



# Unexpected Development

*Marlene Perez*

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*"I'm not sure you really want to get into what I did this summer, Mrs. Westland. Sex. Sex is how I spent my summer vacation."*

### **Megan knows twenty different words for "breasts," and can recite them alphabetically-but she can't remember the last time a guy looked her in the eye first, not the chest**

Size matters, as Megan found out in the 5 th grade, when she developed the largest breasts in the class. Now she's 17 and wearing her twin brothers' baggy sweatshirts can't hide the fact-two facts, really. When her summer job at Pancake Palace puts her in close touch with Jake , who smells like "temptation and Ivory soap," Megan wonders if he can like her for herself, not just her body. Can lusty, busty Megan learn to trust Jake -and herself? Megan tells about her summer of sex in somewhat poignant and very funny journal entries to her favorite teacher.

## Unexpected Development Details

Date : Published September 2nd 2004 by Roaring Brook Press (first published August 13th 2004)

ISBN : 9781596430068

Author : Marlene Perez

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Genre : Young Adult, Teen, Romance, Contemporary, High School

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## From Reader Review Unexpected Development for online ebook

### Booknerdreads Grace Haddad says

Definitely not what I expected.

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### Greer says

This book has an interesting start. It's an essay on "How I spent my summer Vacation" We meet our main character Megan and right off the bat Megan starts her paper about sex. I know sex is not new to teenagers but WOW this book's whole basis is having sex and large breasts.

There was a good story line about Megan who thinks she is seen just as a walking set of boobs.

Interaction with boys and how differently each one treats her and a bit of thirty year old perv action. There is the discovery of self and loving who you are and first time sex but not graphic.

The cover is the funniest thing, simple and funny use of word placement.

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### Stephanie says

This was one of those books that you know what the ending pretty early in the book. But since you love the protagonist so much you have to continue until the end.

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### Ashley says

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CompNtBk

Borrowed from library.

FS:

LS:

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### Marsha says

Candid and (dare I say it?) up front about a sensitive issue, this is an adolescent novel of a different kind. Lots of girls worry about their body—when it's going to develop, when they're going to start their menses, whether their shape is pleasing to boys, etc. But I can't think of another YA fiction that has dealt quite so forthrightly about what a girl goes through when nature has, ahem, landed her with mammaries she considers way too large.

The protagonist Megan writes with absolute bluntness about the horrors of name-calling, gossips, boys and

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men who think they have a right to her body simply because she sports a D cup—along with the overwhelming fear that no boy will ever like her for who she is rather than her over-sized breasts. Puberty has also hit her hormones with a vengeance so that her emotions for one particular boy are yawning all over the place. Welcome to adolescence.

Written as a long essay to a teacher who saved her from a creep, Unexpected Development is a refreshing look at what such girls have to endure when they're far too young to handle what society throws at them. Far from being happy, Megan suffers from back and neck pains, a creepy adulterous boss, a senior who has "potential rapist" written all over him and a dearth of female friends.

It's a powerful little novel, slim and yet packed with action, tension, conflict and a rather likeable protagonist. While the ending is a tad ambiguous, it's acceptable—because, after all, being a teenager shouldn't be the end of one's life but merely an entry to bigger (heh) and better things.

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### **Carmela says**

Still researching Marlene Perez. I just finished "Unexpected Development."

I liked the book and the voice it was written in. I sympathize with Megan's character and can relate to her insecurities and doubts about the men in her world. Her friendship with BFF Jilly is what every girl this age can relate to.

The book does hit on some very serious topics, like sexual harassment, statutory rape, pre-marital sex, extra marital affairs, and cosmetic surgery. Not to mention the obvious. (no spoilers here.) A good read.

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### **Rosa Deleon says**

Unexpected development is a heartwarming story by Marlene Perez that is very intriguing as it touches a very sensitive topic through the eyes of a young adolescent girl and that topic is self-esteem. When I first picked up the book was when I was doing shelving at my library with my friend Jessica and the cover was pretty funny so we decided to skim through the book and then skimming turned into taking every free minute we had to reading the book. The story is laid out in a very clever way following the main character as she writes a letter to one of her very trusted teachers. The letter stating in detail how she had passed her summer with the boy of her dreams but how her insecurities seemed to have made dents in their relationship. For the girl is neither overweight nor ugly, her curse seems to be that ever since fifth grade she had an "unexpected development" in the chest area meaning that her boobs were huge. This cast certain feelings of self-esteem issues because now not only is she embarrassed of her body and hides it underneath her older brothers baggy clothes but feels that no guy has ever liked her for her but for her breast making her seek surgical methods to alter her body. Being a teenage girl and being very displeased with what she sees in the mirror leads her to trouble when the boy she has been crushing on ever since elementary school finally lays his eyes on her in high school and she seems to push him away because she lets all her insecurities surface with every smile, compliment, or embrace he sends her way. The story showcases how young girls can go to great lengths believing that one day they can look in the mirror and say that they are finally happy when in reality the alterations have to be done in the mind. We see this theme play itself out in the book through the eyes of the character. In my opinion this book is a universal concept that is not directed to just girls or just adolescents but for each and every one of us who has one day looked in the mirror and not been happy with what they see may those disappointments be physical, economical, or emotional. =)

## **Pirate Queen says**

Seventeen year old Megan finds her body a hindrance to her high school career as she is a "D" cup while everyone around her wishes they were. Over the course of the summer, before her senior year, she finds the object of her affection is taking an interest in her and she struggles to keep calm while trying to discover WHY he's interested in her.

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## **Mary (BookHounds) says**

Sigh, I wish all authors could write like this. Direct and full of humor, this cute story is perfect for teens that hate their body. Megan is such a believable character from a different point of view than normal young adult themes about how you have to deal with what you have.

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## **Evrin Akman says**

I really like Marlene Perez's writing. But this book did not live up to my expectations. The book is about love and self consciousness. Which I like but this book was not my cup of tea. Sorry Perez!

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## **Arminzerella says**

Meghan is a senior in high school with a big problem. Well, 2 big problems - and they're sitting right on her chest. You might say she's over-endowed, her cup runneth over; she is, in fact, at war with her breasts. What bothers her the most is the way people treat her. The boys at school make eye contact with her nipples, the girls avoid her because they're afraid her breasts will steal their boyfriends, and her mother even slips occasionally and tells her that "girls like you, Meghan" need to be careful. Meghan could do without that kind of attention. She decides to get a job and save up her money - either for college (which will get her and her chest out of this podunk town), or breast reduction surgery. But then she runs into Jake, this guy she's been dreamy about since, oh well, forever, and it turns out that he's just broken up with his very steady very long-term girlfriend - for the express privilege of getting to know Meghan. He also looks her in the eye. This could be good.

I apologize in advance if I've made this story sound trite and boob-obsessed. It's also gritty and hard. There are moments of sexual harassment that make you clench your teeth. You'd feel the same way after reading *Reviving Ophelia* - angry and itching to do something to right the wrongs and bring justice into a bad, bad world. And Meghan does not disappoint us. She is a strong and empowered young woman, even when she's scared.

This story does a very good job of describing what it's like to be noticed as a body first and as a person, maybe, if you're lucky, second. It also makes it ok to talk about how women are often treated as objects, and how our society in particular is so highly sexualized that people think it's ok to make lewd comments about women's bodies and to reach out and grab/fondle/tweak the same, to label women as sluts and whores just because of how they're put together. And it also makes a stand against those people and those ideas. So it's

not just about breasts, and it's not just about a sweet and budding relationship, and it's not just about high school. It's about life and it's about change. Read it.

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### **Kayla Bowdre says**

Just a thought i have 38F boobs and I never get molested as many times as she does, I don't know that's up with her. I think she just has a sexual scent or something. lol

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### **Kim B. says**

This book sets up a lot of interesting, provocative subjects... and proceeds to do nothing with them, instead offering one of the most groan-inducing romances I've read in a while. What a shame.

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### **Zhane' says**

it an very eye opening or good book that i would remend people. mainly girls too but it really a book i liked.

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### **Sarah says**

Hilarious chick lit. I loved this one. Unfortunately the cover is great in a bookstore, but not so good in a high school. Even the author's name is in an, ahem, appropriate place.[return][return]In a series of papers for Honors English, a senior girl relates the difficulties of being blessed with a voluptuous body that began appearing in fifth grade.

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