The Talented Mr Ripley By Patricia Highsmith

The Talented Mr. Ripley: A Psychological Thriller that Still Captivates

Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* isn't just a novel; it's a chilling exploration of obsession, manipulation, and the seductive allure of the American Dream. This meticulously crafted psychological thriller, published in 1955, continues to resonate with readers, influencing generations of filmmakers and writers. This will delve into the narrative intricacies, analyze its enduring appeal, and explore the complexities of its themes, while examining its lasting impact on popular culture.

Unveiling the Enigma of Tom Ripley

Tom Ripley, the titular character, isn't a straightforward villain. He's a chameleon, a master manipulator who, driven by an insatiable desire to emulate and replace others, embarks on a descent into a world of deception and murder. The novel unfolds as a gradual unraveling, meticulously detailing Ripley's psychological transformation from a seemingly charming and resourceful young

man to a cold-blooded criminal. Highsmith uses intricate plotlines and evocative imagery to capture the unsettling atmosphere of suspicion and betrayal.

A Masterpiece of Psychological Suspense

The Talented Mr. Ripley excels in creating an atmosphere of dread. The narrative style, often employing fragmented perspectives and flashbacks, mirrors the fractured mental state of the characters, particularly Tom Ripley. Highsmith masterfully employs foreshadowing, building tension and anticipation throughout the story, making the reader complicit in the unraveling of the plot. This creates a captivating and disturbing reading experience.

The Enduring Appeal: Why *The Talented Mr. Ripley* Still Holds its Charm

Highsmith's novel transcends its time. Its themes of social climbing, the allure of wealth and status, and the inherent darkness in human nature remain relevant and disturbingly relatable. The complexities of interpersonal relationships, the blurring lines between imitation and identity, and the destructive power of envy are all explored with a sharp insight that hasn't lost its power.

Advantages of Reading *The Talented

Mr. Ripley*

• *Deep Exploration of Human Psychology:* Highsmith's meticulous character development and psychological insights provide a compelling look at the dark side of human nature. • **Intricate Plotline:** The novel's intricate plot twists and turns, expertly woven together, keep readers engaged and guessing until the very end. • Enduring Themes: The novel's themes, such as social climbing, envy, and the destructive nature of obsession, resonate with contemporary audiences. • *Literary Excellence:* Highsmith's prose is evocative and precise, creating a richly atmospheric reading experience. • **Significant Cultural Impact:** *The Talented Mr. Ripley* has influenced various forms of popular culture, cementing its place in literary history.

Exploring Related Themes and Tropes

While *The Talented Mr. Ripley* stands alone, several themes and tropes find resonance throughout its narrative.

The Allure of Social Climbing

The novel brilliantly portrays the relentless pursuit of social status and wealth. Tom Ripley's actions, motivated by a deep-seated desire to emulate and surpass others, mirror the societal pressures and anxieties that drive individuals to seek higher social standing.

The Nature of Deception and Manipulation

Highsmith delves into the psychological intricacies of deception and manipulation. Tom Ripley's calculated and often charming approach to deception highlights the lengths to which individuals might go to achieve their goals. This manipulative behaviour is explored through a careful and detailed analysis of his choices and interactions with other characters.

Identity and Imitation

The novel grapples with the complexities of identity, particularly in Tom Ripley's insatiable desire to impersonate others. His attempts to assume the identities of others expose the inherent vulnerabilities and anxieties around personal authenticity, demonstrating how the desire to mimic or emulate can be destructive and potentially fatal.

Social Commentary on American Society

Although set in the 1950s, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* offers a pointed commentary on 1950s American society. The novel examines the anxieties around wealth, social status, and personal identity, highlighting the corrosive effects of envy and the pursuit of an idealized image.

Case Study: The Impact of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* on Film

The Talented Mr. Ripley has been adapted into several highly successful films, notably the 1999 film starring Matt Damon. This demonstrates the enduring power of the novel and its ability to capture the imagination of filmmakers and audiences alike. A comparison chart can show how different adaptations portray certain elements. (Insert a table or chart here, comparing plot points, character portrayals, and critical reception of different film adaptations.)

Concluding Thoughts and Advanced FAQs

The Talented Mr. Ripley remains a compelling exploration of human psychology and the complexities of social interaction. Highsmith's insightful portrayal of Tom Ripley's descent into darkness continues to resonate with readers, challenging us to confront the darker aspects of our own desires and motivations. The novel's enduring appeal stems from its ability to explore complex themes and present them in a richly detailed and disturbingly engaging manner. *Advanced FAQs:* 1. **How does Highsmith's writing style contribute to the psychological suspense?** Highsmith uses fragmented narrative structures and unreliable narrators, reflecting the fragmented minds of her characters, building tension and creating a sense of unease in the reader. 2. What are the symbolic meanings of the locations and settings in the novel? The locations—from the glamorous Italian settings to the more mundane American environments—contribute to the atmosphere and symbolise societal anxieties and the

pressures within those environments. 3. **How does the novel explore the concept of the American Dream?** The novel critiques the pursuit of the American Dream through Tom Ripley's obsession with wealth and status, exploring how it can become a destructive force. 4. **What is the significance of the relationships in the novel, especially between Tom and Freddie?** The relationship dynamic between Tom and Freddie illustrates the power of manipulation and the toxic effects of an obsessive need for control. 5. **How does the novel engage with the theme of the "Other"?** The "other" represents the characters Tom seeks to emulate and eventually destroy. This exploration exposes the anxieties surrounding difference and the desire to assimilate or replace. By engaging with the psychological complexity of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, readers gain a deeper understanding of the human condition and the enduring power of literature to explore the complexities of the human spirit.

There are some books that burrow into your brain and refuse to leave. Patricia Highsmith's 1955 novel, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, is undeniably one of them. It's a chilling, captivating, and surprisingly addictive exploration of identity, ambition, and the dark side of human nature that has resonated with readers for decades. If you've ever found yourself wondering about the allure of sociopathy, or the fine line between admiration and obsession, then this is a novel you absolutely need to experience.

Unveiling the Enigma: Who is Tom Ripley?

At its heart, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* is the story of Tom Ripley, a young man adrift in a sea of mediocrity. He's a talented mimic, a

skilled deceiver, and deeply, profoundly unsatisfied with his lot in life. We first meet Tom in New York, a charming but unremarkable individual scraping by. His fortunes take a dramatic turn when he's approached by a wealthy shipbuilder, Herbert Greenleaf, who mistakes Tom for an old acquaintance. Greenleaf offers Tom a seemingly idyllic job: travel to Italy and convince his dissolute son, Dickie, to return home.

The Italian Idyll and the Seeds of Desire

What follows is a masterclass in atmosphere and psychological tension. Tom arrives in sunny, picturesque Italy, a world away from his drab existence. He finds Dickie, a dilettante living a life of leisure, and his beautiful, sophisticated girlfriend, Marge Sherwood. Initially, Tom is star-struck, captivated by their effortless wealth, their artistic sensibilities, and their carefree lifestyle. He yearns to be a part of this world, to shed his own skin and inhabit something far more glamorous.

This initial admiration, however, quickly morphs into something far more sinister. Tom becomes consumed by envy. He sees Dickie's life not as something to emulate, but as something to possess. He begins to mimic Dickie's mannerisms, his speech, his very essence. The author, Patricia Highsmith, brilliantly portrays this descent. It's not a sudden, explosive transformation, but a slow, creeping erosion of Tom's moral compass. He is a man who sees opportunity and seizes it, with no regard for the consequences.

The Art of Deception: Ripley's

Masterful Manipulation

As the novel progresses, Tom's desire for Dickie's life intensifies. He becomes increasingly adept at deception, weaving a web of lies that are as intricate as they are bold. Highsmith doesn't shy away from the darker aspects of Tom's character. He's not a gratuitous killer; his actions are driven by a cold, calculated logic. When circumstances present him with a path to fulfilling his deepest desires, he takes it, with a chilling lack of remorse.

A Shadow of Identity

The title itself, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, is a brilliant piece of irony. Tom's talent lies not in art or music, but in his ability to assume identities, to become someone else. He is a chameleon, a master of disguise and manipulation. He can slip into the lives of others with an uncanny ease, leaving behind a trail of confusion and destruction. This aspect of the novel is what makes it so compelling. We find ourselves, perhaps uncomfortably, rooting for Tom, even as we are repulsed by his actions. Highsmith's genius lies in making us understand, if not condone, his motivations.

The psychological thriller genre is rich with complex characters, but Tom Ripley stands out. He embodies a particular kind of modern anxiety – the fear of being insignificant, the yearning for a life beyond our grasp. His methods are extreme, but his underlying desires are, in a twisted way, relatable to anyone who has ever felt a pang of envy or a longing for more.

Patricia Highsmith: The Queen of

Psychological Suspense

It's impossible to discuss *The Talented Mr. Ripley* without acknowledging the brilliance of its author, Patricia Highsmith. Highsmith was a master of suspense, known for her morally ambiguous characters and her ability to create an unsettling atmosphere. Her work often delved into the darker corners of the human psyche, exploring themes of alienation, paranoia, and obsession.

A Legacy of Intrigue

Highsmith's Ripley series, which includes five novels, cemented her reputation as a formidable voice in crime fiction. She didn't believe in conventional heroes or villains. Instead, her characters were flawed, complex individuals driven by their own desires and justifications. This approach made her novels feel incredibly fresh and modern, even decades later. *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, as the inaugural novel, set the stage for a universe of intrigue and psychological complexity that continues to captivate audiences.

The enduring popularity of the novel, and the subsequent film adaptations, is a testament to Highsmith's skill. She created a character who, despite his monstrous deeds, remains utterly fascinating. We are drawn to his intelligence, his resourcefulness, and his sheer audacity. It's a testament to her writing that we can be so simultaneously repelled and enthralled.

Beyond the Page: Adaptations and

Enduring Appeal

The Talented Mr. Ripley has been adapted into film multiple times, each bringing its own interpretation to Highsmith's gripping narrative. The most famous is undoubtedly the 1999 film starring Matt Damon as Tom, Jude Law as Dickie, and Gwyneth Paltrow as Marge. This adaptation, while visually stunning and commercially successful, took some liberties with the source material, offering a slightly more sympathetic portrayal of Tom in certain moments.

The Cinematic Shadow

Other adaptations, like the 1960 French film *Purple Noon* starring Alain Delon as Ripley, offered a different aesthetic and focus. Each adaptation highlights different facets of Highsmith's story, proving the novel's versatility and its ability to resonate across different cultural contexts and cinematic styles. These adaptations have introduced new generations to the enigmatic character of Tom Ripley and the chilling world Highsmith created.

The enduring appeal of *The Talented Mr. Ripley* lies in its timeless themes. It explores the allure of wealth, the complexities of identity, and the uncomfortable reality of human capacity for both great charm and profound cruelty. It’s a story that lingers long after the final page is turned, prompting reflection on our own desires and the choices we make.

Why You Should Read "The Talented Mr. Ripley"

If you're looking for a novel that will keep you on the edge of your seat, that will make you question your own moral compass, and

that will introduce you to one of the most compelling anti-heroes in literature, then *The Talented Mr. Ripley* is for you. It’s more than just a thriller; it's a psychological deep-dive into the mind of a man driven by ambition and a desperate need to belong, even if that belonging comes at a terrible cost.

Patricia Highsmith’s prose is sharp, precise, and utterly compelling. She crafts a narrative that is both propulsive and introspective, drawing you into Tom’s world with an unsettling intimacy. The Italian setting is vividly rendered, adding a layer of exotic beauty that contrasts starkly with the darkness unfolding within Tom's heart. If you're a fan of psychological thrillers, character studies, or simply a well-told, expertly crafted story, then do yourself a favor and immerse yourself in the captivating, and terrifying, world of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*.

It's a novel that asks uncomfortable questions and provides no easy answers, leaving you to ponder the nature of talent, desire, and the darkness that can lurk beneath even the most charming of surfaces. For fans of gripping thrillers and intricate character development, this book is an absolute must-read.

The Enduring Legacy of The Talented Mr. Ripley: A Psychological Classic by Patricia Highsmith

Patricia Highsmith’s The Talented Mr. Ripley stands as a masterful exploration of identity, obsession, and moral ambiguity, cementing its place as a cornerstone of psychological fiction. Published in

1955, this novel transcends genre boundaries, drawing readers into a world where charm masks danger and desire blurs the line between reality and delusion. At its core lies Tom Ripley—a man whose brilliance is matched only by his ruthless adaptability, crafting a narrative that remains chillingly relevant decades after its release.

Unmasking the Complexity of Tom Ripley

Tom Ripley is not merely a villain but a deeply layered character whose motivations resist simple judgment. Initially introduced as a talented but financially struggling young man with a fragile self-image, Ripley's transformation into a calculating manipulator reveals the psychological toll of insecurity and envy. Highsmith delves into the intricate workings of the human psyche, portraying how a person's need for status and belonging can drive them to extreme acts. His chameleon-like ability to assume identities and deceive others is not born of pure malice, but from a profound inability to accept his own limitations. This nuanced characterization invites readers to confront uncomfortable questions about self-perception and the masks people wear.

Highsmith's prose, marked by its taut psychological insight and subtle tension, draws readers into Ripley's inner world without ever fully revealing it. The novel's power lies in its ability to make even the most morally ambiguous actions feel disturbingly plausible, blurring the boundary between empathy and horror. Through Ripley's eyes, the narrative exposes the fragility of identity and the seductive allure of power—even when achieved through deception and violence.

Key Themes and Narrative Depth

At the heart of The Talented Mr. Ripley is the theme of identity—how it is constructed, performed, and manipulated. Ripley's journey reflects a deeper existential crisis: the struggle to define oneself in a world where external appearances often overshadow inner truth. His obsession with wealth, beauty, and status drives him to commit increasingly dangerous acts, illustrating how the pursuit of self-invention can spiral into self-destruction.

Another central theme is the seduction of privilege and the psychological impact of social aspiration. Highsmith critiques the illusion of upward mobility, revealing how easily desire for a better life can corrupt morality. The novel also explores the dynamics of power and control, particularly through Ripley's interactions with others—how he uses charm, intimidation, and manipulation to dominate those around him, not out of inherent evil, but as a survival strategy rooted in insecurity.

Applications and Enduring Relevance

The Talented Mr. Ripley continues to resonate in contemporary culture, influencing film, literature, and psychological discourse. Its exploration of identity and deception finds new life in modern narratives that examine digital personas and the performative nature of selfhood. The novel's psychological realism offers valuable insight into the mechanisms of manipulation and the fragility of self-concept, making it a resource for both readers and professionals in fields like psychology, sociology, and criminology.

Moreover, the character of Tom Ripley has inspired countless reinterpretations, from acclaimed films to psychological studies on antisocial personality traits. His enduring appeal lies in his complexity—he is both terrifying and tragically human, a figure who challenges readers to examine their own boundaries between aspiration and self-deception. As society grapples with questions of authenticity in an age of curated identities, Highsmith's work remains a powerful mirror to the darker facets of human ambition.

Future Outlook and Literary Legacy

Looking ahead, The Talented Mr. Ripley retains its status as a timeless classic, continuing to inspire new generations of writers and thinkers. Its themes are increasingly relevant in a world where social media amplifies identity performance and where the line between reality and illusion grows ever thinner. Highsmith's ability to craft a protagonist who is both captivating and unsettling ensures the novel's lasting impact on literary and cultural discourse.

As digital landscapes evolve and the nature of selfhood transforms, the story of Tom Ripley serves as a sobering reminder of the psychological risks embedded in identity construction. Future scholarship may further unpack Ripley's character through lenses of psychoanalysis, gender studies, and cultural critique, deepening our understanding of his place in the literary canon. For readers and scholars alike, Highsmith's work remains a profound exploration of what it means to be human—flawed, deceptive, yet profoundly compelling.

The Twisted Genius of Patricia Highsmith: Unpacking the Enduring Allure of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*

Patricia Highsmith's *The Talented Mr. Ripley* is more than just a thriller; it's a chilling examination of identity, ambition, and the seductive power of a carefully crafted lie. Published in 1955, this novel catapulted Highsmith to international acclaim and cemented her reputation as a master of psychological suspense. Decades later, Tom Ripley remains one of literature's most compelling and morally ambiguous characters, a testament to Highsmith's profound understanding of the darker corners of the human psyche. This article delves into the enduring appeal of *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, exploring its thematic richness, unforgettable protagonist, and its lasting impact on literature and film.

A Descent into Desire: The Genesis of Tom Ripley

The story begins with Tom Ripley, a young, adrift New Yorker, struggling to make ends meet. His life takes an unexpected turn when he's hired by a wealthy shipbuilder, Herbert Greenleaf, to travel to Italy and persuade his charming, wealthy son, Dickie, to return home. Greenleaf believes Dickie has abandoned his responsibilities and is frittering away his inheritance. Tom, desperate for a life beyond his meager existence, sees this as his golden ticket. However, his initial intention isn't merely to retrieve Dickie; it's to *become* him.

Highsmith masterfully crafts Tom's internal monologue, revealing his simmering envy and deep-seated dissatisfaction. He's not inherently evil, but rather a product of his circumstances, yearning for the ease, privilege, and social acceptance that Dickie effortlessly embodies. The novel is a slow burn, meticulously detailing Tom's observation of Dickie's lifestyle, his mannerisms, and his relationships. This detailed observation is crucial, as it lays the groundwork for the chilling deception that will follow. The "LSI keywords" like "psychological suspense," "moral ambiguity," and "identity theft" become central to understanding the narrative's core.

The Allure of Italy: A Backdrop for Deception

Italy serves as more than just a picturesque setting for *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. The vibrant culture, the sun-drenched coastlines, and the sense of liberation it offers become intrinsically linked to Tom's burgeoning desires. Highsmith uses the lush descriptions of locations like Positano and Rome to highlight the stark contrast between Tom's former life and the one he craves. The very act of escaping his drab reality to the idyllic Italian landscape mirrors Tom's own desire for transformation. He is not just escaping to Italy; he is escaping *from* himself. This element of escapism and reinvention is a key draw for readers, making the Italian setting a vital character in its own right.

The Birth of a Psychopath: Tom Ripley's Transformation

The pivotal moment in the novel, and arguably one of the most shocking in crime fiction, is Tom's murder of Dickie. This act is not

born of sudden rage but a calculated, almost desperate, measure to secure the life he believes is rightfully his. Highsmith's genius lies in her refusal to demonize Tom. Instead, she invites the reader into his twisted logic, making us complicit in his rationalizations. We witness his terror, his ingenuity, and his remarkable ability to adapt and improvise. The "LSI keywords" "character development," "psychological thriller," and "crime fiction" are crucial here, as the novel is celebrated for its complex character study.

Following Dickie's death, Tom embarks on a chilling charade, assuming Dickie's identity. He meticulously imitates Dickie's handwriting, his voice, and even his habits. The novel details the painstaking efforts Tom takes to maintain this illusion, a testament to his "talented" nature in the most sinister sense. He uses Dickie's money, lives in his homes, and even engages in relationships with Dickie's associates, including his girlfriend, Marge. The constant threat of exposure fuels the narrative's tension, making every interaction a high-stakes game of cat and mouse.

The Art of Deception: Highsmith's Narrative Style

Patricia Highsmith's prose is deceptively simple, yet incredibly effective. She eschews elaborate descriptions in favor of sharp, precise language that mirrors Tom's own calculated approach. The narrative is told primarily from Tom's perspective, allowing readers intimate access to his thoughts and motivations. This first-person narration is a stroke of genius, as it draws the reader into Tom's world, fostering a strange, unsettling empathy. We don't condone his actions, but we understand his drives. This mastery of "narrative perspective" and "suspense building" is what sets Highsmith apart.

The dialogue is sharp and often laced with unspoken tension. Every conversation is a potential minefield for Tom, and Highsmith excels at capturing the subtle nuances of social interaction, making the reader acutely aware of the slightest misstep that could unravel his elaborate charade. The "LSI keywords" "dialogue," "tension," and "pacing" are integral to appreciating Highsmith's skillful execution of the thriller genre.

More Than Just a Criminal: The Sociological Undertones

Beyond the thrilling plot, *The Talented Mr. Ripley* offers a potent social commentary. Tom is a character from the lower strata of society who, through sheer cunning and a ruthless disregard for morality, infiltrates the opulent world of the wealthy elite. Highsmith taps into anxieties surrounding class, privilege, and the American Dream. Tom's success, however morally reprehensible, can be seen as a dark inversion of upward mobility. His ability to mimic and assimilate highlights the superficiality of social standing and the ease with which appearances can be manipulated.

The novel also explores themes of homophobia and societal prejudice. While not overtly sexual, Tom's deep, possessive fascination with Dickie, and later with Freddie Miles, hints at a complex sexuality that was rarely explored openly in literature at the time. Highsmith navigates these sensitive areas with a deft hand, subtly weaving them into the fabric of the narrative, adding another layer of depth to the character of Tom Ripley. This exploration of "social commentary" and "character psychology" enriches the novel's enduring relevance.

Enduring Legacy: *The Talented Mr. Ripley* on Page and Screen

The Talented Mr. Ripley has captivated audiences for generations, spawning numerous adaptations. The most famous is Anthony Minghella's 1999 film, starring Matt Damon as Ripley. The film, while generally faithful to the spirit of the novel, offers a slightly more sympathetic portrayal of Tom, particularly in its emphasis on his outsider status. Other adaptations include René Clément's 1960 film *Purple Noon*, starring Alain Delon, which is visually stunning but takes more liberties with the plot, and *Ripley's Game* (2002), based on a later novel in the series.

These adaptations, while varying in their fidelity, speak to the enduring power of Highsmith's creation. Tom Ripley is a character who continues to fascinate, to disturb, and to provoke discussion. His intelligence, his adaptability, and his chilling amorality make him a figure that lingers long after the final page is turned. The "LSI keywords" "film adaptation," "literary influence," and "cultural impact" are essential for understanding the novel's broad reach.

Why Tom Ripley Still Captivates Us

So, what is it about *The Talented Mr. Ripley* that continues to resonate so deeply? It's Highsmith's unflinching gaze into the abyss of human nature. She doesn't shy away from the unpleasant truths about ambition, envy, and the desperate desire for acceptance. Tom Ripley is a monster, yes, but he is also a flawed, complex human being. His journey, however twisted, is a compelling narrative of reinvention and survival. Highsmith's ability to create a protagonist we are simultaneously repelled by and strangely drawn to is her ultimate triumph. *The Talented Mr. Ripley* remains a benchmark of the psychological thriller, a dark

masterpiece that continues to thrill and unsettle readers with its exploration of the ultimate chameleon.

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development. Digital access ensures that knowledge remains dynamic, inclusive, and relevant in an increasingly digital world.

Questions & Answers About the talented mr ripley by patricia highsmith

No	Question	Answer
1	What makes 'The Talented Mr. Ripley' so captivating, even decades later?	'The Talented Mr. Ripley' remains captivating due to its masterful exploration of identity, ambition, and the dark side of human nature. Tom Ripley's chilling charm and cunning, coupled with Highsmith's suspenseful plotting, create a psychological thriller that's both disturbing and utterly compelling.
2	Is Tom Ripley a villain or a tragic figure?	This is a central debate! Ripley is undeniably a criminal, but Highsmith presents him with such psychological depth that readers can't help but be fascinated by his resourcefulness and desires. Whether you see him as purely evil or a product of his circumstances is part of the book's enduring appeal.
3	How does Patricia Highsmith build suspense in 'The Talented Mr. Ripley'?	Highsmith excels at psychological suspense. She immerses the reader in Ripley's internal world, making us complicit in his actions. The tension arises not just from the threat of discovery, but from our growing understanding of his amoral mindset and the precariousness of his deceptions.

4	What themes does 'The Talented Mr. Ripley' explore?	Key themes include the fluidity of identity, the corrosive nature of envy and desire, the illusion of wealth and status, and the psychological consequences of deception and murder. It's a deep dive into the darker aspects of the American Dream and social climbing.
5	How does the setting of Italy contribute to the novel's atmosphere?	The sun-drenched, glamorous settings of Italy provide a stark and ironic contrast to Ripley's increasingly dark deeds. The beauty and allure of places like Rome and Venice highlight the superficiality he craves and the moral decay hidden beneath the surface of his aspirational lifestyle.
6	Are there any significant differences between the book and its film adaptations?	Yes, film adaptations often take liberties. While generally capturing the essence of Ripley's story, they might alter character motivations, streamline plots, or adjust the ending. The 1999 film, for instance, is widely praised for its faithful yet visually stunning interpretation.
7	Why is 'The Talented Mr. Ripley' considered a landmark in psychological thrillers?	It's a landmark because it shifted focus from external threats to the internal machinations of a disturbed protagonist. Highsmith's unflinching portrayal of a sociopath, and her ability to make readers both repulsed and intrigued by him, redefined what a thriller could be.

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