

# Ophelia parker`s moment with chanel

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These were the rich and famous women of the Big Apple, the Broadway actresses, the wives of millionaires, or as I called them, the " Fur Coat Ladies. " They all exuded glamour, which I, Aphelia Parker, wanted more than anything. But Instead of that, I got living In a middle class environment and going to a regular high school. But I was lucky enough to marry my high school sweetheart, James Richard Parker. We were madly In love, so It was pretty easy to convince him to save up enough money for a honeymoon in Paris, France. Honeymooning in Paris Is excellent by Itself, but I had no Idea what amazing opportunity it had in store for me.

On February 5, 1954, at around nine in the morning, I went on a walk by myself through town. Except this was not the town I usually walked through, for it was Paris, France. I was aware of the fact that Coco Chanel, also known as my role model, was holding her well anticipated comeback show in Paris that day. I wanted to get a ticket, but they were sold out. As I walked past the venue of the show, there were already any well-dressed people, most of them with cameras and notepads, hoping to sneak a peek at the new collection.

And that was when I Molly saw her: the most glamorous woman In the world, the woman to whom I looked up the most, Coco Chanel, was within walking distance of me. I was staring intensely at her impeccable outfit: a small, black wool hat, a glossy pair of pearl drop earrings that were matched up with an even glossier pearl necklace, a black and white tweed skirt suit, a silky black shirt, sheer black stockings, and carefully crafted leather high led shoes. I then saw her pointing at me and a feeling of fear quickly came over

me. Immediately after that, Coco and a young man in a well-tailored suit walked over to me.

The man asked me, in French, if I could model, and being fluent in French, I answered that I could. Coco and the man told me to come with them, and before I knew it, I was whisked into the magical world of fashion. The scenario that was occurring at Coco's show was that one of her models had abruptly fallen ill, and I was literally pulled from the streets to take her place. While tanning nervously backstage, I was handed one of the most flawless outfits I had ever seen: a perfectly stitched Chanel suit. It contained a box jacket and pants; a crafted leather high-heeled shoe.

I was told not only that this is the outfit that I would be wearing onstage but that I would be the first model to walk across the runway! All I had to do was simply walk to the end of the runway, turn around, and walk backstage. That is exactly what I did when it was time to do so. I can still vividly remember the hot, bright stage light shining down on me as if it was the Sun, the illicit-clack of the high-heeled shoes on the smooth runway, and the feeling of hundreds of pairs of eyes fixated on me, a regular girl from the United States of America, modeling in Coco Chanel's comeback show in Paris.

After Coco gave me 400 Euros for filling in for the sick model, I resumed my honeymoon with James. When we got back to New York City, I went back to witnessing at an Italian restaurant, and he went back to work in construction. We eventually got teaching jobs at our old high school, with James teaching mathematics and me teaching French. I was also the proud owner of

a youth theater until I sold it in 1992, which was also the year I retired from teaching.

Two of its biggest stars were my daughters, Betty and Sally, who both went on to be actresses on Broadway. James passed away yesterday morning in his sleep, and while going through his belongings, I discovered the pictures of our honeymoon, bringing me back to this experience. It made me realize that even though I never became a " Fur Coat Lady," being the first model in Coco Channel's comeback show was just as great in my opinion.