

APPENDIX I

SYNOPSIS

F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Winter Dreams" was first published in Metropolitan Magazine in December 1922 and collected in All The Sad Young Men in 1926.

Summary:

Dexter Dexter is fourteen at the beginning of the story. His father owns the second-best grocery store in town and he works as a caddy at the golf club for pocket money.

The effect of winter on Dexter's psyche is intense. He lapses into "profound melancholy." It appears that winter severely affects Dexter's mental state: it makes him "tremble," "repeat idiotic sentences" and "command...imaginary audiences." In winter, he hallucinates – initially about golf games, which he plays "over the fairways of his imagination."

Fourteen-year old Dexter Dexter encounters an eleven-year old spoiled brat who instigates him handing in his notice at the golf club. She is Judy Jones – described as being unattractive in a way particular to ugly ducklings who are soon to grow into beautiful swans. He quits his job rather than wait on her, a decision that surprises him as much as his employer.

Dexter's desires are not to just be close to wealth, but to have it. He makes a success of a laundry business. He joins the golf club as a member at 23 and finally beats Mr. T A Hedrick, his opponent in his many fantasies. In so doing, however, he learns that Hedrick is dull and a poor golfer. When he sees Judy again, she is playing golf and hits Mr. T. A. Hedrick in the abdomen with a ball. She is now beautiful, and he is immediately taken with her.

Dexter is later disturbed from a reverie at the beach by Judy Jones on her boat. She asks him to drive it so she can surf behind the boat. Judy invites Dexter to dinner. His background forces him to consider what he wears, as he does not have the security of ancestry to allow him to dress carelessly. Judy tells him that she has discovered that the man she is in love with is actually poor, though he had made the pretense of not being so. She is impressed that Dexter is wealthy and kisses him passionately.

Dexter is swept up in her and bends to her every whim. But because he was so devoted to Judy, she began to take him for granted. Keen to change this, Dexter becomes engaged to another girl, Irene Scheerer. Despite his imminent marriage to Irene, his passion for Judy remains. When Judy says want to marry with him, Dexter is confused. He does not tell Judy about Irene, and resumes his relationship with Judy.

Judy and Dexter are together for only a month. Even on reflection, it still takes Dexter a long time to actually regret this decision. His relationship with Irene is over, as is his friendship with her family. He finally understands that he loved Judy but could not have her. Dexter sells up his businesses and goes to war, in an attempt to escape his feelings. Seven years later, Dexter is talking to a business acquaintance when Judy's name comes up. She is now Judy Simms; unhappily married to a brute who treats her poorly. When he is told also that Judy is no longer beautiful, Dexter is distraught. The version of Judy, young and beautiful, who he had loved, was no longer real.

APPENDIX II

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, on September 24, 1896, the namesake and second cousin three times removed of the author of the National Anthem. Fitzgerald's given names indicate his parents' pride in his father's ancestry. His father, Edward, was from Maryland, with an allegiance to the Old South and its values. Fitzgerald's mother, Mary (Mollie) McQuillan, was the daughter of an Irish immigrant who became wealthy as a wholesale grocer in St. Paul. Both were Catholics.

Edward Fitzgerald failed as a manufacturer of wicker furniture in St. Paul, and he became a salesman for Procter & Gamble in upstate New York. After he was dismissed in 1908, when his son was twelve, the family returned to St. Paul and lived comfortably on Mollie Fitzgerald's inheritance. Fitzgerald attended the St. Paul Academy; his first writing to appear in print was a detective story in the school newspaper when he was thirteen.

During 1911-1913 he attended the Newman School, a Catholic prep school in New Jersey, where he met Father Sigourney Fay, who encouraged his ambitions for personal distinction and achievement. As a member of the Princeton Class of 1917, Fitzgerald neglected his studies for his literary apprenticeship. He wrote the scripts and lyrics for the Princeton Triangle Club musicals and was a contributor to the Princeton Tiger humor magazine and the Nassau Literary Magazine. His college friends included Edmund Wilson and John Peale Bishop. On academic probation and unlikely to graduate, Fitzgerald joined the army in 1917 and was commissioned a second lieutenant in the infantry. Convinced that

he would die in the war, he rapidly wrote a novel, "The Romantic Egotist"; the letter of rejection from Charles Scribner's Sons praised the novel's originality and asked that it be resubmitted when revised.

In June 1918 Fitzgerald was assigned to Camp Sheridan, near Montgomery, Alabama. There he fell in love with a celebrated belle, eighteen-year-old Zelda Sayre, the youngest daughter of an Alabama Supreme Court judge. The romance intensified Fitzgerald's hopes for the success of his novel, but after revision it was rejected by Scribners for a second time. The war ended just before he was to be sent overseas; after his discharge in 1919 he went to New York City to seek his fortune in order to marry. Unwilling to wait while Fitzgerald succeeded in the advertisement business and unwilling to live on his small salary, Zelda Sayre broke their engagement.

Fitzgerald quit his job in July 1919 and returned to St. Paul to rewrite his novel as *This Side of Paradise*. It was accepted by editor Maxwell Perkins of Scribners in September. Set mainly at Princeton and described by its author as "a quest novel," *This Side of Paradise* traces the career aspirations and love disappointments of Amory Blaine.

In the fall-winter of 1919 Fitzgerald commenced his career as a writer of stories for the mass-circulation magazines. Working through agent Harold Ober, Fitzgerald interrupted work on his novels to write moneymaking popular fiction for the rest of his life. The *Saturday Evening Post* became Fitzgerald's best story market, and he was regarded as a "Post writer." His early commercial stories about young love introduced a fresh character: the independent, determined young American woman who appeared in "The Offshore Pirate" and "Bernice Bobs Her

Hair.”Fitzgerald’s more ambitious stories, such as “May Day” and “The Diamond as Big as the Ritz,”were published in *The Smart Set*, which had a small circulation.

The publication of *This Side of Paradise* on March 26, 1920, made the twenty-four-year-old Fitzgerald famous almost overnight, and a week later he married Zelda Sayre in New York. They embarked on an extravagant life as young celebrities. Fitzgerald endeavored to earn a solid literary reputation, but his playboy image impeded the proper assessment of his work.

Literary opinion makers were reluctant to accord Fitzgerald full marks as a serious craftsman. His reputation as a drinker inspired the myth that he was an irresponsible writer; yet he was a painstaking reviser whose fiction went through layers of drafts. Fitzgerald’s clear, lyrical, colorful, witty style evoked the emotions associated with time and place. When critics objected to Fitzgerald’s concern with love and success, his response was: “But, my God! it was my material, and it was all I had to deal with.” The chief theme of Fitzgerald’s work is aspiration—the idealism he regarded as defining American character. Another major theme was mutability or loss. As a social historian Fitzgerald became identified with the Jazz Age: “It was an age of miracles, it was an age of art, it was an age of excess, and it was an age of satire,” he wrote in “Echoes of the Jazz Age.”

Young Men, was published on February 26, 1926. His strongest collection, it sold well and received favorable reviews. It included “The Rich Boy,” explores how wealth affects character and how wealth operates in America. It also included

“Winter Dreams” and “ ‘The Sensible Thing,’ ” which have close connections with the novel’s themes of love and loss.

Fitzgerald’s peak story fee of \$4,000 from *The Saturday Evening Post* may have had in 1929 the purchasing power of \$40,000 in present-day dollars. Nonetheless, the general view of his affluence is distorted. Fitzgerald was not among the highest-paid writers of his time; his novels earned comparatively little, and most of his income came from 160 magazine stories. During the 1920s his income from all sources averaged under \$25,000 a year—good money at a time when a schoolteacher’s average annual salary was \$1,299, but not a fortune. Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald did spend money faster than he earned it; the author who wrote so eloquently about the effects of money on character was unable to manage his own finances.

In 1932, while a patient at Johns Hopkins, Zelda Fitzgerald rapidly wrote *Save Me the Waltz*. Her autobiographical novel generated considerable bitterness between the Fitzgeralds, for he regarded it as pre-empting the material that he was using in his novel-in-progress. Fitzgerald rented “La Paix,” a house outside Baltimore, where he completed his fourth novel, *Tender Is the Night*. Published in 1934, his most ambitious novel was a commercial failure, and its merits were matters of critical dispute. Set in France during the 1920s, *Tender Is the Night* examines the deterioration of Dick Diver, a brilliant American psychiatrist, during the course of his marriage to a wealthy mental patient.

The 1936-1937 period is known as “the crack-up” from the title of an essay Fitzgerald wrote in 1936. Ill, drunk, in debt, and unable to write commercial stories, he lived in hotels in the region near Asheville, North Carolina, where in

1936 Zelda Fitzgerald entered Highland Hospital. After Baltimore Fitzgerald did not maintain a home for Scottie. When she was fourteen she went to boarding school, and the Obers became her surrogate family. Nonetheless, Fitzgerald functioned as a concerned father by mail, attempting to supervise Scottie's education and to shape her social values.

Fitzgerald went to Hollywood alone in the summer of 1937 with a six-month Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer screenwriting contract at \$1,000 a week. His trips East to visit his wife were disastrous. In California Fitzgerald fell in love with movie columnist Sheilah Graham. Their relationship endured despite his benders. After MGM dropped his option at the end of 1938, Fitzgerald worked as a freelance script writer and wrote short-short stories for *Esquire*. He began his Hollywood novel, *The Love of the Last Tycoon*, in 1939 and had written more than half of a working draft when he died of a heart attack in Graham's apartment on December 21, 1940. Zelda Fitzgerald perished at a fire in Highland Hospital in 1948.

F. Scott Fitzgerald died believing himself a failure. The obituaries were condescending, and he seemed destined for literary obscurity. The first phase of the Fitzgerald resurrection—"revival" does not properly describe the process—occurred between 1945 and 1950. By 1960 he had achieved a secure place among America's enduring writers. *The Great Gatsby*, a work that seriously examines the theme of aspiration in an American setting, defines the classic American novel.

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