

### ***The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald**

Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* has accumulated one of the most overloaded critical reputations in American literature. Published in 1925, the novel follows Nick Carraway's account of his neighbor Jay Gatsby's obsessive pursuit of his former love Daisy Buchanan across one summer on Long Island. Fitzgerald's actual subject is not the romance but the mythology of self-invention: what America promises, what it delivers, and the cost of refusing to know the difference.

The novel's technique is its most undervalued quality. Fitzgerald's prose is among the most controlled in American fiction at the sentence level, and Nick's unreliability as a narrator is built into the structure rather than announced. The famous final paragraphs work because everything preceding them has earned their weight. The weakness most critics identify is the thinness of Daisy as a character, and it is a real one: she functions more as symbol than person, which limits the emotional range of the novel's central tragedy. Whether this is a failure of execution or a deliberate satirical choice is a genuinely open critical question, and any strong college review engages with that ambiguity rather than resolving it prematurely. *The Great Gatsby* remains essential reading for any course in American literature or the study of modernist fiction.

