

= Fay Ripley =

Fay Ripley (born 26 February 1966) is an English actress and recipe author . She is a graduate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (1990) . Her first professional role was in the chorus of a pantomime version of Around the World in 80 Days . Ripley 's early film and television appearances were limited , so she supplemented her earnings by working as a children 's entertainer and by selling menswear door @-@ to @-@ door . After her scenes as a prostitute were cut from Frankenstein (1994) , Ripley gained her first major film role playing Karen Hughes in Mute Witness (1995) .

In 1996 , Ripley was cast in her breakthrough role of Jenny Gifford in the ITV series Cold Feet . Initially a supporting role in the pilot episode , Ripley 's character was expanded when a series was commissioned in 1998 . She stayed with the show for three full series before leaving to take more varied roles and to spend more time with her family . She returned for a guest appearance in the fifth series . After leaving Cold Feet , Ripley played a succession of leading roles in comedies and dramas including Green @-@ Eyed Monster (2001) , I Saw You (2002) , The Stretford Wives (2002) , and Dead Gorgeous (2002) . Each role won her critical acclaim . In 2006 , she filmed a leading role in the ITV drama Bon Voyage , before taking time away from acting after the birth of her second child . Ripley returned to television in 2009 , starring as human resources manager Christine Frances in the ITV comedy drama Monday Monday , and Nicola Perrin alongside Martin Clunes in BBC One 's Reggie Perrin .

Since 2009 , Ripley has authored two recipe books ; Fay 's Family Food in 2009 and What 's For Dinner ? in 2012 . She is married to actor Daniel Lapaine , with whom she has two children ? a daughter and a son ? and is an advocate of several charities and causes .

= = Early life = =

Ripley was born in Wimbledon , south @-@ west London to Bev (erley) William Deacon Ripley and Tina Ripley (née Forster) on 26 February 1966 . Her father was a successful businessman- the son of Sydney William Leonard Ripley J.P. , D.L. , a member of Greater London Council , whose father had owned a printing company that produced movie posters- and brother of 1960s pop singer Twinkle , and her mother an antiques dealer . They separated when Ripley was two years old and both remarried , so Ripley spent her childhood moving around Surrey between two families . She was the only child from her parents ' marriage but had several half @-@ brothers and sisters from their new relationships . In her early life , she lived in various Surrey towns , including Walton @-@ on @-@ Thames , Weybridge , Esher and Cobham . Her father wanted her to have a good education so , despite the family 's Protestant religion , sent her to various Catholic convent schools around the county . One was St Maur 's Convent School in Weybridge , which she attended with Liza Tarbuck . Ripley did not feel academically challenged there , and later declared the school mediocre .

At school , Ripley enjoyed drama lessons , spurred on by the positive remarks she received from her drama teacher Susan Ford . She said of Ford , " When I was 15 , one of the few people who said , ' Well done ' , was my drama teacher , and she was really brilliant . She was a powerful woman . Those women change your life . You always remember them . There was something about her . She basically made me feel very good about myself as a 15 @-@ year @-@ old girl . " Abandoning her childhood ambition to become a nurse , Ripley decided to go into acting . Her father wanted to send her to a finishing school in Switzerland but , in an effort to rebel from her middle class Home Counties background , Ripley instead went to a local state college in Surrey , where she took A @-@ levels in communication studies , art , and drama . During her time at the college , Ripley performed her own small shows at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe . In an effort to " bring Brecht to the masses " , she performed The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui at the 1983 festival .

After completing her A @-@ levels , Ripley sought entry to the Guildhall School of Music and Drama . It took her three attempts before she was accepted onto an acting course at the age of 20 . While at drama school , Ripley lived in a flat in Streatham , South London , during a time she

described as " horrible and penniless " . To support herself financially , she sold menswear door @-@ to @-@ door , timeshares on Kensington High Street and Oxford Street , worked as a receptionist at a health club , and spent five years as children 's entertainer " Miss Chief the Clown " . As Miss Chief , Ripley performed magic tricks and painted faces at children 's parties . The work paid off when she was able to get a mortgage on her first flat , stating clown as her occupation .

= = Early career = =

Ripley graduated from drama school in 1990 . Her first role afterwards was playing Osatko in the chorus of *Around the World in 80 Days* at the Liverpool Playhouse during the 1990 ? 91 pantomime season . She had ten lines in Japanese . Her next role came at the end of the year in the Manchester Royal Exchange 's production of *Medea* . Ripley recalled , " It was only my second job , and I took it all very seriously , in my Greek sarong and my torch of fire , having to burble in tongues . "

Ripley 's early television and film career was characterised by minor roles as prostitutes or mistresses ; in what was to be her film debut , she filmed two scenes as a prostitute in the film *Frankenstein* (Kenneth Branagh , 1994) . In the first scene , her character was strangled by the creature (played by Robert De Niro 's stand @-@ in) . The second scene featured De Niro himself , though Ripley 's character was lying dead in a mortuary throughout . Pleased with what looked like her breakout role , Ripley bought a dress for the premiere , though she was distraught when Branagh sent her a card apologising for cutting her scenes from the finished film . The same year , she filmed the role of Karen Hughes , the sister of a mute character who believes she sees a murder , in the low @-@ budget film *Mute Witness* (Anthony Waller , 1995) . After *Mute Witness* 's British television premiere in 1999 , a *Daily Record* critic wrote that Ripley 's dramatic scenes were not as good as her comic ones .

In 1995 , she appeared in an episode of Channel 4 's Alan Davies vehicle *One for the Road* and made her last theatre appearance as a cast member in the Bush Theatre 's *Two Lips* , *Indifferent Red* . In 1996 , she had a role in Stephen Poliakoff 's *Frontiers* , and played a club barmaid in Dennis Potter 's penultimate television series *Karaoke* . The following year she had roles in the comedy film *Roseanna* 's *Grave* (Paul Weiland , 1997) , an episode of *The Bill* ? as a woman whose nanny is accused of stealing from her ? and a two @-@ part episode of the Kevin Whately series *The Broker* 's *Man* as a police officer . Her role in *The Broker* 's *Man* was one of the few occasions on which Ripley played a police officer ; she has frequently declined offers of similar roles because she does not want to " summon up the misery " to play a character that performs post @-@ mortem examinations or investigates murders when she could be starring in more true to life and funny programmes .

= = Breakthrough roles = =

In 1996 , Ripley auditioned for Granada Television 's *Cold Feet* , a television pilot about the romances of three couples living in Manchester . She believed she was reading for the role of Rachel , the " young , pretty one " , and was surprised to discover that she was wanted for Jenny , the " northern housewife " . In the audition , she performed with an inelegant approximation of a local Manchester accent . The producers found her approach to the role refreshing from other actresses , who were seen as too " finger @-@ wagging " . Ripley won the role , and appeared opposite John Thomson and James Nesbitt in the programme . After the pilot won an award , ITV 's director of programmes commissioned a series of *Cold Feet* , so Ripley worked on improving her character 's accent by speaking to locals and mimicking their speech . Her supporting character from the pilot episode was given a bigger role in the series ; in the first episode (broadcast in 1998) , Jenny gives birth to her first child . At that time , Ripley had never experienced childbirth , so copied birth scenes she had seen in other television series . An Independent review of the first series in November 1998 noted , " Fay Ripley has a range of quirky mannerisms that are more reminiscent of Elaine in *Seinfeld* than of any other Brit @-@ com woman . " The character also

gained Ripley public recognition ; after being noticed by a member of staff in Marks & Spencer , she was so pleased that she invited the woman to dinner .

Ripley 's performance in the first series won her a nomination for Best TV Comedy Actress at the British Comedy Awards 1999 . For her performance in the third series (2000) , in which her character separates from her husband and dates another man (played by Ben Miles) , she was nominated for the British Academy Television Award for Best Actress . During pre @-@ production of the fourth series (2001) , Ripley announced to the producers that she would be leaving the show , partly because she did not want to spend five months living in Manchester away from her home in London and wanted to spend more time with her husband , and partly to take other roles which she would otherwise not be able to do . She asked the writer Mike Bullen to either kill off Jenny or have her lose a limb . Bullen refused and instead wrote a plot in which Jenny moves to New York . Ripley returned to the series for a guest appearance in the final episode (2003) . She had originally planned not to return to the show , but reprised the role so she could have an on @-@ screen record of the final stages of her pregnancy with her first child .

In 2000 , Ripley appeared in the British dogme film The Announcement , as well as playing lead female character Grace Bingley ? opposite Paul Rhys ? in the Granada television pilot I Saw You , which used many of the same production staff as Cold Feet . David Belcher of The Herald called Ripley " perfectly scatty , tousled and self @-@ sufficient " in the role , and Joe Joseph of The Times complimented her comic timing . Ripley returned to I Saw You for a three @-@ episode miniseries in 2002 . She considers I Saw You , in which she acted alongside her husband Daniel Lapaine , the television show she is most proud to have worked on .

= = Leading roles = =

Having left Cold Feet , Ripley began to take on more leading roles ; her first role was as housewife Deanna in the BBC thriller Green @-@ Eyed Monster , which was broadcast in September 2001 . She researched her character , a murderer , by visiting a coroner . Guardian critic Gareth McLean wrote of her performance , " Ripley did a good job of exorcising the ghost of Jenny Gifford [...] by coolly cranking up the insane desperation and needy malevolence to an impressive degree . " In 2002 , she played domestic abuse victim Donna Massey in Danny Brocklehurst 's The Stretford Wives . Ripley was initially not eager to play another character from around Manchester so soon after leaving Cold Feet , but she changed her mind after reading the script . She did not research spousal abuse to play her character , a woman struggling to bring up her two children in a run @-@ down house while her husband is imprisoned , because she did not find it difficult to " work out what it 's like to be scared and want to protect your kids " . Also in 2002 , Ripley played Rose Bell in the ITV post @-@ war period drama Dead Gorgeous , alongside Helen McCrory . The following year , she provided the voice of Meg in the ITV adaptation of the Meg and Mog children 's books , before playing Jill in the third series of the BBC One sitcom Bedtime at the end of 2003 .

In 2004 , Ripley had her first of three on @-@ screen partnerships with Martin Clunes , playing Jane White in the CBBC adaptation of Fungus the Bogeyman . The following year , she played the guest role of corrupt police inspector Sam Phillips in the BBC TV series Hustle , a role that received praise from The Times and The Sun newspapers . In 2006 , Ripley played the role of child abductor Linda Holder in the two @-@ part ITV drama Bon Voyage , starring alongside Ben Miles , Rachael Blake and Daniel Ryan . She was offered the part without having to audition , and took it because she wanted the opportunity to play an antagonist . She liked the style of Canadian director John Fawcett in making the thriller , as it differed to that of other British thrillers , which she believed were poorly filmed . Ripley filmed the role in Canada during the later weeks of her second pregnancy , so her character was dressed in baggy clothes to hide her bump . Her pregnancy also caused changes to the script ; originally her character was to run through a forest , fall off a cliff and " die a gruesome death " . Reviewing , Thomas Sutcliffe of The Independent and Gareth McLean of The Guardian noted that Ripley 's pregnancy was poorly disguised . In complimenting the performance of the whole cast , Brian McIver of the Daily Record praised Ripley 's portrayal of Linda as " scary but sympathetic " .

Bon Voyage marked Ripley 's last television acting appearance until 2009 . During that time she appeared as a guest on panel shows and talk shows . In 2009 , she returned to television screens as Nicola Perrin alongside Martin Clunes ' eponymous character in the BBC One sitcom Reggie Perrin . She took the role because she had previously worked with Clunes and the writer Simon Nye . As the series was Ripley 's first studio sitcom , she approached the role with apprehension ; she told The Independent on Sunday , " I basically just hung off Martin 's coat @-@ tails and hoped for the best . " Ripley compared Nicola to Reggie 's house @-@ bound wife Elizabeth in the original series , noting that the modern character needed a job and independence from her husband because of changes in society . She reprised the role in the second series in 2010 , after which the series was cancelled . 2009 also saw the broadcast of Monday Monday , an ITV comedy drama series in which Ripley plays Christine Frances , an alcoholic human resources manager at a supermarket head office that moves from London to Leeds . She took the role because it was different to characters she had previously played .

= = Other work = =

During her time on Cold Feet , Ripley hosted the Channel 4 show Sofa Melt , a relationships chat show in the vein of Trisha . The show lasted for one series of 60 episodes , broadcast in 1999 . In Scotland on Sunday , critic Stewart Hennessey called Ripley 's presenting fantastic and called the show itself " utterly without any intelligent merit whatsoever . It is just unmissable because the people on it are hilariously stupid . Set the vid , show it at parties . " Ripley said of the show retrospectively , " It was the most terrifying thing I 've ever done . " In 2003 , she presented a short film advocating Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire for the BBC 's Big Read series and in 2009 , she presented an episode of the Blighty documentary series My Brilliant Britain .

In 2004 , she appeared on the Star in a Reasonably Priced Car segment of Top Gear , where she discussed her car history with presenter Jeremy Clarkson . On her celebrity lap of the Top Gear test track , she achieved a lap time of 1 : 53 , making her 38th on the Suzuki Liana leader board . The same year , she participated in a major advertising venture by The National Lottery , playing " Lady Luck " alongside a unicorn voiced by Graham Norton . In 2008 , she appeared alongside Martin Clunes in a series of advertisements for Tesco Direct and , since 2009 , has starred with Mark Addy in a series of adverts for Tesco 's various brands .

In 2007 , Ripley announced that she would be writing a cookbook about family food . She said , " I want to help people prepare good food for their kids , really practical stuff that 's easy , quick , healthy and you can whizz up in the blender for the baby . " Fay 's Family Food was published by Michael Joseph , an imprint of Penguin Books , in April 2009 and was selected by Marie @-@ Claire Digby of The Irish Times as a " summer read " . Ripley 's second book , entitled What 's For Dinner , was published in April 2012 . Since the release of her first book , she has resisted offers from television production companies to make her own cookery series .

= = Personal life = =

Ripley met English actor James Purefoy when the two were starring in the eponymous roles in a college production of Romeo and Juliet in 1983 . They began an 11 @-@ year relationship that ended when Ripley was 27 . Ripley said of the relationship in 2006 , " We were just kids when we met and , therefore , the relationship had more than run its course . " She was single for five years , before being introduced to Australian actor Daniel Lapaine at a party hosted by mutual friends . Neither of them thought the other was interested in dating and they drifted apart . After meeting again on separate holidays in New York , they began dating and married in October 2001 in a ceremony in Tuscany , Italy . Ripley gave birth to the couple 's first child , a daughter , in October 2002 . She gave birth to a son in October 2006 .

Ripley is a patron of several charities and causes . In 2007 she took part in What 's it going to take ? , a campaign by Women 's Aid to raise awareness of domestic abuse against women . She visited Tanzania with ActionAid in October 2008 to raise awareness of child sponsorship . While in the

country , Ripley visited community projects set up by ActionAid in Bagamoyo and Mkuranga . Ripley was already sponsoring a child and had been asked by ActionAid to participate in a visit but had always declined because of conflicts with her work . Ripley also fronted a " Climate Action Now " protest with novelist Rebecca Frayn and actress Rula Lenska in 2008 , opposing government support of the then planned third runway at Heathrow Airport .

= = Filmography = =