatest love poets. He was The Greatest Love Poet of all time. I, on the other hand, am the unluckiest in love. It's not for lack of trying. So far I'm about zero for seven, the names of the girls written on my heart like the scars I can still recall on Ella's knee—Marisol, Stephanie, Jessi, Angela, Trinity, and Elise." Carrie Arcos's writing is quite beautiful. Being in Neruda's perspective, his romanticized views on love as well as his artistic side lends itself to descriptive prose and some beautifully introspective moments. At the heart of the book is the friendship slowly formed between Neruda and Callie. The two are paired together for an English project where they have to do reports on each other. But soon both realize that they're just hanging out with each other and not just for the project. In a small way, the way their friendship formed reminded me a bit of Josh and Nasyta from *The Sea of Tranquility*—a bond formed that neither of them really wanted but it happened anyway. Neruda goes through a character change from beginning to end, with his views on life shifting slightly through his experiences, a coming-of-age novel through and through. I really liked seeing him parse through everything, as he is put in a difficult position with his parents. "...secrets are insidious things. The truth wants to be found out." This is a very character-driven story but I felt like the plot was almost a little too sparse. The characters were interesting but not enough for their interactions to carry the story without more going on. There was also a plot point that I found completely unbelievable and I couldn't suspend disbelief. Three years prior, Neruda had started writing a prisoner as part of a school pen pal project. Now this prison is out and they're best friends. I had a really hard time believing that any school would be able to get such a program going without legal repercussions and questions of safety. I know not all prisoners are dangerous but it didn't seem probable in today's day and age. "The ugliest, hardest, meanest men cry when they think no one can hear. They would be ashamed if they knew others could hear, but through all these years, I've clung to that sound because it gives me hope. Makes me realize we are all the same in the middle of the night, fighting against the great tide of loneliness that threatens to drown us. All longing for someone to hear, to truly know us as we are." \* Thanks to Philomel Books for providing me with an early copy for an honest review.

Carrie Arcos' third book Crazy Messy Beautiful was lighter than her other two books, yet doesn't shy away from tackling one of the biggest teen issues: love. I saw my own teenage self in the main character, hopeless romantic, sensitive artist, struggling to navigate the things we only know from film or television or poetry. Of course things don't go as hoped with our main character and we find out that films and poetry often get love so very wrong! Great read, I carried it with me for 48 hours, reading it in line at Disneyland and on a cross-country flight. It is perfect for the teen or adult in your love as a gift for St. Valentine's Day! xo

Carrie Arcos's books just get better and better with each one she writes. Crazy Messy Beautiful is so rich and gave me all the feels; I laughed, I cried, I got angry and and felt angsty. Loved the characters and the journey I got to go on with them through this story.

I loved it! Life is crazy messy and beautiful!

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