



# Archipelago

*John Rachel*

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This is the story of Billy Green. When he was just turning four, his father tried to throw him in the trash. He was a smart kid but that just seemed to create enemies.

His mom did everything to protect him. But this was Detroit, armpit of the wasteland! Catholic school didn't help much, except the time he got his first kiss from an atheist nun. Home life was dismal. Was his father capable of anything but drinking beer and farting? And what was with that neighbor who made puppets and tried to molest Billy? Golly! Detroit was sucking the life out of him. At such a young age!

Then adolescence swirled around him. Like water in a toilet bowl. High school was a B movie. Only without a plot. So finally he did something about it. Billy ran away... to college. Cornell University. That was a good move for sure! He studied hard, lost his virginity, met the love of his life. Things were definitely looking up! What could possibly go wrong? Isn't that what we always ask?

## Archipelago Details

Date : Published November 9th 2014 by Literary Vagabond Books (first published October 7th 2014)

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Author : John Rachel

Format : Paperback 204 pages

Genre : Fiction, Adult Fiction

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# From Reader Review Archipelago for online ebook

## Sandra Lopez says

This is the story of Billy Green, a precocious young boy with a cruel father and a coddling mother who deemed him “special” from the start.

Full of curiosity, the kid loved school and loved to learn. His Catholic school was a “Toys R’ Us to make you smart.” Of course, much of the history and debate involving the church did not interest me so much.

The fascinating thing was that although the story centers on Billy from childhood to adulthood, story expands slightly to the other characters, enlightening readers on their bio and history (ex: his mom, Sister Bernadette, Sister Mary, etc.) Sister Mary’s story was particularly sad.

Though sheltered by his mom, Billy had some unsettling experiences in regards to sex—things that made you go WTF!? At times, it was a tad vulgar and crude. I wondered if it was really necessary.

I liked the list that Billy considers the things he learned so far.

Billy is a smart and perceptive kid, who was often bullied by his peers, which he speaks extensively on some, making it, at times, for laborious reading.

“If [the missing concept and perspective] had been there, people would have had to see how bogus and childish and truly embarrassing all the hand-wringing and heart-wrenching and torrential downpour of tears really was—how infantile and cowardly the collective response of the American people was to the events of Sept. 11.” (LOC 1852) I totally agree! In fact, Billy makes some excellent points here.

However, in spite of a few minor oversights, this was still a well-written and thought-provoking story. It’s a critical and comprehensive study on sex, people, social conduct, marriage, religion, America—life.

Honest and clever, story is colorfully rendered in pale beauty and striking candor.

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## Sandra says

I got this as a free eBook. I enjoyed this book. It's not what I usually read. This book was about a young boy from age 3 to 28, but this was the first book of a trilogy. The ages were from 3 -20. The boy went through the same things young people today may face. Abuse:bullying, sexual,emotional, physical, and psychical. But he was not your typical person. He was very intelligent, he loved to learn all kinds of things. He was a loner, not a loser. He went through the different school systems, homeschooling, private school, and public. He followed the beat of a different drummer. He was following his own plan. I will have read the other two books see what happens next.

Thanks for the eBook!.

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## **Kelly says**

The Man Who loved Too Much is a fantastic coming of age story about a boy growing up in the suburbs of Detroit Michigan. Billy Green has a loving doting mother and an abusive father and has a desire to escape his dysfunctional family. The author takes you on Billy's journey through his early years starting at the age of four in 1986 to his early college years in 2003 at the age of 20. Along the way we see Billy receive his first kiss, have his first sexual experience and find his first girlfriend. Billy Green is clever, witty and charismatic and you can't help but fall in love with him. Thank you to the author for providing a copy of this book. I truly loved this story and I eagerly await the next instalment in the trilogy!

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## **Misty Nordyke says**

This is the story of Billy Green. Billy grew up in Detroit, Michigan, with a loving and doting mother and a father who was cruel and abusive with his words and actions.

Billy can't wait to leave Detroit to go to college and finally have some independence.

While in college, Billy learns about the world, people around him and how some people like to take advantage or hurt others.

Billy falls in love with a girl and their relationship is a confusing one for Billy, while trying to deal with classes, finals, his mother's illness, and his girlfriend's best friend.

Billy soon gets an eye opener on life.

This was an interesting read. I liked the story line and the view into college life.

\*\* I won this book on Goodreads first reads giveaway. \*\*

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## **Gayle says**

THE MAN WHO LOVED TOO MUCH: BOOK ONE by John D Rachel

Billy Green stole my heart.

From his earliest days his dear mother loved him with a love so deep you could put your arms around it. But, even such a great love was not enough to balance the emotional abuse thrown out in wild abandonment by his sloppy, farting, beer-drinking "Get me another, suds, Woman," dad.

Billy was blessed with a brilliant mind, and it wasn't long before his mother realized she had not the capacity to home school him any longer and enrolled Billy at a Catholic school where he stayed through the sixth grade.

Billy was smart enough to stay at the top of his class and mischievous enough to warrant frequent visits to the principal's office.

The end of the sixth grade brought Billy his first kiss; high school gave him his first blow job; college produced his first love.

I laughed uproariously, and then I cried.

You will be begging for more. Voila! Your wish has been granted. This is the first part of a trilogy which follows Billy until he's twenty-eight.

Part Two is coming soon.

This is written by someone who uses words so masterfully; who employs satire at its finest, can get downright dirty if life dictates it, and appears to have fun with it all.

Don't miss any.

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## Dianne says

Grab the sunglasses! John Rachel's **The Man Who Loved Too Much** is simply brilliant story telling that keeps one guessing, is he serious, is this pure satire, should I cry here, is it okay to laugh out loud, how am I relating to so many events?

Billy Green survived and often manipulated his growing up in a dysfunctional family from Detroit and its suburbs. From the Thanksgiving Parade to his academic misadventures, Billy seems to have a target on his back, saying "Kick Me Here." Too intelligent for his own good, with an inner rebel just dying to get out, his antics often backfire, even when sent to the mysterious world of Catholic schools and nuns, with their requisite tissue up their sleeve. He carried his school career to new heights in public high school, while planning his great escape to college. Little did he know that many of his defining life moments were still ahead of him inside those glorious halls of higher education. Confusion, feelings of being disconnected, an unintentional babe magnet and losing his virginity in a less than romantic way, who would have thought that love would run our Billy over like a steamroller?...a steamroller with spikes, no less.

Did I mention brilliant story-telling and John Rachel in the same sentence? It's worth repeating, trust me! Take a walk on the "definitely unique" side of life, empty your head completely before plummeting heart first into this tale of one young man's often painful journey to manhood. It's even okay to laugh, because John Rachel's tale isn't meant to depress as it nails what we can all relate to in one way or another. Mr. Rachel has a fresh style that refused to let go as each page unveiled another scattered island in the tumultuous sea that is Billy's life. Was it Detroit? Fate? Life? All I know is this is pure reading entertainment! Billy even answered the age-old question: "Do nuns have feet?!"

I received this copy from the author in exchange for my honest review.

Series: Archipelago - Book 1

Publication Date: November 9, 2014

Publisher: Literary Vagabond Books | John Rachel

Genre: Adult Fiction|Satire

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## **Peggy Dabney says**

Phenomenal Story! Must Read! This unique story is about Billy Greens struggles growing up. It begins when he is a small boy, taking us through his tragic childhood, rocky adolescence, and then attempting the impossible task of just getting through his teenage years with hope for a better future. He loves his mothers dearly. (Although personally I think she is a little smothering). His father is the bastard from hell whom you hate from the beginning. How this man can be so cruel to his own child makes me cringe. Billy's perspective on the world is molded from his challenges, and we get a unique perspective on both how and why he thinks the way he does. When he finally gets to flee to College, he meets his girlfriend Natalie and again has a new set of challenges.

This is superb story telling and will make you feel and think about the world and people in a totally different way. Billy's world is a rollercoaster of defiance, confrontation, and provocation. We cheer at his victories and cry when he is defeated. Kudos to John Rachel for bringing us this special story.

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## **Harmony Kent says**

Reviewed on behalf of The Review Board by Harmony Kent.

I received a free mobi copy of this book, in exchange for an honest review.

This is the first book of a trilogy, and not a standalone novel. The ending is abrupt and leaves a lot of loose threads. It feels as if we have the beginning, and perhaps some of the middle, but not an ending. When I read the last line, I felt cheated. I'd put all this effort into reading the book, and by the finish I was left wanting. The revelation in the final two pages wasn't a surprise at all, as I'd already guessed this from early on in Billy and Natalie's relationship and the tension surrounding Pam.

The book opens strongly and follows Billy green, a precocious toddler who becomes a smart kid. His home life is screwed up, and the love of his doting mother is all that saves it. Although, I find it quite a stretch to believe that he would turn out anywhere near well-adjusted with such an aggressively indifferent father and a mother who dotes on him and gives him everything he wants, to the point of indulging his aversion to school by keeping him home. Added to that is all the crazy stuff he got exposed to at school (when he finally began attending), and you have a recipe for one screwed up kid, no matter how clever he might be. This also makes it highly unlikely that he would reach college in such a naïve state. His highly politicized viewpoints at a tender age also feel forced and detract further from the believability of his character.

The narrative is told in third person close and mostly from Billy's viewpoint. Any POV shifts are given their own section, and so head hopping is avoided. Unfortunately, spelling errors and missing words litter the text, and sentences like the following drive me nuts: 'After all, they had just had been as intimate as two people can be.' When mistakes as basic as this are made, it shows me that not even a cursory read-through has been performed.

Some parts of the book felt engaging and had me chuckling aloud, and yet others had me as bored as could be. The author puts in a lot of detail, but for me, a lot of the college stuff could have been trimmed significantly without detracting from the plotline or story arc. On occasion, a line or phrase would stand out

for me, such as: 'You learn as you go along. It's not what you deserve or don't deserve. You just get what you get. The important thing is to live.' It's pithy and to the point, and an important message.

At first, I thought this would be a coming of age tale, and then I thought that Billy would find out the truth about his girlfriend, or that they would split up and something would happen from that (especially with the title of the series), but by the end of the book, none of that had occurred, and I don't know what the point of the tale is. Perhaps book two might shed a little more light? Hopefully, you don't have to wait until book three. Not that I cared enough about the characters, not even Billy, to wade through the sequel to find out. Sorry, but this is a take-it-or-leave-it read for me. It gets 6 out of 10 TRB stars, which equates to 3 out of 5 stars on other rating scales. This basically means that it's one up from 'flip a coin and take a chance if you dare.'

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## **Tony Parsons says**

1986–1995, set in Detroit; Harold (husband/father) & Irene (wife/mother) had taken Billy (3, son) to Thanksgiving Day Parade. They had bought him a balloon but it blew away.

Things didn't actually go as planned for Billy or Harold.

Billy appeared to be a gifted child.

Sister Mary Felicia (5th grade teacher, Anna Marie Fontana, Loyola Marymount, Dominican Nuns of Corpus Christi Monastery) would get to know each other very well. He would stay after class & ask a lot of ? about the Catholic faith.

Things got tough for the Green family & Billy (13) would now transfer to Troy Jr.-Sr. HS.

1996–2001, A lot of reminiscing about all the HS students Billy (aka Buttboy) had met, puberty, hormones, pranks, teachers & classes.

2001–2002, 9/2001, Billy would start at Cornell University (Ithaca, NY).

The horror of 9/11/2001.

12/18/2001, Room 348 Billy Green's 19th birthday party.

Christmas break.

Billy meets Natalie Diamond (3rd floor Resident Assistant).

The 2 freshman semesters are over.

Billy goes back to Michigan production work at the assembly plant where his dad Harold (Duke) works.

Billy's mom Irene tells him Peter Loy is his Billy biological dad. He was/is married, & had 3 children.

Harold could not produce children.

Back to Cornell Billy now live at Townhouse Community & has a new roommate Gil Skidmore, (Skid) who enjoys MJ.

It was Natalie's 20th birthday. Big party in the dorm room.

Christmas break Natalie was going with Pam to NY. Billy back to Detroit.

Spring break for Natalie & Billy a trip to the Poconos. What happened there?

What happened at the Lucatelli's Ristorante?

We had 2 of those preachers where I live. There was a movie made about 1 of them.

The other 1 the wife forgave him & they moved to a bigger city.

HS & College (under grad/grad), spring break fun times. I miss it.

A very awesome book cover, great font & writing style. 1st of a trilogy. Wow, a very well written young man's coming-of-age book. It was very easy for me to read/follow from start/finish & never a dull moment. There were no grammar/typo errors, nor any repetitive or out of line sequence sentences. Lots of exciting scenarios, with several twists/turns & a great set of unique characters to keep track of. This could also make great young man's coming-of-age movie, or mini TV series. The suspense is killing me. There is no doubt in my mind this is a very easy rating of 5 stars.

Thank you for the free book (Author, PDF)  
Tony Parsons MSW (Washburn)

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### **Michael Mardel says**

The man who loved too much by Rachel sucks one in from the very beginning. In the very first conflict, one holds one's breath as a too full bladder is pushed to the limits. Each stage of Billy's life is momentous with people in his life adding to his repertoire. One is saddened about Billy's home life and Rachel eventually lets us glimpse why. Sex is treated in such a way that Billy is not really choosing it, but it chooses him. And then there are the emotional turmoils of his mother and his girl friend, Natalie. Yes, Billy loves too much but so do those closest to him.

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### **Paul says**

I was given an electronic copy of this book by the author for an honest review. This book follows the main character, Billy Green, through the first 20 years of his life.

Billy Green has a loving doting mother and an abusive father and has a desire to escape his dysfunctional family. The author takes you on Billy's journey through his early years starting at the age of four in 1986 to his early college years in 2003 at the age of 20. Billy Green didn't have a great childhood. Billy was smart. Sometimes, too smart. After making it through high school, Billy decided to leave and attend college. He went to Cornell University. Things were finally looking up for him. He met someone there.

Billy falls in love with a girl and their relationship is a confusing one for Billy, while trying to deal with classes, finals, his mother's illness, and his girlfriends best friend.

It's an extremely short book, and because the cliffhanger ending did leave me the itch to find out an answer to one of the book's mysteries, I'd recommend picking it up. I'm very interested to see what other plans the author has in store for Billy in book two.

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### **Sharon says**

I was given an electronic copy of this book by the author for an honest review. This book follows the main character, Billy Green, through the first 20 years of his life. He navigates his world with sarcastic wit and dry humor, all the while having emotional, spiritual, social, and sexual revelations. The author clearly portrays Billy as a person who is intellectually stimulated by the world around him. He takes things at face value and



is willing to stand up against his adversaries, regardless of what it might cost him. I found the story interesting and thought that the plot was well paced. I did think that novel concluded rather abruptly and would have liked a few more pages to flesh out those ideas. All in all, I enjoyed this book and look forward to reading more by this author.

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### **Georgiann Hennelly says**

Billy Green grew up in Detroit Michigan his Mother was very loving and doted on him. His Father was a cruel abusive man. Billy had a brilliant mind his Mom soon realized she couldn't home school him any longer so she enrolled him at a Catholic school where he attended through the sixth grade. The end of sixth grade brought him his first kiss. Each stage of Billy's life is momentous. A wonderful coming of age story .I look forward to reading the next book i the series.

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### **OpenBookSociety.com says**

<http://openbooksociety.com/article/th...>

Brought to you by OBS reviewer Andra

Some Spoilers

The Man Who Loved Too Much is an intriguing, captivating coming of age story. I was engaged from the very beginning pages as a result of Mr. Rachel's writing style, which was very fluid and easy to read.

A rollercoaster, that is how I can describe the life of Billy portrayed throughout the book. But really, what child isn't exposed to life in a myriad of ways? Getting thrown into a trash can at age four by his father is a bit unusual, but not unheard of. However, this certainly set the tone of his relationship with his father. Billy has neither respect nor love for the man but truly adores his mother (Irene). Billy's mother does all that she can to see that Billy has all the advantages that she can muster. Hence, the catholic school from grade one through six. Nothing but the best for her bright boy. Too funny when asked in the 3rd grade what he wants to be when he grows up by Sister Grace

"I really think I want to be a nun."

And the uproar then ensues is classic Billy. :) The relationship that developed between Billy and Sister Mary Felicia was gripping. She has such depth as well as some unusual discoveries given her vocation....a surprise really.

Mr. Rogers! Hmmm...not sure I like this character using this particular name...sullyng the name and all. Once I got past that.....Wow. I was so glad Billy was able to get away from and past this gentlemen's despicable behavior. Another dimension to Billy...not that he needed this particular life experience.

Throughout the story, the hatred for Billy's dad seems to grow. Revelations throughout definitely clarify the relationship. And the way that Harold (Billy's father) was SO disengaged, from early childhood was upsetting. However, as the tale continues at least some disclosures provide reasoning and explanations as to Harold's behavior. Still, he could have been such a better father to his son!!!

Now it was never in doubt from kindergarten on that Billy would do well in school. I loved his dedication to getting away from his family and his drive to study hard. But all studying and focus can (and did) make Billy a bit naïve as to the ways of college girls. What a birthday present! Interesting, funny and lucky for Billy, the introduction of him to his future love interest (and lucky in other ways....but you will read about it yourself). The love story in college is heartwarming. I loved the way that Natalie and Billy slowly and cautiously danced their dance of romance. It was VERY engaging....and true to Billy's nature.

I will wait with baited breath for the next installment as I must continue on with Billy's journey! It was that engaging. What will happen with Billy and Natalie? What does the future hold for Irene? And what about Harold? Or the members of the birthday crew (Kristin, Angie, Erin, Julianne and Tanya)? And how does Billy navigate life after college?

Thank you, Mr. Rachel, for penning such a delightful read.

\*OBS would like to thank the author for supplying a free copy of this title in exchange for an honest review\*

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## **Arlena says**

### Book Description.....

"This is the story of Billy Green. When he was just turning four, his father tried to throw him in the trash. He was a smart kid but that just seemed to create enemies.

His mom did everything to protect him. But this was Detroit, armpit of the wasteland! Catholic school didn't help much, except the time he got his first kiss from an atheist nun. Home life was dismal. Was his father capable of anything but drinking beer and farting? And what was with that neighbor who made puppets and tried to molest Billy? Golly! Detroit was sucking the life out of him. At such a young age!

Then adolescence swirled around him. Like water in a toilet bowl. High school was a B movie. Only without a plot. So finally he did something about it. Billy ran away... to college. Cornell University. That was a good move for sure! He studied hard, lost his virginity, met the love of his life. Things were definitely looking up! What could possibly go wrong? Isn't that what we always ask?"

Title: The Man Who Loved Too Much

Author: John Rachel

Publisher: Literary Vagabond Books

Book 1: Archipelago

Reviewed By: Arlena Dean

Rating: 5

Review:

"The Man Who Loved Too Much" by John Rachel

This author really presented the reader with a story that was simply a amazing good read as this was part one of of this trilogy. I was simply amazed that as I read through this journey how much I simply enjoyed this entire well written story. At times I was left feeling so sorry for Billy Green and at other times I was found

simply cheering for him. The story setting starts in Detroit, Michigan where Billy at three years old lived with a loving mom and abusive dad. Starting at Thanksgiving Day at the Parade this story continues on through his college years where Billy meets the love of his life. As the story continues it will take you through some interesting times from Billy's childhood being home with his mom, his first day at kindergarten... on to the Catholic schools events...on through his high school years in Troy Jr. and Sr HS where there would be some painful memories....on to Billy's his first kiss ...then off to Cornell University in Ithaca, NY...his mom's illness and on to his first love where Billy meets Natalie Diamond.

What I especially enjoyed from this novel....

What I especially enjoyed about reading from "The Man Who Love Too Much" was that I was able to laugh so hard at some of the read and yet there was parts of this read you could feel real sadness too. In this intriguing story you are able to feel the pain that this hero is dealt with along with his happiness as you are lead to keep turning the pages until the end where you will find many twist and turns in the story. A lots will come out of this read and this is where I want to say you will have to pick up this novel to see what else this author has in store for the reader. It will be some journey and in the end I was left wondering about that best friend of Natalie ...Pam. Now really what was Pam up too in her presentation to Billy and Natalie at the Lucatelli Ristorante? I don't know but I felt that there was something going on in that best friend relationship (Natalie and Pam) but I am sure this will be cleared up in the next trilogy for me. Now, to get this and the rest of the story you will have to read it for yourself. The details presented in this story along with the history of what was going on at that time was absolutely wonderfully brought out making you feel that you are right there in the midst of it all.

What I also liked about this novel....

I liked how this author was able to give the reader such a interesting, intriguing and captivating well written script showing this hero 'young man's coming of age.' This novel will leave you definitely wanting the next trilogy to this wonderfully told story about Billy Green. So, in the end we have a first trilogy of Billy Green from three years of age well into his college years....wow, what a read that I would definitely recommend to you.

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