



The Big Dirt Nap

Rosemary Harris

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“A smart, engaging heroine who isn’t afraid to get her hands dirty—literally.”

- Brian Freeman, author of *Stalked*

A hit with mystery lovers and gardening fans nationwide, *Pushing Up Daisies* introduced Paula Holliday, ex-NYC media exec turned Connecticut gardener, in Rosemary Harris’s celebrated series debut. Now in *The Big Dirt Nap*, Paula is back in a second scent-sational thriller.

Something stinks to Paula Holliday, and it isn’t just the corpse flower, titan arum, named for its off-putting fragrance. When Paula’s friend Lucy asks her to tag along on an all-expense-paid junket to the Titans Hotel, it seems like a good idea. Paula even manages to squeeze a few bucks and a byline out of the local paper for writing an article on the titan arum, a rare flower that’s just about to bloom and on display at the hotel.

But when her friend is unavoidably detained, a would-be suitor is found with a gaping hole in his head, and the corpse flower refuses to bloom, the entire venture starts to seem like less of a good idea.

Brimming with wit and wisecracks, *The Big Dirt Nap* is sure to win rising mystery star Rosemary Harris a whole new slew of ardent fans.

The Big Dirt Nap Details

Date : Published February 17th 2009 by Minotaur Books (first published 2009)

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Author : Rosemary Harris

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From Reader Review The Big Dirt Nap for online ebook

Lorraine says

I'm addicted.

Sam says

I didn't love this book as much as the first installment of the Dirty Business Mystery series, but it was a fun read none the less. I primarily found fault, if you can call it that, in the humor, or rather "lessness", by comparison to "Pushing up Daises". I just really loved the wit and humor of PUD and didn't find it so much in this 2nd installment, but "The Big Dirt Nap" was still a fun, great cozy/beach read mystery.

Paula is looking for a relaxing, all expenses paid, spa get-away at the Titan Hotel, with her friend Lucy. She's included a little free-lance job, on the side, involving the hotels unusual "corpse flower", which blooms very rarely and earned its name due the blooms pungent odor. When Lucy fails to show, Paula chucks it up to her lassie-faire love life. But when a man she meets at the hotel turns up dead, she is followed home from the hotel, and finds her house ransacked, Paula starts to worry, maybe Lucy has gotten them both involved in something beyond just a facial and some smelly plant.

Ellen says

Did not hold my interest, July 6, 2012

By Ellen Rappaport (Florida)

This review is from: The Big Dirt Nap: A Dirty Business Mystery (Dirty Business Mysteries) (Hardcover)
Paula Holliday is involved with a corpse plant. A corpse plant that eventually will bloom with a rare and beautiful flower. In the meanwhile it's fragrance is gross to say the least. This plant/flower is located in the middle of the hotel that her best friend ,Lucy, has invited her to spend an all expenses paid vacation of sorts with her.

But where is Lucy? While waiting for her BFF she runs into a wisecracking guy by the name of Nick Vigoriti. Paula tries to get rid of him but he just doesn't get it. Later on Nick does get it...right between the eyes.

This 2nd book in the dirty Business series was a real let down for me. The first book, "Pushing Up Daisies" was so over the top terrific that I feared two in a row may be asking too much...and it was. This book, although well written by a gifted author, held no interest as far as I was concerned.

I will try the 3rd in this series and hope for the best.

Nikki says

I haven't yet read Rosemary Harris's Agatha-nominated *Pushing Up Daisies*, but I definitely want to after sampling the second of the series, which I read in uncorrected page proofs. Paula, a refugee from the cutthroat world of Manhattan, is now a gardener with her own business in Connecticut. When she plans to meet a New York journalist friend at a resort hotel near the Indian casinos, murder and mystery spoil what was to have been a relaxing weekend. Casino and Indian politics, possible Russian mobsters, and an isolated cabin all feature in the story. And for the gardening element, there's the "corpse flower" set to bloom in the hotel lobby.

My one complaint about this book was that I couldn't really get a handle on the character of Paula; this may be due to my not having started at the beginning of the series. The character of Babe, the ex-roadie diner owner who keeps coming to Paula's rescue, was much more real to me, and I hope she turns up again in future books.

Ali says

The mystery plot was incredibly weak and the main protagonist, Paula, seemed only to have a periphery interest and involvement. The plot overall seemed rambling and haphazard, there was no conviction, no sense of urgency and I was never convinced of Paula's interest in anything, she seemed perpetually bored in the middle of her own story and I was bored right along with her. Those interested in the series for the gardening theme will find little to please since it garners only the occasional mention. If those reasons weren't enough to turn me away from the series well the protag's transformation from slightly prickly character to neurotic detached sizest certainly did the job. Is it possible for a character to de-evolve?

I obviously enjoyed this book a great deal less than the series opener, which received a strong three stars from me, but I don't know that my light enjoyment of the first is enough to overcome my real dislike for Paula. I find the main protag's neurotic eating and exercise habits, plus her constantly sizest thoughts a real turnoff. It seems everyone she encountered save her two friends were plump, pudgy, round, had haunches or were overflowing their seats. I'm not sure what the author was trying to prove with the constant mention of Paula's fitness, Paula's physical appeal, everyone else's flabbiness and Paula's "sleek" outdated wardrobe choices. Does she want us to believe that Paula is healthy and thin, the healthy part is questionable because a diet of protein bars and diet red bull with the occasional turkey wrap is hardly the picture of nutrition or health? Does she want us to believe that Paula is on the verge of an eating disorder? Does she want us to believe that Paula has questionable fashion sense with her leather pant, black jeans and suit jacket combinations? I don't know and I don't know that I care.

Perhaps the problem is the reader simply spends too much time with only Paula and little time with recurring characters, new characters and even the murder suspects interacting with her. She just isn't the kind of woman one wants to spend hours with, hearing her boring self-involved judgmental monologue. The next book should spend more time developing the mystery in a compelling and coherent manner, one that makes the reader keep going because the author is unraveling an intriguing tale and less time telling the audience about the physical awesomeness of Paula.

Jen says

The Big Dirt Nap is the second book in Rosemary Harris' "A Dirty Business Mystery" series. Paula Holliday is a landscaper/gardener, a woman with a love for plants. So when her friend Lucy tempts her out to a swanky resort for some relaxation and a look at their rare corpse flower, Paula agrees.

While Paula is waiting in the hotel bar for Lucy to arrive, a handsome man with terrible pick-up lines starts putting the moves on her. She chats with him long enough to find out he can connect her with the hotel owners, who she wants to speak with about the corpse flower. So, Paula (dun-da-dun-dun) gives him her business card. When he winds up dead in an alley that night, the police come calling on Paula because the human corpse has her card in his pocket. And that's when the fun begins.

And fun this book is! Paula is a character with sass and spunk. Her sarcastic wit makes for many humorous situations even though most times she's just pointing out the everyday obvious. I enjoy when people can find the humor in those little facets of life. But, Paula unwittingly finds herself in some rather unique situations as well. And from the outsider's view, they're funny, but I sure wouldn't want to be the one encountering a black bear. Paula isn't one of the senseless amateur sleuths that so commonly inhabit cozy mysteries. She's a smart cookie who ends up in odd predicaments.

And Paula's supporting cast are equally dynamic. Babe is the former rock and roller turned restaurant owner who has a rather maternal quality to her. Sam is a former shoe factory owner who lost his business and became homeless. Lucy does a great job of filling the ditzy roll. She isn't over the top, but she's just goofy enough to make a perfect foil for Paula.

The great cast is combined with a solid plot; the reader can't help but keep turning the pages, partly to find the solution to the mystery but also to discover what new adventure Paula finds herself in. The poor woman just wants to get some sleep.

The Big Dirt Nap is a quick, fun, thoroughly entertaining novel. When you're ready for a serving of laughs with your who-done-it, I recommend you pick up a copy.

Lafcadio says

Fairly quick-paced and engaging, but some of the characters were too bland to tell apart—their only distinguishing characteristics were ethnic stereotypes. Also, two characters named Billy and Bobby had similar roles, and may have even been brothers or cousins or something, but were rarely referred to on the same page. Took me until the last chapter to realize they were two different people. Of all of the first names that exist (or don't yet exist), the author chose Billy and Bobby? Help a reader out!

Velma Bennett says

This book was a different take on mystery. Easy read.

Cheryl says

Landscaper, Paula Holliday checks into a hotel where in its lobby is an encased corpse flower, appearing to be ready to open up a big bud of stench. It's a girls weekend to be shared with her bestie, Lucy. To make a few bucks, Paula consigns herself to write an article on the flower and surrounding interests.

In the lobby, a smarmy Armani-scented fella tries a few cringe-worthy lines that fall flatter than a room key. He later saddles up alongside Paula, as she still waits for Lucy to show, and tries a few more. Shortly after Paula retires, alone, the locals escort her out of her room to a back alley to ID the body of the litch she dissed earlier. Assured she was uninvolved, she is left to go. But still no Lucy. Cryptic texts arrive and set Paula off to sleuth her whereabouts, just as it appears her own are also of concern to not so savory characters too big for the shadows.

Plenty of who, what & where twist and turn as the story gets to the guessing. No way was I even close! It was a fun cast of characters that rival Evanovich, with zippy lines and madcap scenarios. Love the epilogues.

Michelle says

Corpse Flower was truly fun reading and I burned through it in an afternoon. I would have given it four stars except for two tiny little things:

One, a minor character's last name changes inexplicably between book 1 and book 2, which really threw me. I had to go back and double check book 1 to make sure I wasn't just imagining it (and with the cold I've had this week, it's entirely possible).

Two, I felt a little let down when I found out what was going on with Lucy's disappearance.

Oh and I was super confused about what was actually happening sometimes, but I think that has more to do with my head cold than the story. I'll probably re-read this when I'm not sick!

Bridget says

This is an author and series that are new to me, but when I visited the library recently, this book caught my eye. The main character, Paula Holliday, has given up her stressful life as a media executive in New York City, and opened her own gardening business – Dirty Business – in Springfield, Connecticut.

This story (second in the series) begins with Paula heading to a hotel that is past its glory days in suburban Connecticut, with plans to meet a friend, and write an article for her local paper about the upcoming blooming of a corpse flower. Problems begin when Paula's friend Lucy never shows, and the man that Paula was talking to in the hotel bar lobby turns up dead with Paula's business card in his pocket.

The story goes back and forth over the next few days, and covers the Ukrainian mob, Native American casinos, and Lucy's involvement with a member of one of the local Native American families that have been causing trouble. Paula in the meantime, is pretty sure that she is being followed as she goes back and forth from her home to the hotel.

This was OK, as far as the story went. Paula was a likable character, and it was interesting how confident the author made her – she really didn't fall into the usual line of finding a male character to "save" her or to help her solve the crime. I think I would like to read the first book in this series, Pushing Up Daisies, to see if it seems worth continuing with any future books. One of the quotes on the back cover from a review, called it "a cozy mystery that is intelligent and modern." Whether or not that is how I'll feel about it remains to be seen, but I'm willing to give it a try.

Sherry says

Well, the book was okay, but nothing I would rush out and buy with my own money. Too many extraneous characters, too much rushing around, odd story tangents, all in all not terribly satisfying when you find out who did it. Sort of like those times you eat a whole box of Oreos but still feel hungry when you stop. And sort of sick. Not the worst thing I've ever read, but I don't know that I'd read any of her other books.

Rebecca Heintz says

There was a lot going on and a bit hard to follow, but I would give the series another try.

Kathy Chung says

Reviewed at : Mama Kucing Books :The Big Dirt Nap by Rosemary Harris

This is the second Rosemary Harris book which I read. I love her Pushing Up Daisies. Got both books from The Big Bad Wolf Sale last year.

In this book, Paula Holiday gets to tag along with her friend Lucy to an all expenses paid trip the Titans Hotel. Lucy is there for a story while Paula is there to see the rare Titan Arum or better known as Corpse Flower(Rafflesia).

Unfortunately for her, she gets to "meet" with a real corpse instead while her friend Lucy went missing.

Nick, was a man whom she met in a Bar was found dead with Paula's name card in his pocket. Starting then, strange things starts to happen to her. She felt that she is being tailed and spied on. Her home was broken into.

Paula waited for Lucy at the hotel but Lucy never show up. Lucy sent her strange messages which makes Paula fear that something bad had happen to Lucy. She started to dig around and found that Nick's murder and Lucy disappearance seems to be linked.

This is a very fast paced book. A lot of clues and stuffs like that. There was an unexpected ending in the story. The murderer turns out to be someone who is least expected in the story.

Sheila says

Rosemary Harris, the author of "The Big Dirt Nap" is annoyed, apparently, that her editor made her write an "Author's Note" explaining that the tribe featured in the book, "the Quepochas," is fictional.

<http://www.jungleredwriters.com/2008/...>

Ironically, she airs her beef on the blogsite of a group she belongs to that calls itself "Jungle Red Writers." As far as I can tell, there's nary a red (Native person) or a red (Communist) in the bunch. Nor do they live in the Jungle. These "8 smart and sassy crime fiction writers," who "dish on writing and life" all appear to be white.

Maybe that's why Harris feels free to exercise her "white privilege" and paint a stereotypical picture of a tribe (fictional!) whose members stand to gain 100K a year just for being tribal members, and whose leaders stand to gain a cool million and a half a year if only they can get the Feds to allow them to open a casino on the rez. Phew. And I thought Native Americans were oppressed! I thought the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota (which has a casino) had 84 percent unemployment, and high infant mortality, suicide, alcoholism, and school dropout rates. I thought they were POOR.

In reality, only a few tribes make substantial gains from casinos. The vast majority do not. Read "The Myth of Indian Casino Riches," (nonfictional) <http://indiancountrytodaymedianetwork...>

And then there's the kidnapping victim, (a self-described red on the outside, white on the inside "apple") the lawyer who looks Indian but who's just like any other American - lost to her roots. Funny, the Native lawyers I know are dedicated, knowledgeable, respectful members of their tribes who work hard to reverse the backstabbing betrayals and theft of tribal lands that have marked U.S. policy toward the First Nations since the arrival of the Europeans. (Over 500 treaties were signed, and ALL of them were broken by what I like to call "white givers.")

When you call your group "Jungle Red Writers" and you are actual writers, you should study the semiotics of your own name. Wrapping yourself in words that reek of colonialism and 50's racism and sexism says more about the nonfictional you than you may care to know. Yeah, I know - it's hard now that the 50's are over and you have to watch your language; that there are Native American writers from nonfictional tribes (like Louise Erdrich, Chippewa) who can write circles around you; or writers like Arundhati Roy who actually have spent time in real jungles with real reds (the Naxalites).

Yeah. Reality is a hard act to follow.
