

New York Times Bestselling Author

Ava Catori



The Big, Not-So-Small, Curvy Girls Dating Agency

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Becky Holgate's lost her focus. It's complicated... she didn't mean to fall in love with another woman's guy. How could she be a matchmaker for other people if all she could think about was her own heart? Determined to ignore her growing infatuation, she set her sight on building her career. Only Reed Amwell was making it hard to concentrate; every encounter left her breathless.

Reed didn't mean to fall for the curvy girl, but she was carefree, silly, and fresh. Her soft curves and playful heart had him questioning his current relationship. Could he be with the wrong girl? He needed to figure it out fast, because his wedding day was getting closer by the minute.

With a laugh-out-loud best friend, an insane cat, and a business to run, Becky Holgate didn't have time for guys like Reed Amwell... until time was running out.

(NOTE: This is book 1 in a series. Each book can be read as a stand alone, but the series and storyline will continue with book 2 and 3.)

The Big, Not-So-Small, Curvy Girls Dating Agency Details

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From Reader Review The Big, Not-So-Small, Curvy Girls Dating Agency for online ebook

Christina says

Has potential buuutt

I'm not sure if it was the format or what, but I kept having to re-read passages to be sure who was thinking. Bit confusing sometimes not knowing which character was the focus.

And can we do something about the 5 minute rant about bras?!?!

Richard says

Although it's a bit different from what I usually read, I thought I'd try this light romance, in part because I obtained a free copy through a Bookbub offer in January. It's a brief novel featuring Becky, a 20-something woman who is trying to start a web dating service for "curvy" women. Along the way, she meets with a designer who happens to be a hunk. Becky is pretty insecure about her weight, which is a major plot point. (And perhaps it's one of the major "sales points" for this author, who seems to specialize.) Because this is a romance, you know it'll work out somehow in the end. The plot is perhaps a little silly and mostly light-hearted; the banter between Becky and Samantha is generally fun; and there are some definite charming moments. (view spoiler)

I wanted to like the book more than I did, but it has some significant structural and editorial issues with the writing, which I needn't go into, but which I kept bumping into. And in all honesty, they could have been mostly cleaned up by a careful copy-editor.

Overall, I enjoyed the story pretty well, and if you can get it for free or a dollar, check it out.

Julie-anne says

The lead character and her best friend seem really immature. I thought the worst part of this book was the giggle-fart thing in the cafe (she seriously giggled for about 3 or 4 paragraphs), but then we had a weird break in convo about bras at a later stage - totally came out nowhere and have no idea what the point in it was. I also didn't get why the author kept feeling the need to bring the kitty up all the time, it just started to feel like she was using the cat as a conversation breaker or a way to ease the main character's (her name didn't even stick in my head, that's how little I thought of her) awkwardness.

I don't think I liked any of the characters in this story and the dating agency idea didn't take up as much of the book as you'd think - being that it's in the name an all.

Also, there's no breaks between scene switch overs or character switchovers - it literally just runs on like a normal paragraph. Very confusing.

Nancy Crocker says

Becky Holgate wants to start her own Internet dating service for BBW. Her good friend Samantha who runs a pet grooming service, barter with one of her clients in exchange for photographs for Becky. When she meets Jaw-dropping-drool- worthy Reed Amwell she is head over heels. But he is engaged to be married to model worthy Jessica, and Becky does not go after another woman's man. No matter how "H O T" he may be.

Reed might be engaged to Jessica, but he can't get Becky off his mind. And he has to admit there has been something just missing from his relationship with Jessica lately. Something he just can't put his finger on. He started questioning everything and the more he runs into Becky the more he is convinced Jessica is the wrong girl for him.

I thought the author did a good job on describing the characters, I got the attraction between these two. But I questioned Reed being able to be totally loyal to one woman down the road. I was happy to see Becky walk away while Reed was still engaged, and stood firm until he was free. I thought a little too much time was spent on Reed not being attracted to curvy women, stating it once would have worked for me.

While I had a couple of issues with the story working out. I have to admit there were more than a few really funny lines in this book, some maybe inappropriate, but still very funny. I had tears at times I was laughing so hard. A few of them centered around one "horny - crazed" kitten named Bella who just could not leave a stuffed rabbit alone.

This book was good for a number of laughs. If you are stressed this might give you some relief from your problems. But it did miss on a few other points. Still an enjoyable read.

4/5 Stars

I received an ARC of this book from NetGalley in exchange for an honest review.

(NOTE: This is book 1 in a series. Each book can be read as a stand alone, but the series and storyline will continue with book 2 and 3 coming in Fall/Winter 2013)

Char (1RadReader59) says

This was a fun BBW read. Yet, there was a lot of truth in the emotions and fear a BBW or any woman can go through when dating or falling for someone they feel is out of their league.

Becky Holgate is a young mid-twenties woman who is in, a way too boring job. She has always seen herself as a business owner ever since she was a little girl. So, with the help of her BFF, Samantha, a dog groomer she's putting it into action.

You see she wants to be a plus size match maker. She can't get a loan from the bank. So, Sammy being a mobile business, out in the community, starts networking on Becky's behalf. She meets Reed Amwell, the fiancé of a regular Jessica. He's brought their dog to be groomed today.

Reed does website designs for a job. He does photography out of his home. He said he would do two sittings for two dog grooming's, he tells Sammy to give his card to Becky. When Becky calls him, she falls in pure lust with his voice alone. When she's told he's engaged, she scales it way back.

When she arrives at his home his fiancé answers the door. Of course, she is model perfect and doesn't seem to understand why she would be asking for Reed. She says she has an appointment. The pep Becky was feeling goes way down. Then, Jessica calls out for Reed. When he comes to the door he is all smiles. Like a crazy school girl with a crush, she is smiling too. Then, she sees Jessica sizing her up and she loses it. So, when she goes to sit in front of the camera and he sees her through the lens it's gone. The sparkle the shine in her eyes and the soul of who she is was gone. She was stiff and rigid. When he looks again he sees lettuce in her teeth. He finally has to tell her. She wants to die but after retreating to the bathroom to get it taken care of. She returns.

They end up laughing and having a good laugh over it. They can't stop thinking about each other. But it's Reed who keeps finding ways to meet up with her. When she figures out it's not just for business she puts a stop to it. She tells him no way she can be with him when he's engaged to another woman. Especially after he almost kisses her. She thought that was the last of him. Especially, with him being so gorgeous and well her being her.

See what can or how this plays out Sammy makes this book twice as funny Jessica is a winner from hell. Reed is a man a BBW everywhere hopes for. I give this: 4 stars. Free from Amazon. Follow us at www.1rad-readerreviews.com.

Carmen says

I enjoy romances where the heroine is fat, or has any other obstacles to being considered traditionally sexy. So when this was free on Amazon, I downloaded it.

...

This was horrible. If I could give it less than one star, I would. It gets zero stars.

For one thing, the grammar is horrible. Catori does not know where to put hyphens in her words. This leads to a lot of strange and silly sentences. For instance, it's not a "stupid ass cat." It's a "stupid-ass cat." It's not a "kissy face boyfriend," it's a "kissy-face boyfriend." Etc. etc. etc. Expect about 50 of these mistakes in the book.

Not to mention "beaver damn." Why is she talking about beaver dams? She talks about them 3 times, and it's always referencing having spinach caught in the MC's teeth. Finally, in her 3rd description of this (God knows why this is described so much) she gets it right and spells it "dam" instead of "damn."

She also does not put commas where commas need to be. "Thanks Sam." No, it's: "Thanks, Sam." It's not "Yes Becky Holgate," it should be: "Yes, Becky Holgate." There's quite a bit of this.

She doesn't put question marks at the end of certain questions. And not in an amazing way, like Robert B. Parker does (he's a genius). Not like she's trying to make a statement, but like she just forgot. It's horrid.

...

Now that we've established that the grammar is sorely lacking, let's tackle the (awful) story. Becky is a fat woman who has zero self-confidence. She "falls in love" (in quotes because I doubt that actual love is being experienced) with a photographer named Reed.

It's important to point out that Reed is engaged to be married. Of course, to a total "bitch" who is skinny. And also cheating on him. We've gotta make her as bad as possible, so the reader doesn't feel sympathy for her. *rolls eyes*

Reed is "hot" aka ripped and tall and handsome. Becky CANNOT get over the fact that he likes her. She has zero self-esteem and I just want to smack her. I don't know HOW men deal with this shit. I mean, I can understand being insecure about your weight. But like I've said before and will say again, if every time your boyfriend sees you he's got a hard-on and is willing and able to fuck you into next Saturday, then I don't think you have to worry about whether he finds you attractive or not. He obviously does. (Not that Reed has the ability to fuck Becky into next Saturday... he's not that good in bed.) I would have lost patience with her by the third "meltdown" she has of "We should stop dating, I'm not good enough for you." She constantly breaks up with him and avoids sex with him solely based on the fact that she's sad she's chubby. My mind is boggled by this. He obviously is very attracted to you. I'd be all over that if I were you, girl. Stop doubting yourself and grow a spine!

So, I don't like the main character.

I also don't like Reed, the 'hero.' He is engaged but sees Becky on the side, even kissing her once before she shuts that shit down and tells him she won't see him anymore unless he breaks it off with his fiancée. He's also immature and disgusting. There's one totally repulsive scene where he walks in to her room to find her vibrator on the table. He plays "keep-away" with it and (this is really gross) starts sniffing it and saying, "Very nice." Ew, what an unbelievable creeper! Also, why are you humiliating the woman you are dating?!?! The author is trying to get us to think that his behavior is sexy, but I've never been so turned-off in my life.

Catori writes awful sex. Awful. Don't expect anything remotely sexually exciting in this book. Writing good sex scenes is a gift, and one Catori doesn't have.

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Humor. I was expecting that maybe this book would have some humor and funny moments. Catori has one or two places where she starts to make a good joke. However, she always completely ruins it by pushing the joke too far and making it go on and on. It's annoying.

She does a lot of "gross" humor in the book, too, such as farting jokes.

...

Another thing about this book is that after every major scene, Becky calls her friend Samantha and re-hashes what just happened with her. That means that the reader has to suffer through it twice. I just read this, I don't want to read it again as Becky tells Samantha about it on the phone! It's very annoying and unnecessary.

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Tl;dr - Terrible grammar, poor writing, horrible dialogue, crappy plot, awful sex.

ONE REAL STAR, ONE ROMANCE STAR

If you want to read a GOOD ROMANCE BOOK about a FAT HEROINE which also has AMAZING SEX, may I suggest the excellent:

Seduce Me or
Night Play or
Heart of the Dragon.

Fiona says

If you haven't actually started reading this book yet, please don't.

Poorly written, unentertaining, shallow characters, bad grammar, bad spelling, bad structure. I don't know if I can get across how much I disliked this book. I don't like giving up on books, so pushed through to finish ASAP. I just hope if the author writes more books, she books herself into some writing classes and hires a (new) editor.

Maria says

Okay, so I picked up this book thinking, hmm this could be interesting. Let's see how the author works through a fat girls' insecurities. Yes, we big girls have them but I'd like to think we don't obsess to the degree Becky does.

Hot guy breaks engagement to hot girl for curvy girl he can't get out of his thoughts. Now, let's get real-and we can leave size and hotness out of this- what woman is going to trust a man who breaks a long term commitment to go after someone he just met? Really, and what makes you think he won't do it to you? Now I did appreciate the good laugh, the unexpected farting, and food on the teeth: it happens to the best of us.

And the ending, did she have a date/appointment she was late for? Rushed and so abrupt. Left a bad taste in my mouth. Not sure if I'll give this author another chance.

Jo-Anne says

Becky is a BBW looking for love and realizes how hard it is for anyone not model thin to find an interested man. This makes her decide to start an Internet dating service for BBWs. Her best friend, Samantha, has a pet grooming service where she trades services with one of her clients to help Becky out. Reed is a photographer who jumps at the chance to get free grooming so he trades Sam's grooming for his photography.

When Reed meets Becky, he is attracted to her and she to him but he is engaged to Jessica. Becky does not go after another woman's man so doesn't make her feeling known to Reed. Even though Reed is engaged to very thin Jessica, he can't stop thinking about curvy Becky. Things weren't quite right with him and Jessica and he had been wondering if she really was the right woman for him.

This was an enjoyable story with a cute plot and a lot of funny lines throughout. I liked Becky's determination to get the dating service going and all her ideas of how to do that. Her low self esteem got a bit tedious as the book progressed though. For example, her thinking of people like Reed didn't go for a girl like her was over done. I was also surprised that Becky started to like Reed before she knew anything about him.

The character development was well done so that I really felt I knew the main characters. Reed was gorgeous and very nice but confused about his romance direction. There was a lot about Becky that I liked and didn't like, as I mentioned earlier. Sam was a great best friend and was a funny addition to the cast. Reed's fiance, Jessica, was nasty. Just one of those characters you had to hate.

Andrea Guy says

The title of this book is quite a mouthful, considering that the story is only about 120 pages in length.

There are a lot of books going around now with BBW (Big Beautiful Woman) as heroines. What I liked about Ava's Becky is that this was a heroine that was real. Her self esteem issues throughout the book were ones that any girl, myself included feel when there are a few or many extra pounds on your frame.

The book might have been more refreshing if she were more comfortable with herself, like her friend Sam. Both are BBWs but Sam enjoys life more and doesn't let her weight hold her back, even though she was burned by a past boyfriend.

Reed was an interesting hero. I loved him...I was confused by him..I didn't know what to make of him. Super gorgeous and engaged when he first met Becky, it was hard to think that these two would get it together.

I don't like books with cheating and I was really glad that Reed chose to break it off with Jessica. (Who was a Bitch..and that capital B needs to be there). There is absolutely no way you can like that girl. She was "Wicked Witch" evil. Seriously, the girl needed a house to fall on her!

I would have liked this story to have been a little longer because I felt all the characters relationships moved a little too fast. But then again..the character are in their mid-twenties and things tend to move faster at that age. But I would have liked more time getting to know Reed and Becky and definitely Sam.

The only gripe I had was with the confrontation with Jessica....I knew it was going to happen. The pretty thin girl had to belittle the fat chick. It was too obvious for me.

Still it was a cute fun read and a nice introduction to a new author.

Feed the Indie says

Being overweight while looking for a date can be difficult, full of insecurities and frustrations. Becky has decided to help plus-sized women find dates by creating a service specifically for them. Nevermind, that her own love life is nearly non-existent.

In The Big, Not-So-Small, Curvy Girls Dating Agency, Becky meets Reed, a hot photographer who takes headshots of her for a potential website. Becky and Reed immediately hit it off, laughing about embarrassing moments and enjoying each other's company. Yet, they face several hurdles such as Becky's overwhelming insecurities and Reed pending wedding.

The premise seems like a cute story, but I had several issues with the book.

First, the words "People like Reed didn't happen to a girl like Becky" were said in some variation at least a half a dozen times. In a rather short book, saying it once proved the point, but it became so repetitive to the point where I actually wanted to root against the two of them getting together. I understand insecurities – better than I can convey in a book review – but this seemed so far into the deep end of the insecurity pool, it became difficult to relate to.

Also, Becky found herself infatuated with him before she really knew anything about him. Reed takes photographs, he has a flatulence problem and he left his fiancée for another woman. I just need to say that

last part again – he left his fiancée for another woman. Even if that woman is the cute, bubbly main character, it's worth noting. Yet, the author decided to wrap this up in a pretty bow. Rather than feel bad for the fiancée, we learn after the break up that she cheated on him and she's a terrible person. The fiancée wasn't just mean, but completely unredeemable, which made it difficult to see what Reed saw in her in the first place.

Then, there were weird point-of-view jumps. It went from one character to the next without any breaks or indications a new character was speaking. It was quite jarring.

To me, these two didn't really seem as though they were adults in a relationship but high school kids pretending to be.

This review originally appeared on FeedTheIndie.com

Lauren says

First off I think the title is slightly misleading. Becky is trying to set up a plus size dating agency but it's a very minimal part of the story. It's almost not worth including it in the book as it just served as a convenient way for her to meet Reed and have him keep bumping into her. I expected with it being in the title to be a major part of the story and we would see Becky setting up the business instead of just starting to.

There were many sentences that were all over the place with misplaced words.

The author seems to have spent the whole book building up the two main characters coming together only to end the book abruptly when the real story was only just beginning.

I thought it was unnecessary for Becky to keep having 'does he/doesn't he like me' conversations with Sam, they seemed like teenage conversations and became needlessly repetitive. Plus referring to Becky's 'naughty bits' in the sex scenes, or should I call them 'intimate moments' as the book occasionally did, was ridiculous. I'm not sure how the author can write erection and hardness for the male lead, but can only say 'naughty bits' for describing Becky's genitalia. For me, 'naughty bits' pretty much sucked the sexiness right out of those moments.

Overall I thought the story and character development was lacking.

Natalie TBGWP says

Hmmm, so I've just finished The Big, Not-So-Small, Curvy Girls, BBW Romance, Dating Agency. I chose this book because let's face it my size 10 Jeans wearing days are long gone, so I was obviously intrigued because basically I am probably the target area for this book.

I'm just going to show you my notes I made throughout the book as my review.

- I Don't like the way she's basically saying if you're fat then no one takes any notice of you. In my opinion and as a large lass myself, it's like she's saying fat people are not real humans sorta thing, like being large is a disability or something to be ashamed of.
- It doesn't flow very well and is quite flat with minor descriptions. Also, during conversations it's hard to

decipher who's speaking as sometimes it all becomes one with no detail to what's going on in between.

- Becky's not a very good friend. She's not very supportive of her friend Sam at all and goes on that she doesn't trust her. I wouldn't want Becky as my friend at all. She's always quick to be very negative to Sam regardless of what the situation is. What a bitch.
- Her naughty bits! Is a child writing this?
- He wants to see me. He wanted to see me. If I have to read these sentences again any time soon, I may scoop out my eyeballs with red-hot teaspoons.
- Same phrases or near identical phrases used constantly throughout the book makes it very repetitive
- There's never any description at all about things that are going on, except for the sex scenes.
- It's not OK to go meet someone who's engaged to be married. It's not OK at all.
- Spelling mistakes and misplaced words
- No description to Becky's size is hard to read because a book about a bigger lady without any description especially when the story is based on her weight needs a description. One minute she's really fat, the next minute she's carrying extra weight, then the next minute only a few extra pounds
- Erm.... Did that just end? What was the point of the story!?

As you can see from my notes, I was far from impressed. The ending was the final straw for me, it was that made me think well if the writer can't be bothered to put the needed details into her book and a proper ending, then I can't be bothered writing a proper review. I know that's harsh, and I surprised myself thinking it, but my pet hate in books is bad endings. It really grates on me. I'm not giving this book a second chance as I promised I will do on every book I read, I just couldn't read it again.

Kylie says

I was really excited by this title. Books about overweight women are very difficult to find. And a book about a plus sized dating agency? Forget about it!

Unfortunately my excitement was short lived...

What came through strongest in this book was that fat chick's are insecure bimbos who need a strapping man in order to have any sense of self worth. Without said strapping man, their lives are worthless.

I'm a fat chick. I get the insecurity thing. But I'm here to tell you, if a hot guy is naked, in your bed, in YOU, you don't self analyze about how he is too good for you. You shut your eyes and enjoy the ride! Just sayin'!

If you pick up this book hoping for it to be a positive book about how women of any size can be successful and happy, put it back down again. If, however, you subscribe to the archaic belief that a fat woman is only truly complete if she is in a relationship, and you enjoy reading about a woman who needs serious psychiatric intervention, then go nuts.

Therinia says

Becky is a BBW looking for love and trying to help other BBW find love, too. I really liked Becky. She's a vibrant, funny woman, that is, when she isn't doubting herself and brimming with the insecure thoughts a lot of BBW have. I connected with Becky, and cheered her on through her kooky adventures and embarrassing mishaps.

The story itself is a lot of fun, but it does end rather abruptly. I felt like there were supposed to be a couple of more chapters. And while it was nice to have Reed's perspective, the POV switch between him and Becky was a little confusing. It threw me out of the story because I had to reread what I just read to make sure I understood what was happening.

Except for those two things, I enjoyed reading about Becky and Reed. It flowed well, and there were some funny antics that made me laugh out loud. Or cringe a little in embarrassment. The dialogue was good, especially between Becky and Samantha. They are good friends and it shows. Everyone should have a friend like Sam. They pulled me in for a good time and left me wanting more.

***A free ARC was provided through Netgalley.
