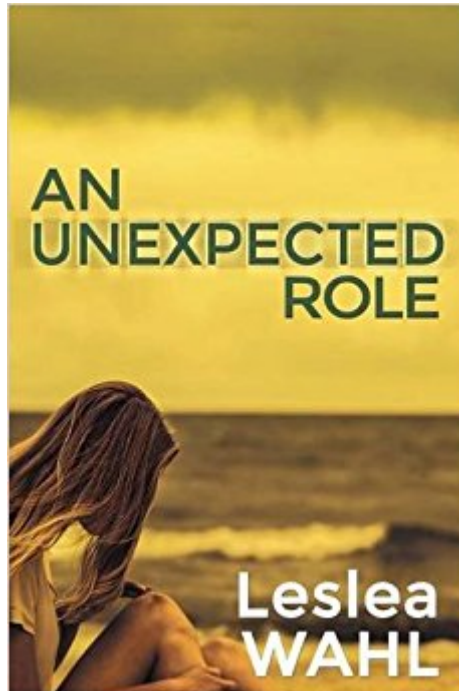




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# An Unexpected Role



## Synopsis

The devastation of a ruined summer. The gift of a second chance. Can Josie learn the lessons she needs in order to discover her true self? After a humiliating event and overwhelming peer pressure, 16-year-old Josie flees her home to spend the summer with her Aunt on a South Carolina island. Her fresh start turns into the summer of her dreams as friendships grow, romance blossoms, and a series of thefts surround her with excitement. However, when tragedy strikes someone close to her, Josie realizes there are more important things than her reputation. As she sets out to solve the mystery she has become entangled in, she not only realizes the importance of relying on her faith but along the way also discovers who God wants her to be.

## Book Information

Paperback: 250 pages

Publisher: eLectio Publishing (October 11, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1632133040

ISBN-13: 978-1632133045

Product Dimensions: 6 x 0.6 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 15.5 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.8 out of 5 stars 15 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #2,440,582 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #39 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Religious > Christian > Emotions & Feelings](#) #211 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Performing Arts > Theater](#) #319 in [Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Religious > Christian > Relationships](#)

## Customer Reviews

"Leslea Wahl has done it again! Another heart-pounding, can't-put-it-down teen suspense novel with humor galore and a delightful romantic twist. What more could you want?"- Author Susan Peek  
"Told with humor and heart, *An Unexpected Role* is a tale for any teen who enjoys a book with a little romance, mystery, and adventure!"- Author A.J. Cattapan  
"An excellent read and I look forward to more books by Wahl in the future."- Books Reviews and More

LESLEA WAHL lives in beautiful Colorado with her husband and three children. Their own life of adventure includes traveling, skiing, and scuba diving. Leslea strives to write fiction that will inspire readers to use their own talents and gifts to glorify God. Visit Leslea's website at

This YA book is about a high-school theatre geek who doesn't fit in with the cool kids and who's been the target of some in-person pranks and cyberbullying. Seeking a fresh start, she spends the summer with her aunt, only to keep running into one of the cool kids from home. Josie and Ryan get wrapped up in trying to solve a rash of local robberies. Great characters, painfully real situations, mystery and even a love interest--with some wisdom in the side. Well done!

This book was so refreshing and enjoyable! I appreciated the weaving of God's plan for Josie's life with the day to day events of her life! Leslea Wahl skillfully wrote from Josie's perspective, and the way the story moved along, it was hard to put this book down! I would recommend this book to readers of any age, but especially to teen readers that are in the midst of high school drama--both inside and outside of the theater setting!

Leslea Wahl has done it again - another great book custom-tailored to teens (teen girls in particular). I'm always a little put-off by present tense narration, but I quickly grew to enjoy Josie's voice. Great writing peppered with humor and insight, the author captures the human tendency to hyperfocus on our own problems that can be part and parcel of the teen years. Take a mortifying yet hardly life-threatening problem, add an alluring backdrop of sunshine, sand, and an attractive guy, and watch Josie's self-preoccupation melt away as she forges relationships with those outside her narrow Minnesota high school circle. Her summer escape is populated by people of different ages, races, and backgrounds, and not everyone - even those she thinks she knows - is what they seem. There's a nice little mystery that keeps the story moving, but the most touching moments involve Josie's self-discovery, the softening of her heart, and, eventually, genuine romance with an upstanding guy and reconciliation with her mom. Enjoyable for adults, highly recommended for teens. Bonus if you're a fan of musical theater.

I just finished reading AN UNEXPECTED ROLE by Leslea D. Wahl. I can't believe I read it in one day, but it was that good from beginning to end. I mean, this book is absolutely hilarious! For me, as a writer, I love that the main character's mom is a writer! And poor Josie decides her mom is ruining her life because everyone at school thinks the embarrassing stories in the book are about her. More than anything, Josie wants an escape. And she gets one

which has the potential to be everything a girl could want. As the fun plot moves forward a mystery begins to develop, then the tension really starts mounting. In addition to being fast-moving and at times hilarious, this novel has incredible descriptions. Since I read this as summer is dwindling down, I really appreciate the beautiful imagery, the beaches and ocean view. It lets me hold onto summer for a wee bit longer. But this story is also filled with life-lessons that are totally relevant to young adults--well, to me too. This book is a fun and rewarding read!

AN UNEXPECTED ROLE by Leslea Wahl is an engaging mixture of adventure, romance, and coming-of-age penned in a unique and delightful writing style. While I was intrigued by the mystery and wanted to find out who was responsible for the robberies alongside Josie and Ryan, I also found myself prompted to turn the page because of the clever imagery that Ms. Wahl painted through incomparable metaphors sprinkled throughout the text. On several occasions during the reading experience, I thought to myself, "Wow, that is incredibly creative and sketched such a vivid picture in my mind! And it's also . . . fun!" Since the story is told in first person, these metaphors and other striking descriptions have added depth and meaning to them; it is like they are an extension of this imaginative, young theatre lover's mind. There were many elements of the story that drew me in personally and, as a result, will undoubtedly be appealing to those of a similar mind and heart. As a girl who is in love with the ocean and lighthouses, I enjoyed the fact that most of the book took place near the coast, as well as the beautiful symbolism connected to it. Indeed, it could be argued that the setting was like a character in and of itself, solid in its identity and purpose. It takes a skilled writer to convey such an understanding. As a storyteller myself, I was fascinated by the fact that the mother of Josie is a published author inspired by the antics of her daughter, leading to the "crisis" at the beginning of the journey. I have never seen such a role portrayed in a literary context before, so I greatly appreciated the inclusion; it adds yet another distinctive mark to the novel that separates it from its fellows. As I have always been close to my mom, I also loved how beautifully that special relationship was portrayed, tucked in with a sweet nostalgia yet transformed, as well as the "sisterhood" between two best friends. This is a book that should be read by every girl, regardless of her age, but especially by those young women facing obstacles in their adolescent years. There are so many relatable aspects of the book that will undoubtedly touch the hearts of other readers as they did mine. One of the primary messages of the book is that it is better to be yourself than get lost in a crowd of clones. I could not applaud such a notion of individuality more and feel that it is especially imperative that the problem be addressed at the high school level. So many teens want to be "cool" and "fit in", yet lose themselves as a result. Thus, with yet another dynamic, I believe that

this book could be the catalyst to prompt a more healthy outlook for teens and young adults in particular. Faith is also a key component, lending itself to thought-provoking and insightful moments without straying from the dimensions of the storyline in a "preachy" way. It was delightful to follow young Josie as she drew closer to God despite the distractions of this busy world. Just as in her previous novel *THE PERFECT BLINDSIDE*, Ms. Wahl is adept at creating colorful and endearing characters with their own very "human" idiosyncrasies. Josie the passionate theatre lover who jumps in headfirst yet has become insecure, the "cool" Ryan with wry humor and unexpected sensitivity, Lily the free-spirited artist, the mysterious Niko, the superfan Cyd (who added another fun dynamic for me, as a writer myself), Josie's newfound BFF, the wise old war veteran Mr. Thompson, . . . I could go on and on. What it all comes down to is the fact that each and every character had a distinctive personality that made him/her feel entirely REAL, as if there were actual people that I knew outside the pages of a book. And, just as in real life, each character often had more to him than readily apparent, gently reminding the reader to not make unfair assumptions of others. Just as with the mother-daughter relationship, the friendship and romantic angles were beautifully portrayed, with a charming combination of sweet moments and witty dialogue highlighting those true-to-life moments of mutual vexation. I found myself switching "teams" for Josie's romantic prospects when reading, which is pretty unusual for me; I tend to stick to a pairing throughout the story. That is a testament to the incredible way that Ms. Wahl keeps you guessing 'till the end. I highly recommend *AN UNEXPECTED ROLE* to the teenage girl in your life, as well as anyone who enjoys a compelling story filled with both suspense and a timeless message about discovering yourself while not forgetting the importance of those who matter most in your life---for, in the end, the two go hand in hand. Two thumbs up!

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