



Mrs. 'Arris Goes to Paris

Paul Gallico

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Mrs Harris is a salt-of-the-earth London charlady who cheerfully cleans the houses of the rich. One day, when tidying Lady Dant's wardrobe, she comes across the most beautiful thing she has ever seen in her life - a Dior dress. In all the years of her drab and humble existence, she's never seen anything as magical as the dress before her and she's never wanted anything as much before. Determined to make her dream come true, Mrs Harris scrimps, saves and slaves away until one day, after three long, uncomplaining years, she finally has enough money to go to Paris. When she arrives at the House of Dior, Mrs Harris has little idea of how her life is about to be turned upside down and how many other lives she will transform forever. Always kind, always cheery and always winsome, the indomitable Mrs Harris takes Paris by storm and learns one of life's greatest lessons along the way. This treasure from the 1950s introduces the irrepressible Mrs Harris, part charlady, part fairy-godmother, whose adventures take her from her humble London roots to the heights of glamour.

Mrs. 'Arris Goes to Paris Details

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Author : Paul Gallico

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From Reader Review Mrs. 'Arris Goes to Paris for online ebook

Jane says

"The small, slender woman with apple-red cheeks, greying hair, and shrewd, almost naughty little eyes sat with her face pressed against the cabin window of the BEA Viscount on the morning flight from London to Paris. As, with a rush and a roar, it lifted itself from the runway, her spirits soared aloft with it. She was nervous, but not at all frightened, for she was convinced that nothing could happen to her now. Hers was the bliss of one who knew that at last she was off upon the adventure at the end of which lay her heart's desire."

That's Mrs Ada Harris, a widowed London cleaning lady. A practical woman and a reliable worker, she left her good friend Mrs Violet Butterfield to look after her clients while she was away.

She's honest and open, and definitely a glass half full person. I liked her from the start.

And though her life might seem drab and humdrum to many, Mrs Harris knows and loves beauty and colour.

"Outside the windows of her basement flat were two window boxes of geraniums, her favourite flower, and inside, wherever there was room, stood a little pot containing a geranium, struggling desperately to conquer its environment, or a single hyacinth or a tulip, bought from a barrow for a hard-earned shilling."

And it was that love of beauty and colour that called Mrs Harris to Paris. It all started when one of her clients left her wardrobe door open ...

"But now as she stood before the stunning creations hanging in the wardrobe she found herself face to face with a new kind of beauty – an artificial one created by the hand of man, the artist, but aimed directly and cunningly at the heart of woman. In that very instant she fell victim to the artist; at that very moment there was born within her the craving to possess such a garment."

It wasn't that she thought it would transform her, that she would ever have an occasion to wear such a dress; it was just that she wanted to own, see and feel such a garment.

And it didn't occur to her that such things weren't for the likes of her. The price was a shock, but she was determined to find the money. There were some ups and downs, tears and laughter, along the way, but eventually she did it. And that was how she found herself flying over the English Channel.

The storytelling is lovely. I read about Mrs Harris's adventure in the same way that I read the books I loved as a child. I was completely captivated, living every moment, reacting to everything, wishing and hoping...

Buying the dress wasn't as simple as she thought it would be. Well French fashion houses aren't like London shops!

Some of the people she met looked down their noses at the common char-woman, but others were charmed by her sincerity and the clarity of her ambition.

There were more ups and downs, tears and laughter, before Mrs Harris found her dress, but, in the end, find it she did. And she made friends and had quite an effect along the way.

It made a lovely story. About the importance of dreams, about what you can do to make them come true, and about just what really is important in life.

There is much light, but just the right amount of shadow too.

And the ending! Just when I thought that a simple, heartwarming story was winding down it took a turn into something very special, full of all kinds of emotions, and the very thing that the word "bittersweet" was created to describe.

I was very sorry to part company with Mrs Harris, but we will be meeting again. She appears in three more novels.

The next one takes her to New York - now I wonder what calls her there...

Bettie? says

Description: *Mrs Harris is a salt-of-the-earth London charlady who cheerfully cleans the houses of the rich. One day, when tidying Lady Dant's wardrobe, she comes across the most beautiful thing she has ever seen in her life - a Dior dress. In all the years of her drab and humble existence, she's never seen anything as magical as the dress before her and she's never wanted anything as much before. Determined to make her dream come true, Mrs Harris scrimps, saves and slaves away until one day, after three long, uncomplaining years, she finally has enough money to go to Paris. When she arrives at the House of Dior, Mrs Harris has little idea of how her life is about to be turned upside down and how many other lives she will transform forever. Always kind, always cheery and always winsome, the indomitable Mrs Harris takes Paris by storm and learns one of life's greatest lessons along the way. This treasure from the 1950s introduces the irrepressible Mrs Harris, part charlady, part fairy-godmother, whose adventures take her from her humble London roots to the heights of glamour.*

Watch here, dear people :O)

Lovely, sentimental feel-good story to escape into, during this era of extreme human fallibility.

Michelle Meeks says

I made a New Year's Resoultion to not buy any books (expect for teaching) and to read what I already owned. Okay, I admit it, I have bought 2 books for reading, 3 for teaching, and 2 for "fun". Regardless, this was a book on my shelf. I purchased it because I love old books, Dior, and anything to do with fashion. This was such a sweet story (c. 1957) about a sweet charwoman from London. Very light and uplifting. My favorite part...

"She had ventured into a foreign country and a foregin people she had been taught to suspect and despise. She had found them to be warm and human, men and women to whom human love and understanding was a mainspring of life. They had made her feel that they loved her for herself."

The world could be reminded of this sentiment.

I will treasure my copy.

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Donna says

Part of my review of this book is simply for nostalgia's sake. I read this in a Reader's Digest version when I was about 11 and thought Mrs. Harris was so gutsy to take her char woman's savings and go to Paris to buy a Dior gown. She insisted on fulfilling her dream and charmed everyone she met. Me too. I even enjoyed the Angela Lansbury tv movie version of the book. Just a sweet read about an adorable plucky older lady who is young at heart.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

Mrs. 'Arris Goes to Paris = Flowers for Mrs. Harris?, Paul Gallico

Mrs. 'Arris Goes to Paris is the title of a Paul Gallico novel originally published in 1958. In the United Kingdom, it was published as Flowers for Mrs Harris. It was the first in a series of four books about the adventures of a London charwoman. The plot revolves around Ada Harris, who is so enchanted by her employer's couture wardrobe that she becomes determined to go to the House of Dior in Paris to purchase an evening gown of her own. She achieves her goal with the assistance of a French marquis, whom she first meets at the house of Dior during an afternoon showing and who becomes a long-term friend as do a series of other characters revealed to have hidden hearts. The comic tale takes on a final poignant overtone when the dress is loaned to an up-and-coming actress, with disastrous consequences. Initially devastated, Mrs. Harris reflects that the experiences she had in pursuit of the dress were worth its loss. ...

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Nicky Wheeler-Nicholson says

Okay, I know. It seems ridiculous. I adore this book. I first read this book as a young girl in the Reader's Digest version and fell in love with the story of the charwoman who ends up with a Dior gown. It's a great

story and Paul Gallico is a wonderful storyteller. I am so fond of this good-hearted and amusing tale that I recently found a new copy and purchased it to place on the "beloved books" shelf. If you need a lift this is an excellent story to while away a few hours and cheer you right up plus you get to be in London and Paris!

Amy says

A hard to rate book. Dated and silly but if you are wanting an afternoon spent in the most unrealistic Paris and London to ever exist then you'd probably enjoy this book.

Arwen56 says

La signora Harris, domestica inglese, si ficca in testa di comprarsi un vestito di Dior, per il quale risparmia per anni. Giunta a Parigi, tutti si fanno in quattro per aiutarla e, naturalmente, già che c'è, lei aiuta gli altri a risolvere diversi problemin. Così diventano un bel gruppo di amiconi e sono felici e contenti.

Adesso che ve l'ho raccontato, potete anche risparmiarvi il tedium di leggerlo.

Aylavella says

3,5 Un libro de estilo feelgoods que logra sacarte más de una sonrisa con la historia de esta peculiar señora de la limpieza londinense.

Jennifer says

Delightful. This is the kind of book to read when you need a break from reality...when you want the planets to be aligned and the world to be full of friendly strangers. It's perfectly brief because too much at once would be too sweet. Instead this is a wonderful little after dinner mint. (and I love my first edition copy with the beautiful dust jacket. And the fact that it says 'Arris is really ace.)

Faith says

A sweet, delightful concoction like a French Cinderella story or the most delicate, airiest trifle.

The widowed London char woman Mrs. Harris is overwhelmed by desire to possess a beautiful Dior dress and decides to save the money for one despite being a poor cleaning woman. She's simple but pure of heart, just like in olden fairy tales.

The short story is heart-warming and enjoyable. Mrs. Harris encounters all of the usual human traits through her journey, selfishness, anger, righteousness, honor, courage and love. Throughout the experience she is

indomitable and she triumphs, despite the many obstacles. The ending is surprisingly bittersweet and the story, although short, has unexpected depths.

I loved the descriptions of their meals, of Paris and the lovely House of Dior. Recommended for anyone in need of an unusual but old-fashioned fairy tale.

Nanditha Sankar says

A delightful read about a delightful charlady and her heart's desire to buy a Christian Dior dress. I had a smile plastered on my face through the entire length of reading this book. Mrs. Harris is a truly heart-warming story.

Teri-K says

They don't write books like this any more. No, they really don't, and that's a pity. Mrs. Ada Harris is a London charwoman who has saved her pennies for years to fulfill her one secret desire - to own a Dior designer gown. The story opens with our aging, sweet heroine on her first airplane flight - to Paris. As Mrs. 'Arris (as she says it) moves about Paris she charms almost everyone with her kindness and naivete.

In this book there isn't any violence, sex, profanity, or other elements so many writers seem to think they need to tell a story. However you will find plenty of plot, a secret romance Mrs. Harris helps out, and interesting characters. Unfortunately this book can be hard to find, so I was delighted to discover it can be read for free online through openlibrary.com. Read it and enter a kinder world. :)

NB- If you like this book try others by Miss Read, Dorothy Gilman, DE Stevenson. Also, they made a pretty good TV movie from this book, starring Angela Lansbury. If you can get your hands on it.

Tabitha says

Sweet Mrs 'Arris. This story was a delight, even down to the unexpected ending that was drastically different from the movie but still lovely.

My only slight annoyance was the author's multiple references to the desire for a beautiful object being a "purely feminine" instinct-- I think it's simply a human instinct- but I understood why he used that terminology.

Kanin Nitiwong says

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Katherine says

A charming, old-fashioned tale, surprisingly touching. Simply lovely.

Nhischarnun Nunthadsirisorn says

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Cristina says

Un libro para soñar, emocionarse, reír, sonreír, creer en los cuentos, en la amistad y terminarlo pensando que hay cosas realmente bonitas en el mundo.

Bien narrado, personajes a los que conocemos gracias a descripciones encantadoras, escenas maravillosas...

Se que a muchos les parecerá demasiado "dulce" e increíble pero para mi ha sido una gozada

Mango says

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