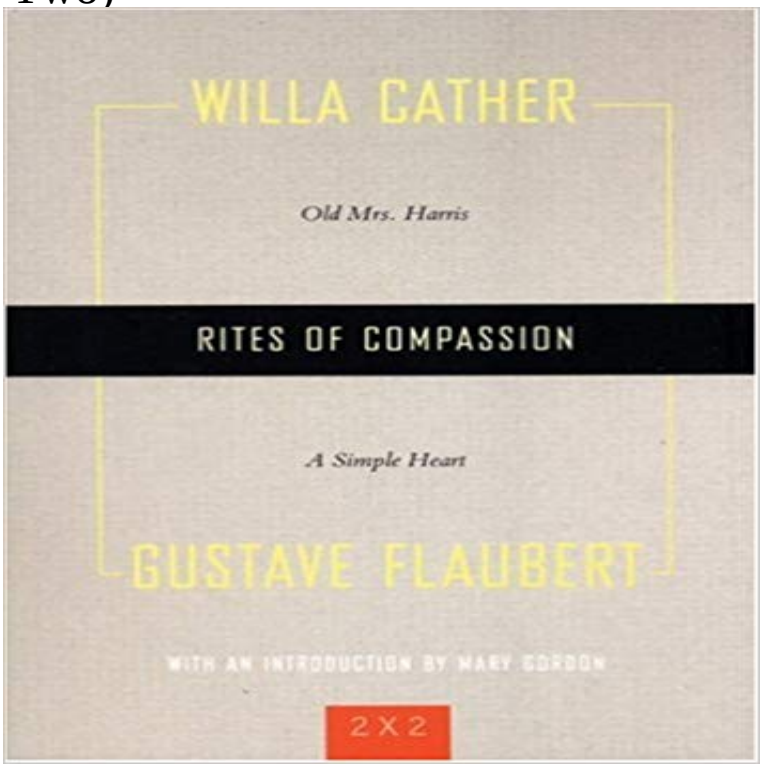
Rites of Compassion: Old Mrs. Harris and A Simple Heart (Two By Two)



Personally selected by award-winning writer Mary Gordon, these two stories by Willa Cather and Gustave Flaubert render a flawless portrait of characters who unquestioningly offer their compassionate service to those that take them for granted.Old Mrs. Harris is the staunch matriarch of a busy house (the look of which Cather based on her own childhood home), brimming with her spendthrift son-in-law, her displaced Southern debutante daughter, and a bevy of children whose dreams seem out of reach. In A Simple Heart, written at the request of George Sand, Felicite is the faithful servant first to a family fallen on hard times and then to a stuffed parrot she confuses with the Holy Spirit.Cruel and honest, these two stories explore the ways in which families treat their aging members, the harsh impatience of the young, and the patient compassion of women who make their familys everyday lives possible.

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