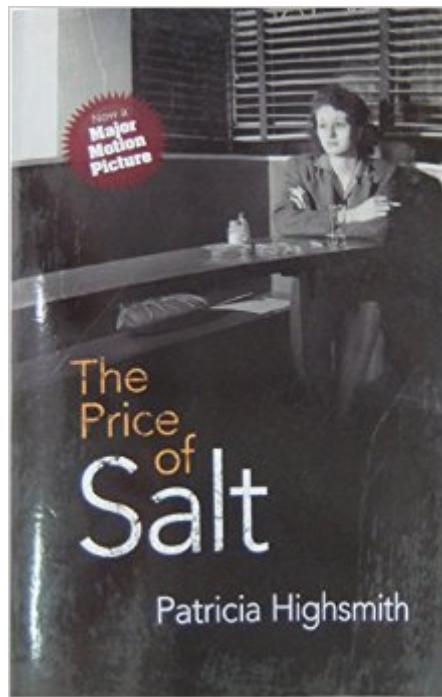


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# The Price Of Salt: OR Carol



## **Synopsis**

A chance encounter between two lonely women leads to a passionate romance in this lesbian cult classic. Therese, a struggling young sales clerk, and Carol, a homemaker in the midst of a bitter divorce, abandon their oppressive daily routines for the freedom of the open road, where their love can blossom. But their newly discovered bliss is shattered when Carol is forced to choose between her child and her lover. Author Patricia Highsmith is best known for her psychological thrillers *Strangers on a Train* and *The Talented Mr. Ripley*. Originally published in 1952 under a pseudonym, *The Price of Salt* was heralded as "the novel of a love society forbids." Highsmith's sensitive treatment of fully realized characters who defy stereotypes about homosexuality marks a departure from previous lesbian pulp fiction. Erotic, eloquent, and suspenseful, this story offers an honest look at the necessity of being true to one's nature. The book is also the basis of the acclaimed 2015 film *Carol*, starring Cate Blanchett and Rooney Mara.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

The Price of Salt changed my life. I used to drive an ice cream truck in Long Beach CA and would stop by the pier at a used book store to search the racks of pulp fiction for anything that had a modicum of same sex content. 21 years old, knowing that I wanted to meet others of my kind, and the only literature I knew was *Well of Lonliness*, prison studies and pulp that either had the butch lesbian dying tragically or reforming into a femme. Among the bunch of poorly written pulp I bought, was a gem written by Claire Morgan. No one dies and they end with the possibility of a long term relationship. It was the first sense of hope that I had as a young lesbian in the sixties. It saved my

life. To anyone who is interested in GLB studies, this is a must read as it is a the first historical book with a positive ending.

I had never read a single same sex romantic novel before; however, the trailer for the movie version of this book was absolutely beautiful and interesting so I decided to give this book a try (since the movie hadn't come out at the time). I finished the book in one day. I just couldn't put the book down, it was simply too mesmerizing! I wasn't against homosexuality before but I wasn't interested in actively fighting for its rights either. After this book, I finally, truly understand the most universal concept of all: love is love. Love is powerful and beautiful and it should not be a crime to fall in love. Who are we to decide if love between a woman and another woman is as natural as between a man and a woman? In the end, love conquers all. This book exceeded all of my expectations and more. Patricia Highsmith, thank you for such a wonderful read!

I was introduced to Therese and Carol, the two protagonists in Highsmith's lesbian romance *The Price of Salt*, my Sophomore year of college in a Gay and Lesbian Lit. Class. The professor told the class she had picked the book because it was well written and it presented an interesting twist to a gay love story, no one dies or goes straight at the end(imagine that). This alone is not necessarily compelling enough to get someone to read *Salt*, after all, today's gay and lesbian love stories often end in positive and fulfilled ways. But for Highsmith's *Salt*, written in the 1950s, this was a stretch. The reader will enjoy the subtleness of the prose and the indepth look at the confusion and chaos that can occur when two women come together and realize their mutual attraction and then love for each other. In addition, the novel is a dynamic look at 1950s America as the characters adventure out of New York and off into the Great American Wide Open. I encourage gay and straight readers to venture forth with Therese and Carol. *Salt* allows a beautiful look into the world of finding one's soul mate and falling in love. Because, above all, Highsmith has written a love story, not just a lesbian work of fiction.

I discovered this book, and my own sexuality, in the late "50's." Through the years it has been the one title and story that I have always remembered. Now, I've a new copy and reading it again has brought back all the memories of the first time I read it. A beautiful story with a beautiful ending... I only wish Highsmith had written a sequel with Carol and Therese.

One of the best,if not the best, book written on same sex love by an excellent writer who chose not

to sensationalize it. Even at the time it was written (1952 or so) Highsmith chose to keep the story on a high level, to keep the main characters respectable and decent. Compared to other books of its type written at the same time there is no comparison. As the Bible says, "where love is, there God is also." And from what I've heard of the movie coming out this fall, Todd Haynes and those who worked with him, kept the story on a respectable track. It'll make us all proud.

In 1952 Patricia Highsmith composed this personal and revelatory classic. Harper & Bros, publisher of Highsmith's "Strangers on a Train," refused to issue this novel due to its controversial subject matter. The powers that be convinced Highsmith that publishing under her own name would adversely impact her career the way Gore Vidal's had initially been by "The City and the Pillar." The Naiad Press out of Tallahassee, Florida published this volume under the pseudonym Claire Morgan. Ironically, "The Price of Salt" became one of this author's best sellers. All that seems so long ago - another lifetime. Indeed, it's hard to conceive of Michael Cunningham or Tony Kushner having to contend with such issues. So, now that all of the controversy has abated we can judge this novel on its own merits, and the verdict is a happy one. "The Price of Salt" is one of Highsmith's best efforts. This novel works on a number of levels. It is both a "coming out" story and a "love" story, with a bit of the author's trademark suspense thrown in for good measure. The story has an emotional honesty and autobiographical sensibility qualities that are noticeably absent from much of her other work. I found myself pulling for Carol and Therese, and found the development of their relationship to be natural and true to life. The "happy ending" is achieved in an uncompromising fashion that doesn't feel false or contrived. I am reminded of a Stephen Sondheim lyric: "wishes come true, not free." These characters paid a price for their happiness - it wasn't free.

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