



Pushing Up Daisies

Rosemary Harris

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Meet Paula Holliday, a transplanted media exec who trades her stilettos for garden clogs when she makes the move from the big city to the suburbs to start a gardening business. Paula can handle deer, slugs, and the occasional *human* pest---but she's not prepared for the mummified body she finds while restoring the gardens at Halcyon, a local landmark.

Casual snooping turns serious when a body is impaled on a garden tool and one of Paula's friends is arrested for the crime.

Aided by the still-hot aging rocker who owns the neighborhood greasy spoon, a wise-cracking former colleague, and a sexy Mexican laborer with a few secrets of his own, Paula digs for the truth and unearths more dirty business the town has kept buried for years.

Pushing Up Daisies Details

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From Reader Review Pushing Up Daisies for online ebook

Vicki says

Paula Holliday has left the tv production industry in the big city to build a nursery/landscaping business in the suburbs. She's got the energy and the artistic eye to pull off pleasing garden design, so it should be way less stressful/far more fulfilling, than her former life, right? Well...the first big job she lands...the first day on her tour of the property as a matter of fact, she discovers a buried box, which, appallingly enough, contains the mummified body of an infant child!

She is horrified, followed by nauseated, and is immediately immersed in a perplexing 30 to 40 year old mystery of just who, and whose, this child was. Amazingly, she retains the job to refurbish the formal gardens of the eccentric Peacock sisters, both of whom have passed away. The stately home and its gardens have been left to the Historical Society and the hope is that the updated gardens will attract donations to Springfield Connecticut's Historical Society. Richard Stapley, the Historical Society's president has hired Paula to get the rundown site ready for a society fundraiser to be held in a couple of months.

Paula's environment is peopled with several unique characters including some of her Mexican employees, other small business owners, several police officials, and the genteel upper crust of Springfield's society. As if one mysterious death is not enough, one of Paula's employees is surprised by an intruder in Paula's home, Paula is locked in the greenhouse at Halcyon gardens overnight by an unknown individual, and one of her landscape business competitors is attacked and left for dead in his office. There is a lot going on in sedate little Springfield, and before long her New York buddy and former co-worker Lucy Cavanaugh is joining Paula on weekends to prune and plant, and oh by the way, help get to the bottom of the various mysteries.

The dialog is clever and witty, and Rosemary Harris does a good job of weaving the mysteries together, leading us along the path to a satisfying conclusion.

Cleverly, the first chapter of the next book in the series is included for good measure. A fast and enjoyable ride...check it out!

Terri says

This is the first in a new gardening series and as a first book, has strong and weak points. I loved the characters and dialog. Some very funny moments as well.

The protag is Paula, who is a gardener who bids to restore the gardens of Halycon, after the oldest sister dies. While digging, she uncovers a box with the body of a baby long dead in it. This leads to old secrets and some ugly moments for Paula.

I thought the plot needed a bit of cohension and was tied up a bit too fast. Maybe a little stronger editing. Particularly in the killer's motivation. But as I said, this is a first book, and I imagine the next one will be stronger.

April says

Cozy mysteries are a great way to change up from serious or deep or depressing or sad books. Or just for a fun, light read to spend a relaxing few hours. Unfortunately, they often move too much in the direction of silly and over the top. This one didn't go there. The author created an interesting character with an interesting job and there were a couple of chuckles along the way too. I'll be reading more of these.

Cheryl says

Pushing Up Daisies by Rosemary Harris

Paula Holliday is an independent garden tender working at the famous Halcyon Gardens when she digs up a crate within a crate that holds the mummified remains of an infant.

Her buddy, Wanda "Babe" Chinnery, a has-been back-up singer, owns the local greasy spoon where Paula spends most of her down time...which is most of her time, period.

Paula's #1 (and mostly only) worker is Hugo, who we later find out is planning to marry Paula's household assistant, Anna. Then there is the local police officer, Mike O'Malley, or "MOM" as he is jokingly called at the station.

O'Malley is leading the investigation into the corpse, which could be anywhere from 20 to who knows how many years old. Another cop, retired, brings into play a dead case on a missing Mexican girl and maybe the cases are related. That seems to trigger a series of happenstance events and an attempted murder, with Hugo being held as the prime suspect. Paula sets herself as the redeemer and works to clear his name.

It's a rollicking time in the garden. Love the cast of characters and their snarky report. It's an intelligently written book, even if some of the dialogue makes no sense, and has numerous laugh out loud lines.

Best LOL's:

"Sex had never been all that great between Chris and me; there were more than a few nights I was left staring at the ceiling thinking Clematis when I should have been thinking clitoris."

"I've always said the best way to get over someone is to get under someone."

Joyce says

This was a light fast read with little substance. Agatha Raisin works to clear several murders in the Cotswold village of Carsely. There are a lot of characters and Agatha remains the boss and head of the agency with Her wit and sharpe tongue and insecure vulnerable ways. I did not really enjoy this book as I felt the characters had little personality which made it more difficult to get Into the story.

Stephanie says

Actually a 1 1/2 star would be appropriate. I didn't hate it, but it wasn't quite okay. I had a really hard time getting into this book. I even stopped and reread the first 4 chapters just to see if I missed something.

The good: the book follows a set direction, the mystery and the conclusion aren't bad.

The not so good: the characters were really lacking in personality. I didn't care one way or another about any of them. Which made keeping track of who was who Extremely difficult!!

There were a few sophomoric sexual innuendo attempts at humor that fell flat.

I have to add that I read the Kindle version and the formatting was quite distracting also. Lots of spaces in between words and strange hyphens. I actually started using the underline feature for the first time and underlined some of the poorly formatted words -- came up with 70.

I was looking forward to reading so this was a big disappointment.

Jennifer says

First in the Dirty Business series.

Paula used to work as a media exec in the big city, but downsizing gave her the opportunity to start her own landscaping/gardening business. Her business isn't large, and she is surprised as anyone else when she manages to land a huge landscaping project; restoring the gardens at Halcyon, a local landmark where the most recent resident, one of the elderly Peacock sisters, recently passed.

While doing a little digging, thinking about how to lay out the gardens, Paula digs up the mummified body of a baby! But that's just the first mystery. Another murder follows, Paula feels threatened, and vows to figure the whole thing out.

I liked the book just fine; as a first in series there is a lot of character development going on. As a breath of fresh air, the policeman is neither incompetent or drop dead gorgeous. Some of the gardening talk made my eyes glaze over, but all in all it was an enjoyable read. The mystery got a bit convoluted in the end but it made sense. Rosemary Harris was leading us down a path and then wham, it wasn't what we thought after all. Nice.

I will seek out the next in the series.

Marty says

I think this is the first one in a new series. It is a better than average cozy mystery. It keeps you guessing until the end. Paula Holliday left her job as a media exec in NYC and starts a gardening business in a small town in Connecticut. She gets the contract to renew the gardens at an old estate. The estate had been willed

to the local historical society by two elderly sisters who had never married. Paula was a member of the society – besides, she needed the publicity and would work cheaply. When she was examining the gardens to find out what was there, she discovers the mummified body of a baby. It was not ancient, but maybe 40 years old??? –The big question is who was the mother of the child; – and this question started reopening long forgotten memories... and led to a murder.

Dawn Michelle says

UGH! UGH! UGH!

While this book had an interesting plot line, the characters **NEVER** engaged me (I found most of them tedious and boring) and most of the dialogue I felt was unnecessary. The characters never felt believable to me and I just could NOT wait for this book to be done.

Will NOT be reading ANY more in this series.

UGH!!

Maureen says

This was pretty good. It's her first mystery and I enjoyed it but thought it dragged a little bit in places. Overall, I would recommend it to anyone who enjoys a light mystery with no gore and minimal sexual tension.

Kate says

I loathe the main character. Mysteries are meh. Better than some but not worth reading.

Michelle says

Good, dirty fun! And by dirty, I mean actual dirt, because it's a cozy mystery about a gardener--so it's almost like it was written just for me.

Seriously. Super fun and engaging. Just what I needed during one of the worst cold's I've ever had!

Mistress ~ ♠ Mistral's Kiss ♠ ~ (Mist) says

Pretty good cozy mystery. Not the tightest plot there ever was, but great characters and a fun feel. I even

enjoyed all the gardening tidbits. Looking forward to the rest of the series.

Tory Wagner says

Pushing up Daisies by Rosemary Harris is a mildly interesting mystery featuring Paula Holliday, a master gardener who seems to fall into mysteries on a regular basis. This is the first in a series entitled A Dirty Business Mystery, in which Paula solves mysteries while working on garden repair and renovation. In this outing, Paula is restoring the gardens at a well known landmark estate when she digs up the body of an infant. By the end of the book, several mysteries are solved and the reader may also pick up on a few gardening tips.

Joyce Lagow says

Chick Lit gets it on with Mystery Genre and the offspring is not that impressive.[return][return]I wish I could praise this book more, since I like the concept. I should I m a Master Gardener myself who is an avid mystery genre reader.[return][return]But the problem is that it s far more Chick Lit than it is Mystery Genre. Quite frankly, the plot is a bit lame and a little too thin as well. The writing is chirpy, and slings around a lot of hip references to such programs/groups/places like *Upstairs, Downstairs*, *The Doors*, *Law and Order* and *Riverdance* (this definitely is the media generation). Then there was, among others, Croisette (what? who? where?) that were beyond me. The book is filled with this sort of thing, and perhaps enhances the enjoyment of the Chick Lit fans but did nothing for me as far as the story line was concerned. It really looked as if Harris was trying to show just how cool and "with it" she is.[return][return]Also, I was disappointed in the gardening contribution. I had rather expected that somehow the protagonist, Paula Holliday, would use her knowledge of gardening to solve the mystery. But while owning a landscape business provides the background, there is very little that contributes to the resolution of the murder. Still, it was fun reading about Culpepper s Complete Herbal and the origin of the Bach Flower Remedies; I m familiar with both, but it was nice to see them in the story.[return][return]The characters are one-dimensional, with the exception of Paula who makes it to one and a half, thanks to her obsession with health food and staying fit. The Lech is too too lechy, the Mexicans are too too Hispanic, the former TV colleague too too wise-cracking.[return][return]It s a shame, really, because Harris premise is interesting. But she needs to decide if she s writing mysteries or chick lit and move in one direction or the other.
