

*Double Indemnity* by James M. Cain is a popular crime novel published in 1936. Eight years later, a film adaptation directed by Billy Wilder was released and was a success, earning seven Academy Award nominations. The film and book are now considered classics in the crime genre. The 1944 movie version effectively captures the characters' essence, including Phyllis' early scenes, Keyes' character and relationship with Walter, and the significance of the endings, making it a legitimate adaptation.

Phyllis' character in the book is portrayed as a manipulative and cold woman who uses her power over Walter to manipulate him into committing murder. The quote "He sat there drumming with his fingers on the arms" pg 26 highlights Phyllis's ability to control Walter, making him a pawn in her dangerous game. However, the movie takes a different approach, depicting Phyllis as a more sympathetic character and romanticizing her relationship with Walter. The quote "I'm pretty crazy about you too, Walter" pg 82 shows their attraction to each other and the challenges they face together. These characterizations have a significant impact on the themes of each version. The book reinforces the dark themes of the noir genre, while the movie creates a more hopeful tone. Ultimately, these character portrayals emphasize the importance of character development in telling the story's overall message.

In the book, Barton Keyes is seen as a sharp and focused insurance investigator, who uses his skills to uncover the truth behind Phyllis and Walter's scheme. Keyes' determination can be seen when he said "If you can get him off that bed and make him think", pg 38 highlighting his approach to solving the case. In contrast, the movie adaptation portrays Keyes in a more empathetic, showing his softer side. Keyes' appreciation for love and relationships is emphasized in the quote "He's quite a matchmaker. Oh yeah. He's romantic." pg 113 Moreover, the movie shows the close friendship between Keyes and Walter, adding scenes that show their interactions

outside of work. These differences in character portrayal and their relationship with Walter conflicts with the story's themes. Finally, these contrasting depictions of Keyes and his relationship with Walter shape the story's overall themes and message.

In the movie Walter's guilt is presented by his memories of the murder, emphasizing the nature of the crime. One scene in which this is particularly clear is when Walter is waiting for Phyllis to signal him that it is safe to enter the house and complete the murder. This showcases the impact of the act and the darkness it causes. The contrast with the more happy ending of the film suggests that redemption is possible. These differences in the portrayal of guilt between the book and movie have an impact on the overall themes of the story. Overall, the book emphasizes the dark nature of the crime and its consequences.

Overall, the film adaptation of James M. Cain's novel *Double Indemnity* directed by Billy Wilder effectively captures the essence of the characters and offers a distinct interpretation of the source material. While there are differences in certain parts, Wilder adapts the story in a cinematic way that remains true to the original story. Both the book and the film provide a compelling exploration of the dark and complex nature of human desires, showcasing the ways in which storytelling can be adapted in different ways.