



## The Spare Wife

*Alex Witchel*

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Alex Witchel's first novel, *Me Times Three*, was praised by Joan Didion as "an irresistible dissection of love in the city." Now Witchel returns with a sophisticated, witty, sexy story that exposes the world of upper-class New Yorkers and the media that perpetuate their myth.

Ponce Morris is a beautiful, rich widow who's been dubbed "the spare wife" because she's the perfect companion to the wealthy, powerful couples she socializes with. She'll go to sports events with the husbands and throw elegant dinner parties and shop with the wives. She's cool and nonthreatening because the two things everyone knows for sure are that Ponce doesn't like sex and doesn't have a romantic bone in her body. Over the years, she has managed other people's lives—and her own—perfectly. Ponce has everything under control, exactly the way she likes it.

Until . . . Babette Steele, an ambitious aspiring journalist, finds out that Ponce is having an affair with a socially prominent and very married man and decides to break the scandal in a juicy magazine piece. For Ponce's circle, day-to-day existence quickly becomes a complicated game of social and professional chicken—whatever outsmarts and outmanipulates the other will win. And there is a lot at stake, not only for Ponce but for her friends, all of whom are in the midst of crises of their own: a philandering novelist who hasn't been able to write since his breakout Wall Street best seller, an aging billionaire who can't seem to resist young women (the younger the better), a legendary news show producer on the decline, a big-name political journalist looking to rebound from his wife's death, and an editor at a glitzy magazine that covers the worlds of politics, fashion, and Hollywood. As Ponce's life threatens to come apart at the seams, the author takes us into a world she knows intimately: a dynamic Manhattan filled with opinion makers and social fakers.

This is a vibrant, trenchant novel about ambition, love, friendship, and the intoxicating allure of getting ahead . . . and trying to stay there.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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