

**ESCAPE** TRAVEL // CULTURE // ADVENTURE

**READ, WATCH, DISCUSS**

Want to hear more from Sophia Money-Coutts, this month's Book Chat author? You're in luck! We're chatting to her on our latest Metro Book Chat podcast. You can listen first on Entale, the new interactive podcasting app to access extra content while you listen, or download episodes via iTunes and all the usual podcasting platforms. You can also keep up with book news by subscribing to our feeds - and share your views on Money-Coutts' latest by considering these points:



■ Are novels about women who just want to get married to Mr Right just a bit patronising in the age of #MeToo? Or does *The Plus One* simply have a bit of fun with a narrative premise that stretches back to Jane Austen?

■ F Scott Fitzgerald once said: 'Let me tell you about the very rich. They are different to you and me.' Does *The Plus One*, with its descriptions of drunken dukes and unhinged duchesses, bear that out?

■ It's been a while since Jilly Cooper wrote a really good bonkbuster. Is *The Plus One* a sign that the time is ripe for a genre revival?

■ Is Polly as funny as *Bridget Jones* or completely different? Is she someone you can root for?

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# A tired genre, then along comes Polly

THE PLUS ONE BY SOPHIA MONEY-COUTTS IS OUR BOOK CHAT CHOICE FOR THE MONTH - AND WE WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK, SAYS **CLAIRE ALLFREE**



**High society:** Money-Coutts (second left) during her time at Tatler in 2014



**Y**OU know the set up: slightly hapless single girl pines for Mr Right, gets together with Mr Wrong, endures a few mishaps but finally ends up with her happy ever after. It's a premise in danger of feeling old hat and is there a place for chick-lit in these new woke, post-Weinstein times? But we think Sophia Money-Coutts (right) has breathed fresh life into the genre with her sparky debut, which reads a bit like *Bridget Jones* trapped inside a Jilly Cooper novel.



The *Plus One* is the story of Polly, a journalist on *Posh!* magazine, who is

panicking that she has no one to take to her best friend Lex's wedding. After profiling Jasper Milton for the mag - a handsome bachelor and fixture of the society pages who oozes wealth, privilege and a conspicuously casual attitude towards the opposite sex - she tentatively starts dating him, despite the fact her closest friends don't seem quite so enamoured of his charms.

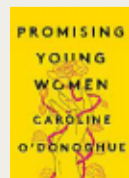
Money-Coutts used to work on *Tatler* and is completely at home sending up the arcane rules by which the landed aristocracy seem to live: the ludicrous surnames; the artfully cultivated air of eccentricity; the

fact they seem to do absolutely nothing with their time. The best wit, however, is reserved for Polly as she negotiates the trip-wired landscape of modern dating: what pants to wear on a date; what to do when your date gets up and leaves in the middle of the night etc. Throw in a potentially weepy subplot involving Polly's mum, a gaggle of funny and loveable supporting characters, a plethora of zesty one-liners plus a fair amount of sex, et voilà! A beach cocktail in book form.

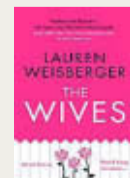


**HOW DO YOU RATE SOPHIA MONEY-COUTTS' NOVEL? VISIT FACEBOOK.COM/METROBOOKCHAT AND LET US KNOW!**

## THREE MORE BEACH READS



**Promising Young Women** by Caroline O'Donoghue  
Gender relations, power dynamics and mental health are at the centre of this Irish debut about agony aunt Jane, who has an affair with her boss following a break-up. A smart, spiky novel.



**The Wives** by Lauren Weisberger  
In the third *The Devil Wears Prada* novel, Emily is now a Hollywood image consultant with a new A-list supermodel client recently arrested for drink driving. Expect gossip, glamour and lashings of female solidarity.



**Fatal Inheritance** by Rachel Rhys  
The late 1940s Côte d'Azur is the perfect backdrop for this Agatha Christie-style mystery about an English woman who has been left an unexpected inheritance by a stranger. An exotic historical thriller.

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