

# Scarlett The Sequel To Margaret Mitchells Gone With The Wind

## Scarlett: A Shadow of Grandeur – Examining the Sequel to \*Gone With the Wind\*

Margaret Mitchell's *\*Gone With the Wind\** remains a cornerstone of American literature, a sweeping epic that captivated readers for generations. Its enduring success understandably sparked a desire for more, a longing satisfied (albeit controversially) by Alexandra Ripley's 1991 sequel, *\*Scarlett\**. While it lacks the undeniable force of its predecessor, *\*Scarlett\** offers a fascinating analysis in several aspects: the challenges of continuing a literary legacy, the complexities of portraying a controversial heroine in a changing social context, and the enduring appeal of the American South's romanticized past.

This article will explore into the narrative choices made in *\*Scarlett\**, assessing its strengths and weaknesses in relation to Mitchell's original masterpiece. We'll consider how Ripley handles the sensitive task of extending Scarlett O'Hara's story, exploring the persona development, the historical context, and the overall atmosphere of the narrative.

One of the most crucial elements of *\*Scarlett\** is its management of Scarlett herself. Mitchell's Scarlett is a flawed but compelling character, a survivor who employs ruthless tactics to obtain her goals. Ripley's Scarlett, however, feels somewhat different. Rather of the fiery, impulsive woman of the original, Ripley presents a more calculated and perhaps less likable figure. This shift demonstrates the changing societal attitudes concerning strong female characters, but it also contributes to a sense of discrepancy for readers familiar with Mitchell's portrayal.

The sequel also extends upon the historical setting of *\*Gone With the Wind\**. While Mitchell's novel focuses heavily on the Civil War and Reconstruction, *\*Scarlett\** extends into the late 19th century, providing a view into the economic and social transformations of the era. However, some critics contend that this broader range lessens the focus on the intensely personal struggles that shaped the original. The novel becomes more of a epoch romance, sometimes sacrificing the sentimental depth that made *\*Gone With the Wind\** so powerful.

Ripley's writing style differs considerably from Mitchell's. Mitchell's prose possesses a raw, visceral nature, perfectly capturing the turmoil of war and the resilience of the human spirit. Ripley's style, while competent, is less evocative. It misses the same lyrical rhythm and the striking imagery that distinguished Mitchell's work.

The moral themes presented in *\*Scarlett\** are also questionable. While the original novel examines themes of survival, ambition, and the cost of war, *\*Scarlett\** often feels less focused. The moral ambiguities that intrigued Scarlett's character in the first book are somewhat simplified in the sequel. This attenuation diminishes the narrative's complexity and its capacity for deeper reflection.

In conclusion, *\*Scarlett\** offers an fascinating – although ultimately inadequate – attempt to continue the legacy of *\*Gone With the Wind\**. While it expands upon the historical and personal scope of the original, it lacks the same narrative impact and emotional resonance. Its analysis of Scarlett's character in a changing context is intriguing, but ultimately misses to capture the spirit of Mitchell's masterpiece. The sequel serves as a testimony of both the challenges and the allure of extending a beloved story, highlighting the challenge of capturing the lightning in a bottle twice.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs):

### Q1: Is *Scarlett* considered a good book on its own merit?

A1: While *Scarlett* is a commercially successful novel, critical reception has been generally mixed. Many find it a acceptable read, but it frequently fails to reach the heights of literary excellence achieved by *Gone With the Wind*.

### Q2: Why did Alexandra Ripley write *Scarlett*?

A2: Ripley was given the opportunity to write the sequel by Mitchell's estate. There was undeniably a significant need for a continuation of Scarlett's story, given the immense popularity of *Gone With the Wind*.

### Q3: Does *Scarlett* accurately depict the historical context?

A3: The historical accuracy of *Scarlett* is questionable, just as with *Gone With the Wind*. While it aims for a more broad range, some historians challenge its simplification and romanticisation of certain historical events.

### Q4: Should I read *Scarlett* if I enjoyed *Gone With the Wind*?

A4: That depends on your expectations. If you go in expecting a similar level of literary excellence and emotional impact, you might be disappointed. However, if you're curious about what happened to Scarlett after the events of the original, it might provide a satisfying answer, albeit one with limitations.

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