



## Harriet Spies Again

*Helen Ericson*

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Harriet M. Welsch has just received the best news of her eleventh year—Ole Golly is coming back! Harriet can still remember how sad she was when her beloved nanny married George Waldenstein and moved away. But the circumstances of Ole Golly's return remain unclear. Where is George Waldenstein?

With Mr. and Mrs. Welsch living in France for three months, Sport confiding that he has a crush on a girl at school, and the arrival of a mysterious new neighbor, who's going to require a whole lot of spying, Harriet already has her hands full. Then she overhears Ole Golly saying she's innocent—but innocent of *what*? Harriet the Spy is on the case and ready to help Ole Golly in any way she can.

## Harriet Spies Again Details

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Author : Helen Ericson

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## From Reader Review Harriet Spies Again for online ebook

### **Cherie says**

Great story. I loved Harriet as a kid and this book brought all of it back for me. I listened to the audio version narrated Anne Bobby.

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### **Maria says**

My 9-year-old daughter loved it.

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### **Jessica says**

I wasn't sure what to think of this book, going in. A different author from the original? Written in 2002 instead of the 1960s? How were they going to reconcile the changes in technology, womens' rolls and pop culture?

I was pleased with the result. Harriet is still young enough that a lot of technology talk was avoided. The characters of Cook and Ole Golly were true to the original book, without being overtly sexist. The new author is obviously a huge 'Harriet the Spy' fan and I enjoyed the story (although not as much as the original).

I'll probably read the other books I just found out existed ('Sport' and 'Harriet the Spy, Double Agent') even though they won't be as satisfying as my favorite children's book of all time, 'Harriet the Spy'.

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### **Paula says**

I feel a certain loyalty to Harriet, since the original Harriet the Spy was one of my favorite books as a kid. I had my doubts about the two sequels, each written by different authors after Louis Fitzhugh's too-soon death, but both did a fairly good job of staying true to the spirit of Harriet.

Harriet Spies Again feels a little empty, as there is very little spying, note taking or interaction with Harriet's friends, and the whole Ole Golly reunion falls kind of flat. Also, it may have been less obvious what was going on with Ole Golly to a younger reader, but to me it was pretty predictable.

The other sequel, Harriet the Spy Double Agent, is a bit better than Spies Again, because Harriet is more her old note-taking self and spends more time talking to Sport, who himself is going through his own turmoil what with his dad's new wife, being in love, and sprouting a few facial hairs. Double Agent also hints (maybe as a tribute to Fitzhugh?) at Harriet's budding sexuality as she discovers and ruminates about her own feelings about Sport, Ole Golly, and her new intriguing friend and spy partner, Annie Smith, who has created three names and personalities for herself and has a few secrets of her own.

Missing from both books is Fitzhugh's wry wit, but these sequels are worth a read if, as a now-grown adult fan, you can ignore that feeling that you're visiting a ghost. It's nice, but leaves you feeling a tiny bit empty.

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### **Tracy says**

I was a disappointed. I've always liked Harriet, and I'd read that this sequel by a different author did justice to the original. I'm not sure I found that to be true. I listened to the first Harriet recently, and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The audio for this sequel was read by the same person, but I felt like it was done a bit differently, even different voices for the same characters. Harriet had definitely grown up a bit, expected and maybe necessary, but I missed the Harriet I know, the one who had to learn that you have to figure out how to get along with everyone. Harriet is missing many of the qualities I loved, and I missed the observations of her school mates and neighbors in her notebook. Ole Golly, well, Ole Golly just wasn't herself at all, and I am not sure she should have been included here. Her character was totally different, not nearly as strong, and their relationship isn't at all the same. Maybe hoping for more of the same was an unattainable goal.

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### **Donna says**

Let's just say this crapped all over my childhood. Regardless of good intent, Harriet is not Harriet and Ole Golly is not Ole Golly and this is a farce. Harriet does not beg for hugs or talk about wanting to be a spy. She IS a spy. Ole Golly doesn't \*discuss\* greeting card sentiment. It is beneath her. She discusses literature, and without calling attention to it. Mr. Waldenstein would NEVER have consistently lied and gambled. Harriet would not have gotten dumber as she got older. Come on, people.

If you liked this book, you clearly did not read the original. You're entitled to your opinion, but I'm sorry, you are wrong.

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### **PurplyCookie says**

With the approval of Louise Fitzhugh's (author of "**Harriet the Spy**") estate, Ericson revisits the life of Harriet M. Welsch and the executors' trust was well placed. An author's note reports that Ericson became a fan when this self-styled young spy first appeared in 1964, and her affection for the feisty character comes through in this new misadventure.

When Harriet's parents leave Manhattan to spend three months in Paris, her former nanny, Ole Golly, returns from Montreal (where she had moved with her new husband) to stay with our favorite spy. Though Harriet's mother warns her that Ole Golly has asked that no one mention her husband's name, the curious sleuth sets out to discover what transpired in Montreal.

Meanwhile, another mystery percolates in the townhouse across the street, where husband-and-wife doctors appear to be keeping a girl captive. As Harriet doggedly attempts to crack these cases, her processing of misinformation makes for some comical scenarios.

While it is admittedly true that Ericson has a decent grasp of Harriet's personality, lovers of the classic book are betrayed by how long Harriet remains clueless about Ole Golly's "condition". It seems that Ericson's version is that of a dumbed down Harriet. More importantly, instead of writing and observing, now she makes wild ridiculous speculations and spends her time, not on her notebook, but on a time line of her life which just bogs down the flow of the story.

#### Book Details:

Title Harriet Spies Again

Author Helen Ericson

Reviewed By Purplycookie

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#### **Morgan says**

I have a strong love for Harriet M. (For Middle) Welsh. She has quickly become one of my favorite literary characters. Not to mention Roserita was a STUPENDOUS addition to the books. She balances Harriet very well and I LOVE HER. And I loved the return of Ole Golly. And Cook. And Sport. Basically everyone in this book was so much fun. Harriet was also creating a timeline of her life and it was fun seeing her reflect on "the big moments".

Everyone needs these in their life (also am I the only one who wants an adult Harriet the Spy novel??)

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#### **Samantha says**

Oh my! Well, Harriet is quite the grown up middle schooler discussing such subjects as kissing, romance and pregnancy. There is a drug reference in the book as well and it shocked me to say the least. It started out very slowly, I practically paced waiting for Ole Golly to come back and when she did I was sorry she did come back! The lack of dialogue between Harriet and Ole Golly is unnerving and horribly wrong. Her mother changes from a caring and concerned parent from the first book to a flake who speaks French and can't remember th time zone changes in this book. Janie is no where to be found, Sport is just barely there and is just barely acting like Sport. Harriet's new friend is positively brutal and rude, a girl that no one should model herself after. She mocks Harriet and goes under so many false names she seriously needs her head examined. Yet, the end leaves us, once again, with Ole Golly leaving and Harriet wondering about the inevitable future and it's mysteries. There she sits on the floor after a highly eventful Thanksgiving with her new "friend" and ponders what will be next and bam the book is over. Let down much? And what kid is going to know what an amniocentesis is? And what kid is going to know why a pregnant woman needs to bring in a urine sample? Ugh, the flaws are endless. Giving it two stars was painful. This was an imposter of a novel.

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#### **Melissa says**

Biggest problems I had with this book:

-Ole Golly did not act like Ole Golly

-Harriet M. Welsch did not act like herself either.

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### **Lars Guthrie says**

I'm shocked but I really liked 'Harriet Spies Again.' Shocked because it's an ersatz 'Harriet' created in 2002, nearly 40 years after the original and over 30 years after Louise Fitzhugh's death. A student of mine had to pick a 'classic' to read, defined as being over 25 years old and still in print, and this somehow slipped under the wire. I was prepared for disappointment, but Helen Ericson really captures the spirit and flavor of 'Harriet the Spy,' and produces a work just as charming as it is. The unique Sport, Old Golly and Cook return (Old Golly in mysterious and surprising fashion), and there's a new character who goes under a number of different aliases, my favorite of which was Yolanda Montezuma. Great fun.

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### **Colleen says**

I love Harriet! I didn't realize there were sequels to Harriet the Spy. Now I want to read them all! If I had a daughter like Harriet I would pull my hair out, but she's so much fun to meet in fiction. (Oh wait- was I a daughter like that? Is that why I love Harriet?! Oh help.)

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### **Alida says**

I read Harriet the Spy when I was young, and so enjoyed it that I've read it again and again through the years. I guess Harriet kinda reminds me of the kind of little girl I would like to have been...totally independent and brassy! She is such a fun little tomboy to follow in her exploits with her friends and as she "spies" on neighbors nearby as she documents in great detail in her "notebooks" her perspective of each of their lives. This new book, "Harriet Spies Again" takes me back to that first book, and how much I loved it. I am just starting to read it, but already, Harriet's favorite person in the entire world, Ole Golly, is coming back to keep an eye on her while her parents are in Europe.

I can only imagine what is yet to come...it's a fun and quick read on a rainy day or when you're stuck at home and you just feel like something easy to read and enjoy.

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### **Pam Mouton says**

AWESOME!

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### **Logan Hughes says**

This book has things going for it. I'll admit that. It is clearly written by someone with a lot of love for Harriet the Spy. There are moments, passing flashes, where the author manages a funny moment or turn of phrase which almost, *almost* echoes the charm of the original. It was well-paced and absorbing enough to keep me reading from start to finish. There are many excesses and violations against the spirit of the original which

the author mercifully failed to commit.

Here is what's wrong with it.

1. Author not nearly as smart or funny as Louise Fitzhugh (but who is?)
2. Harriet defanged. She's too nice. She has a bit of the random sense of humor of the original, but she doesn't have the acerbic meanness or grand ego or delicious hatred or lonely angst.
3. Ole Golly defanged, although that's part of the plot. It's stupid, though. Really, Ole Golly shouldn't have come back at all, ever. That was like, one of the main points of the original book. I know it's hard to write *Harriet the Spy* without one of the major beloved characters, but honestly.
4. Plot turns out to be pretty stupid. It was touch and go for awhile and then it went. Got all goofy and improbable and sentimental at the end. If there is one thing *Harriet the Spy* shouldn't be, it's sentimental. "No more nonsense" is how Ole Golly ended her (canon) letter to Harriet, as the book reminds us, but doesn't adhere to that maxim.
5. Wrong level of detail. I was distracted by the amount of silly detail given--noting that Harriet wrote in an Ultra Fine Sharpie, for example--while at the same time there wasn't enough detail on other things. There was almost no information about Harriet's school life, or any of the things that really helped you picture her world in the original. On a related topic, what time period are we in, anyway? A lot of things (Harriet's father drinking martinis, use of the word "fink," the family having a cook) don't make sense outside of the sixties, but certain details made me think they were trying to do it modern (FYI Ultra Fine Sharpie was introduced in 1989). Any book which leaves you in doubt as to whether the book was supposed to be set in 1962 or 2002 has insufficient detail.
6. Stupid new character I hate. Harriet has enough interesting friends; she doesn't need a Mary Sue who is So Quirky!!! and From a Broken Home and Also Interested in Spying. Bleeeccccchhh. (Although it's hinted in an ad in the back for another "*Harriet the Spy*" sequel that she's a lesbian, so I might read that, if it ever even got written.)
7. The main excess committed by this author, covering basically all the lesser ones, is a lack of subtlety. Harriet's mother isn't just rather vapid, she's a complete idiot; Sport isn't just tidy, he's a vacuuming fiend!

I can certainly imagine a less subtle book. I'm not saying it was the world's least subtle book. (I'll admit I didn't solve the "mystery" until Harriet did, but in my defense it was a stupid solution, and since when does Harriet solve mysteries anyway? She's a spy, not a girl sleuth.)

But the original Harriet has such a light hand, hinting at what's going on in the adult world without getting unrealistically involved in it (we find out about Golly and George's relationship through hints, mostly, not through direct explanation like in HSA). With the possible exception of Janie, none of the characters are caricatures (Harriet's mother is slightly vapid and doesn't understand her but isn't a complete imbecile like in HSA). Even people who love each other don't always understand each other or like everything about each other (Harriet and Sport, for example, are way too sympatico in HSA). Things are left unexplained (what's wrong with Golly's mother, for example, would never have been left so mysterious and raw and confusing and painful in HSA). A larger world is hinted at by meaningful details (Sport's interest in housecleaning is part and parcel with his father's inability to deal with life, not just something he likes because he is Quirky! And has Traits! as in HSA). Things don't fit together perfectly or get resolved neatly (especially not in a big

wacky Thanksgiving scene like in HSA). It's real in a way this book just isn't.

I don't know; maybe I would have liked a book like this if it hadn't aimed so high. But I suppose I knew what I was getting into.

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