

# [PDF] The Engagements

**J. Courtney Sullivan - pdf download free book**

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**Books Details:**

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Author: J. Courtney Sullivan  
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**Description:**

**From** A pioneering, single career woman writes what becomes a legendary slogan for a product she will never use. A husband and wife teeter on the edge of bankruptcy after she is mugged and her most precious piece of jewelry is stolen. A mother despairs over the end of her son's marriage as she recalls the precarious circumstances of her own. A married French woman becomes engaged to an American musician only to discover him cheating on her with her best friend. An overly practical woman nearly ruins her gay cousin's wedding. Inspired by the real-life story of Frances Gerety, a 1940s copywriter who penned the "A Diamond Is Forever" tagline for DeBeers, Sullivan riffs on the fragile state of marriage through a clever series of loosely connected vignettes. At the heart of each episode lies that sparkly symbol of romantic commitments, and what could have been a distractingly disjointed narrative style is give a sharp and crystalline coherence by virtue of Sullivan's sometimes bold, sometimes nuanced improvisation on the resonance of the diamond engagement ring. --Carol Haggas

## Review Praise for *The Engagements*:

"*The Engagements* . . . opens in 1947 with ad-agency copywriter Frances Gerety . . . Struggling to find a last-minute tagline for De Beers, she scribbles down 'A Diamond Is Forever' and promptly falls asleep. For Frances, a lifelong bachelorette, it's just marketing — her boss points out that the phrase isn't even grammatically correct. But *Engagements*' other characters show how much her tossed-off idea came to define diamonds as the ultimate symbol of love and commitment . . . [Sullivan is] a born storyteller. Like its mineral muse, *Engagements* shines."

—Leah Greenblatt, *Entertainment Weekly*

"A perceptive portrait . . . In Sullivan's easy, unadorned style, *The Engagements* is a delightful marriage of cultural research and literary entertainment . . . Sullivan handles all the details elegantly, and the situations are surprisingly distinct . . . For all her sharp wit and insight into the agony of failed relationships, Sullivan's no cynic. The novel's final wedding transcends the craziness and the extravagance and the bickering. Against all odds, it represents something genuinely eternal about the love between two people."

—Ron Charles, *The Washington Post*

"*The Engagements* is a rollicking, entertaining read and a thought-provoking one too. Several of the characters' voices have stayed in my head, and even days after putting it down I am left with a sturdy, hopeful sense of the fundamental goodwill of people and the abiding power of love . . . [I] am certain it will be one of this summer's big hits."

—Lindsey Mead, *Huffington Post*

"The best-selling author of *Commencement* and *Maine* has written her most ambitious novel yet."

—*Entertainment Weekly*

"Sullivan takes the cake when it comes to tying the knot . . . brilliantly captures how the vicissitudes of life—grief, infidelity, pressure—echo throughout a marriage." —Elizabeth Taylor, Editor's Choice, *Chicago Tribune*

"Winning . . . [A] decades-spanning tale of four very different couples and the determinedly single career girl who dreamed up 'a diamond is forever,' the slogan that helped make engagement rings de rigueur. There's plenty of romance and sparkle, but . . . this is one smart summer read." —Kim Hubbard, *People*

"Any one of the five stories of *The Engagements* could have been a novel in itself. Taken together, though, they rather brilliantly represent different facets of marriage — and not always the bright and shiny ones . . . Captivating . . . Clever . . . Sullivan's writing is smooth as she takes the reader back and forth in time and in and out of relationships; by the end, you understand, as one character notes, that marriages can come and go, and it's only the diamond that lasts."

—Laurie Hertzler, *Minneapolis Star Tribune*

"*The Engagements*, J. Courtney Sullivan's sprawling saga of a novel, all centered around the idea of love, marriage, and, yes, a particular diamond ring. In five interconnected stories, ranging from those of the fictionalized Frances to the contemporary Kate, couples work out their sense of what marriage means in terms of commitment and family . . . These alternating stories make for a more ambitious book than Sullivan's two bestsellers, *Commencement* and *Maine* . . . This book has a momentum of its own . . . The protagonists are highly likable."

—*Boston Globe*

"A seamless tapestry . . . Sullivan is a keen observer of people and how they morph over time, either being softened by the years or made more brittle by strife."

—Bronwyn Miller, *BookReporter.com*

"[Sullivan] threads her story with the glitter of diamonds . . . a tale that sweeps across varied emotional landscapes."

—*New York Daily News*

"This novel's concept is as shiny as a diamond itself."

—*Glamour*

"Sullivan has written an intricate, beautifully timed novel, so delicious in its gradual unfolding that readers will want to reread it immediately to enjoy the fully realized ties."

—Beth Andersen, *Library Journal*

"For her third novel, best-selling author J. Courtney Sullivan (*Commencement* and *Maine*) places the indelible diamond slogan and its creator at the heart of a generously populated, multi-generational tale . . . *The Engagements* moves at a brisk pace; it's a fun story. I grew especially fond of Kate and her cousins Jeff and Toby; her married sister, Meg; her divorced mother; her abiding partner; her daughter who (as it turns out) likes fancy dresses and perhaps even dolls. There's dark and light to Kate, despair and tenderness, a sense of a character still unfolding, complexity. Kate says what she thinks, and then she thinks some more. I love that she gets the last word."

—Beth Kephart, *Chicago Tribune*

"Satisfying . . . At each stage of the game, the engagement ring has a different meaning."

—Janet Maslin, *The New York Times*

"Delving into the allure of 'for better or worse,' Sullivan's novel starts with Frances, an unmarried copywriter who coins the 'A Diamond Is Forever' slogan, then follows four couples to the altar. Frank, but fun."

—*Good Housekeeping* Summer Beach Roundup

"This novel is a fun look at diamond advertising and the people who do—and do not—buy into the hype . . . I was captivated by the narratives and thrilled with the way the pieces came together in the end."

—Angela Livengood, *Real Simple*

"The author of *Maine* and *Commencement* returns with a sprawling tale about marriage, its meaning, its importance and whether or not a diamond really is forever."

—Ashley Ross, *Marie Claire*

"The author of *Commencement* and *Maine* threads her story with the glitter of diamonds . . . It's a tale that sweeps across varied emotional landscapes."

—Sherryl Connelly, *New York Daily News*

"The bestselling author of *Maine* and *Commencement* opens her third novel with the tale of Frances Gerety, the real-life ad copywriter who coined 'A diamond is forever' for De Beers. It's the perfect springboard for Sullivan's story, which follows four couples as they navigate the shifting terrain of love and marriage."

—*People Magazine*

"This sprawling novel about marriage spans nearly 100 years and focuses on four couples, as well as a young single copywriter who coins the ad slogan 'Diamonds Are Forever,' which resonates through the decades."

—Cathleen Schine, *Los Angeles Times*

"Is a diamond really forever? So Sullivan (*Maine*, 2011, etc.) asks in her third novel . . . Frances Gerety, a real person whom Sullivan enlists at the outset of her tale, had a daunting task way back in 1947: She had to cook up an advertising tagline for De Beers that would convince Americans to purchase diamond engagement rings, hitherto 'considered just absolutely money down the drain.' Sullivan's story takes off from there, diamonds forming a leitmotif in ingeniously connected stories that span generations. As B. Traven advised in his grand tale of gold, precious objects can cause people to do very bad things; so they do here . . . Does money ever buy any of them happiness? Not really, but it does score a few carats. A modern update of *The Spoils of Poynton*; elegant, assured, often moving and with a gentle moral lesson to boot."

—*Kirkus* (starred review)

"Inspired by the real-life story of Frances Gerety, a 1940s copywriter who penned the 'A Diamond is Forever' tagline for DeBeers, Sullivan riffs on the fragile state of marriage through a clever series of loosely connected vignettes. At the heart of each episode lies that sparkly symbol of romantic commitments . . . given a sharp and crystalline coherence by virtue of Sullivan's sometimes bold, sometimes nuanced improvisation on the resonance of the diamond engagement ring."

—Carol Haggas, *Booklist*

### **In praise of *Maine*:**

"You don't want the novel to end in July. You want to stay with the Kellehers straight through to the end of August, until the sand cools, the sailboats disappear from their moorings, and every last secret has been pried up." —Lily King, *The New York Times Book Review*

"I have never stayed at this cottage in Maine, or any cottage in Maine, but no matter: I now feel I know what it's like being in a family that comes to the same place summer after summer, unpacking their familiar longings, slights, shorthand conversation, and ways of being together. J. Courtney Sullivan's *Maine* is evocative, funny, close-quartered, and highly appealing." —Meg Wolitzer, author of *The Uncoupling*

"An ideal summer read. . . . Gives us . . . characters we can care about, despite their sometimes too-familiar flaws." —*USA Today*

"Attentive to class distinctions and hierarchies, as well as historic pressures and family dynamics, Sullivan presents women who may be stubborn and difficult, but she does so with such compassion and humor that we, too, end up rooting for them. Even if *Maine* weren't set on a beach, it would be a perfect beach book." —*Chicago Tribune*

"Sullivan's smarts shed ...

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