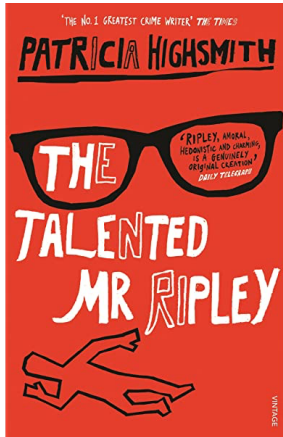


## The Talented Mr Ripley

By Patricia Highsmith



Tom Ripley is struggling to stay one step ahead of his creditors and the law, when an unexpected acquaintance offers him a free trip to Europe and a chance to start over. Ripley wants money, success and the good life and he's willing to kill for it. When his new-found happiness is threatened, his response is as swift as it is shocking.'

Patricia Highsmith was an American novelist and short story writer widely known for her psychological thrillers, including *Strangers on a Train*, which was made into a film by Alfred Hitchcock in 1951.

She was a difficult and eccentric figure who carried pet snails around in her pockets and her handbag. She wrote five Ripley novels, of which *The Talented Mr Ripley* is the first. There have also been several films with Ripley played by actors including Alain Delon, John Malkovich, Dennis Hopper, Andrew Scott and – perhaps most famously – Matt Damon.

### Discussion Questions

1. Ripley is an amoral murderer and psychopath but many readers find him strangely likeable. Did you and if so, why?
2. How important do you think Tom's past is to the character he becomes?
3. In some ways Tom embodies the whole idea of the American Dream, the idea that America is the place where people can re-invent themselves. But it seems that Tom can only do it by leaving America and going to Europe. Why should that be so?

