

# The homicidal Mr. Ripley

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When practiced, certain activities can be elevated to the level of art. And in Patricia Highsmith's book, *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, Tom Ripley has achieved this level of expertise in the art of dissembling. With her adroit handling of psychology, Highsmith has created a world of double meaning and intrigue, which draws the reader into this superb book.

The story begins with the efforts of Herbert Greenleaf to bring his son back from Italy. In order to bring this about he contacts Tom Ripley, an old acquaintance of his son's.

Ripley (Matt Damon) who had been living the life of a destitute con man agrees to the plan. There is a minor dilemma though. The son, Dickie, has no intention of returning to the states.

While Highsmith's prose is strong throughout the novel, it is her descriptions of her characters that really shine. She describes Mr. Greenleaf's idea of Tom Ripley: "...he was intelligent, level-headed, scrupulously honest, and very willing to do a favour. It was a slight error." Her delicately restrained voice is particularly acute during the interactions between Dickie and Tom. Highsmith achieves this by employing swift, declarative sentences, which tend to subtly develop the story's atmosphere. It is this quality of writing that distinguishes Patricia Highsmith from the rest of the multitude of hack criminal writers. And it is also the themes of her works that accurately represent her caliber of writing.

One of Highsmith's central themes is that man only barely suppresses his sadism. In her masterpiece, *Strangers on a Train*, Highsmith treats the same topic: how close we are to the brink of destroying one another. In *The Talented Mr. Ripley*, the reader is faced with the same unpleasant idea: civi-

lization is only a façade, a thin veneer that barely covers over humanity's inherent anarchism. Highsmith uses Tom Ripley to expose just how sordid this modern man is when released from society's restraints.

Tom's primary perversion is impersonation. Highsmith seems to intend that all Tom desires in life is the approval of others'. It's this mania that draws Tom into his sinister relation to Dickie Greenleaf. When he arrives in Mongibello, Dickie and Marge, the only other American, are disdainful of Tom's appearance. But soon Tom's charm wins Dickie over. Beginning with their friendship, Tom's neurotic behavior begins to exhibit itself. He begins to adopt Dickie's mannerisms and style, going so far as to put on Dickie's clothes. He becomes, in mind and body, a doppelganger. A clue into Tom's fascination with Dickie is his putative homosexuality, something Highsmith only treats in passing.

When his fascination with Dickie transmutes into homicide Tom is bound to continue his impersonation of Dickie. However Tom is easy with his new life for he had always been more at home when lying than telling the truth: "That had been the only time tonight when he had felt uncomfortable, unreal, the way he might have felt if he had been lying, yet it had been practically the only thing that he had said that was true."

It's this psychological aspect that defines the superior writers. And Patricia Highsmith, with her ability to describe the characters in her books so well, is also a master dramatic, who has filled *The Talented Mr. Ripley* with a steady stream of turns, and re-turns that is sure to occupy the reader completely. In the end the reader is enthralled with Ripley; however, Highsmith leaves it until the finale to mete out his fate, adding a closing flourish to this beautiful and provocative book.



Microwavable delights!

ashley rankin

## When you've eaten in the cafeteria one too many times...

shayerah ilias

Tired of eating in the cafeteria? When NCSSM students have dined in the cafeteria one too many times, they turn to other food-sources. Students visit restaurants on Ninth Street and in Northgate Mall; they order in from places like Papa John's; or, they get creative. Many students around campus are cooking their own food - and it's not just Ramen that they are making. Students are making all sorts of concoctions. When you want to delve into the culinary arts, check out the following recipes used students on campus:

**Bagel Pizzas** - Jessica McCoy, Jenny Saleeby, and Mela Johnson

Ingredients: Package of crescent rolls, pizza sauce, and grated cheese

Technology needed: Toaster oven / oven  
Recipe

1. Roll dough into crescent rolls.
2. Put crescent rolls on a toaster oven pan.
3. Spread pizza sauce on top of the crescent rolls.
4. Sprinkle grated cheese on top of the pizza sauce.

5. Bake crescent rolls in a toaster oven for fifteen minutes and enjoy.

**Mashed Potatoes** - Jessica McCoy, Jenny Saleeby, and Mela Johnson

Ingredients: 5 potatoes, 1/2 stick butter, 1/4 cup milk, a stick of cream cheese, a pack of chives

Technology needed: Microwave  
Recipe

1. Wash potatoes and peel.
2. Cut potatoes into fourths.
3. Put chopped potatoes into a bowl and fill with water.
4. Boil potatoes in microwave and drain the water.
5. Mash the potatoes
6. Mix mashed potatoes with the butter, milk, and cream cheese.

7. Sprinkle chives over the mashed potatoes and serve. Enjoy!

**Apple Turnovers** - Erin Kimmel

Ingredients: Biscuit dough, 1 apple, cinnamon, a little bit of butter

Technology needed: Oven  
Recipe

1. Roll the dough into five "fist-size" balls.
2. Roll the dough balls out flat with a rolling pin.
3. Cut the apple into thin slices.
4. Put the apple slices in the centers of the flattened dough balls.
5. Fold the dough over the apple slices.
6. Grease a pan.
7. Put the dough with apple slices in the pan.
8. Sprinkle cinnamon on top of the dough balls.
9. Fill the pan with water.
10. Bake at 350 degrees until surface is brown (water should have been absorbed and the dough balls have been meshed together). Enjoy!

**Quesdillas** - Pieng Lee

Ingredients: Tortilla bread and shredded cheese

Technology needed: Toaster oven / oven  
Recipe

1. Sprinkle cheese all over the top of the tortilla bread.
2. Fold the tortilla bread over the cheese.
3. Cook in toaster oven until the cheese melts. Enjoy!

**Smoers** - Serena Liu

Ingredients: 2 graham crackers, one big marshmallow, one section of a Hershey's chocolate bar

Technology needed: Microwave

Recipe

1. Put chocolate bar on top of one of the graham crackers.
2. Put the marshmallow on top of the chocolate bar.
3. Put the second graham cracker on top of the marshmallow.
4. Microwave for fifteen seconds. Enjoy!

## B-Day p 1

SLI and male complex coordinator Steve Goldberg, seeking to find out what went on.

Evidently, many students were disturbed by what they saw with the belt and contacted their parents. In fact, some students became reluctant to admit when their birthday was for fear of what their hall mates might do. This concern culminated into an email sent to all parents

titled "Hazing in Dorms" by Gary Greenberg, chair of the parent counsel. This email lead many parents to become concerned for the safety of their children.

"In my fourteen years at Science and Math, there have always been isolated incidents of this type of horseplay," said Dr. Joan Barber, Director of Student Life.

She concedes,

though, that what some think is mere horseplay, others call hazing, and thus leading to a misunderstanding.

Barber also notes that safety concerns arise as a student could slip and hit his head in the shower.

"...With the type of students at Science and Math, there are many innovative and fun filled ways of building camaraderie without hazing or

endangering students," said Barber.

For now, Barber has ordered all SLIs who witness birthday beat-downs to report them to her so that she can handle them directly.

Dore summed up the essence and intentions of the beat-downs by saying he participates in them because, "I love the guy. I don't do it to hurt him."