



The Plus One

Natasha West

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Dress? £200. Shoes? £60. The perfect date? Priceless...

Charlie Black has found the one. And this time it's for real. Not like the last time. Or the time before that. Or the time before that...

And now she's going to parade the one in front of everyone at her sister's upcoming wedding. She wants to prove that her new girlfriend Lucy is special. She's going to show everyone she can make it work. Especially her judgmental sister Maddie, Bride-Zilla herself.

But a few weeks before the wedding, Charlie gets dumped. Again. And she can't face the humiliation of going to Maddie's wedding stag. Not after loudly and repeatedly telling her family that this one is different.

She needs a date to the wedding and fast. Maybe she could get someone to go with her, but how the hell is she supposed to convince anyone to pretend to be Lucy, her very serious girlfriend of four months? It's too humiliating. But the wedding creeps closer and closer, with no obvious solution in sight.

Then Charlie happens across a website. 'Rent-a-Date. It's just the thing Charlie needs to save her from the embarrassment of admitting that her sister was right again. That's one wedding gift Charlie refuses to give her.

So after booking herself a date from the company, she's guaranteed that a hot woman will show up to the wedding with enough knowledge to pretend to be the real Lucy, at least for the length of the big day. But when Charlie turns up at the church, her date has a surprise in store...

The Plus One Details

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From Reader Review The Plus One for online ebook

Rach (Les Rêveur) says

I was surprised by how much I liked this book. It's was a lovely story. One that pulled at my heart strings.

I don't have to many things to say because it was quite simply a lovely romantic story of two people that where obviously meant to be together and had a very HEA!

It's defo not the kind of thing that I'd normally go for but hey who knew I loved the sweet and cute ones to!

3.5 stars

Dana Formale says

So damn cute

This one was so damn cute I finished in less than a day! Truly highlighted my poor work ethic by doing so, reading is an addiction and this didn't help me! On a more serious note, I thought this was short n sweet n wish there was more! Loved the author's other works as well, keep em coming please!

Corrie says

Book Club Buddy D. and I were on a **Natasha West** high and decided to dive straight into another one after **Chase Me**. What better than to go back to the beginning and read **The Plus One**. It was a first for D. and a re-read for me. But I had almost forgotten just how good her first book actually was. This story has it all. A beautiful tale of a teenage crush, broken hearts, meeting again under very odd circumstances, a grand wedding, unexpected feelings, funny situations. **Natasha West** handles the tropes with care and gives us a wonderfully written and very satisfying rom-com.

f/f fade-to-black-sex

Themes: unattainable first love, high school queen, cliques, a broken heart, summer camp, rent-a-date, wedding, forgiveness, I don't know if I needed that epilogue though.

(again) 5 stars

lov2laf says

This is a sweet rom-com about second chances.

Charlie is a likable though lackadaisical character in a bind and, out of desperation, calls Rent-a-Date to get a companion for her sister's wedding. Said date turns out to be...well, I don't want to spoil it. Suffice it to say,

as a reader, it's worth finding out and following the story.

The comedy aspect has a Bridget Jones' Diary type style and, as a light read, it does tap into some deeper feels.

West sidestepped tropes and groan worthy facepalms that I've seen other writers fall into by giving her characters depth and, dare I say it, communication with each other. There's no unrealistic fast fixes and the unfolding of the wedding day is just entertaining and works.

I did think that sometimes it went into too much tell instead of show but there was enough show to push the story forward and keep my interest.

Overall, a good read and recommend.

Chloe says

I was like "gee this will be obvious, she's totally gonna fall for the blind/hired date!" - I didn't expect to be surprised; I wasn't. The added angst from the past didn't make it more surprising. I did enjoy the writing though, it was a good story, and ended well.

Lexxi Kitty says

This is the first book that I've read by this author. I've had books by them on my maybe pile for a while now, not sure how long. Both because the books looked somewhat interesting, but more importantly (and I think the reason I first noticed them), they were available through the Kindle Unlimited program.

This book is one of those relationship of convenience type books. The main character (though the POV shifts around), Charlie, has a sister who will be having a wedding shortly. After proudly, and loudly, informing her family at a brunch about her latest girlfriend, who definitely 'is the one', Charlie leaves the brunch to spot that her 2 month girlfriend had contacted her. She contacts Lucy and finds out that Charlie's been dumped. And this is after very loudly proclaiming that she did not in fact jump in and out of relationships quickly, and that Lucy would definitely be coming to Maddie's wedding (the sister).

So, Charlie's kind of stuck. What to do? What to do? Days away from the wedding (or was it a week?), Charlie has run out of ideas and is just about to inform Maddie about how Lucy won't, in fact, be attending the wedding. But is stopped when Maddie moves rapidly from happy lovey-dovey to boiling inferno of rage when she's informed that one of her bridesmaid's, Jane, has to sadly announce that her boyfriend won't actually be attending the wedding. Charlie promptly stops herself from informing the Bride-Zilla about her own lack of a plus one.

Sooo. Charlie spends the night searching the internet for an answer. Coming across several thinly veiled prostitute/escort services when she starts googling things like 'renting a date'. Then she sees an ad for 'Rent a Date'. She fills out a form and, after much work (including an in person visit to an office), Charlie has arranged for a lovely gorgeous olive skinned woman named Yasmin to attend the wedding as her plus one. Going under the name Lucy, of course. Oh, I should mention, the Rent a Date place is in fact not a thinly

veiled escort service (well, in the sense that escort services *say* that . . . right, let's not argue this here) – but struggling actors willing to act out parts, in person. Without sex being involved (somewhere in the book there's a mention that there is a pre-arrangement about where hands can be placed, and where kisses might be allowed, and when, etc.).

Charlie feels a certain amount of relief to find such a good stand-in and looks forward to the wedding . . . or at least is less stressed about it. Right before the wedding, though, Charlie gets a call from the agency informing her that Yasmin won't actually be able to attend. Medical emergency. But another woman will be there at the church. Charlie is now nervous again but will try to struggle through this very trying time of being forced to go to her sister's wedding while pretending to have a date.

Pretend date and Charlie meet. And . . . oopsie, it's Amy Sinclair. Teenage love interest from afar (at least at school - they went to the same school and stuff). Amy had, eleven years ago, ripped Charlie's heart into tiny pieces (don't worry, dear reader, you'll be able to experience their tragic love affair in person, so to speak, in flashback form; including how she could 'rip it into tiny pieces' from 'afar' - I'm trying to not be spoiler-y here, you know). Both are shocked to see the other standing there. Charlie becomes enraged when Amy acts as if she doesn't know who Charlie is (as in, that they'd meet before). Before fisticuffs could erupt (not that there was actual danger of that), Charlie and 'Lucy' are dragged into the church so the wedding could actually occur and stuff.

Amy acts professional. Charlie acts like Charlie. And I, the reader, come to the conclusion that I'd not want anything to do with either Amy or Charlie (as a love interest or as a friend), but that they seem decent enough people, really, just . . . hmms. Really really young.

Interesting and enjoyable 'free' read (at some point, if you read enough Kindle Unlimited books in a month, the costs go down and down per book read until it's like pennies per book . . . or something, still not actually free but whatever).

Sex: I don't actually remember. No?

Humor: good bits of humor.

ETA:

Boobs: I forgot that I wanted to make a separate little note about boobs. For reasons. Heh, it amuses me that it took seeing a 'this is how men write women in romances' for me to remember to write this particular note.

Amy, the pretend Lucy, has - it would appear, to have very massive breasts. I mention only because the bloody fact was mentioned about 800,000 times. Not actual quote: 'I may have huge breasts, and have blonde hair, but my father wanted me to also have a brain, so he made sure I studied' *I'm sure you had huge breasts at the time he first indicated his desire for you to be smart* (actual quote went more like: "Amy was also a natural blonde with a fantastic set of breasts. -- But Amy's father, who was not about to let his daughter turn into some vapid fool, had made sure that his daughter knew that she needed to be good at everything to have half a shot at a superlative life." ('breast' actually only comes up 6 times as a word, 'boob' once. oh dang. I was going to mention how at least 'tits' wasn't used, but it was. Well, it's hard to get an accurate count as I'd need to try every word to see if it is used and how often. ("Oh, you mean that I'm the blonde girl with the big tits that goes to every party?" Amy said, a little defensively."))

Both Amy and Charlie really spend a lot more time focused on thinking about Amy's breasts than I think I've seen in fiction before. So much time that I wouldn't have been too surprised if they suddenly had a POV of

their own. I mean . . . shesh.

Rating: 3.75

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Heinerway says

A very cute and entertaining romantic comedy. I felt the ending was weak. That would be my only complaint.

Joc says

I felt sad for Charlie most of the way through this novel and even though there was an improvement by the end I still feel fairly melancholy. Charlie's girlfriend dumps her a few weeks before her sister's wedding and, too embarrassed to tell her family she has no date, she goes to Rent-A-Date to hire someone to pretend to be the 'Lucy' she's told everybody about.

Charlie is undervalued as a person by her parents, sister, sister's friends, her girlfriend and her date which made it difficult for me to like most of the secondary characters. (view spoiler)

I liked that this trope didn't always go where I expected it to but I struggled with the grammar and spelling errors (something that usually doesn't bother me enough to mention it) because my concentration was broken.

Julieta Steyr says

Charlie tiene la boda de su hermana... pero ahí es dónde me empezó a gustar, no sale con la típica respuesta fácil a todo y tampoco es lo que uno espera la cita en sí misma. Ya que una y otra vez me demostró que no iba por el camino fácil, o hacer que la chica automáticamente se enamorase de su cita de alquiler y demás, es que estoy tan complacida.

Ah, sí, es buena historia. Ligera, sin el dramatismo que suelen acompañar a los romances (por algo el chick-lit me es digerible), aunque creo que el final si bien satisface las expectativas es un tanto acelerado a fondo.

Ted says

Kinda between 3 and 4 for me. First time with this author. One word to describe the book is 'Awkward'. The end felt really rushed. Cramming 14 months of time into 5% of the book. IDK. Just felt like a missed opportunity for actual good feels and tenders. Shrug. Will see if book 2 in the series is any better.

Fia says

Short, funny and sweet.

Alexa says

Wait, what's this? A contemporary non-YA romance I actually enjoyed?! YES I DID. (and after the last few I read, that's a big thing.)

The Plus One was funny, engaging, and had just enough drama and feels. It was also the perfect length and didn't drag on too long. There's not much I can say about it without being spoilery, but it's a really cute and funny fake dating F/F romance with an awesome sister. Please read it.

Sprinkles says

Natasha West's 'The Plus One' is an enjoyable slice of a story about well-meaning, yet flaky Charlie finding love in an unlikely way: by paying someone. Okay, that's leaving out a host of important details, but I don't feel like spoiling much in this review.

While the mood, characters, plot, etc appeal to me, what keeps this story hovering in the 3.5 range is its execution. Not so much typos, but...sharpness? Another round of editing could really make this world shine and remove strings of passive text.

Also, and this may just be my weirdness, I wasn't into single quote use for speech. That plus the quirky arrangement of dialogue made me backtrack to check who said what, distracting me from an otherwise fun reading experience.

Alright, maybe I can ask a spoiler-ish question: (view spoiler)

I giggled quite a few times. The humor's very well done and I highlighted many parts. Sadly, the ending sort of fizzled. I'll be sure to peruse West's future stories to see how her writing evolves.

Marilyn says

Natasha West is turning into one of my favorite authors. This was a fun, laugh-out-loud, feel-good read. Well written with a very cleverly executed premise.

Kate says

Lovely sweet, funny read. I really enjoyed Charlie's character as well as her family dynamics. I laughed out loud on a few occasions. In general I am a fan of epilogues and the one in this book gave a really good

insight into how things had panned out for the main characters.

Definitely worth a read if you're looking for a nice short funny read.
