



Coonshong
20世纪外国文学精选

*Tender
Like
Night*

夜色温柔

F. S. K. Fitzgerald (美) 著

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS



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作家及作品介绍

赵太和

弗朗西斯·斯科特·基·菲茨杰拉德（1896—1940）出生于美国明尼苏达州圣保罗的一个爱尔兰移民家庭。一家人靠菲茨杰拉德母亲祖辈创立的批发杂货店维持生计，生活虽远谈不上富有，也还算体面。这种童年生活对菲茨杰拉德后来的创作产生了深远的影响。中学毕业后，菲茨杰拉德先在新泽西纽曼学院预科就读，后进入普林斯顿大学学习。他在大学期间热衷于社团活动，因此影响了学业，曾多次补考，终因成绩不合格而肄业参军。这些经历都在菲茨杰拉德的第一部小说《天堂的这一边》（*This Side of Paradise*, 1920）中有清楚的表述。《天堂的这一边》是第一次世界大战后最受美国读者欢迎的一部作品，评论界曾认为它是第一部真正的大学校园小说。此后，菲茨杰拉德与姍尔达结为伉俪，他们先后游历了纽约、巴黎等城。1922年，菲茨杰拉德的第二部小说《漂亮的冤家》（*The Beautiful and the Damned*）问世，出版后很快畅销，一时饱受读者的青睐。三年后，1925年4月，菲茨杰拉德推出小说《了不起的盖茨比》（*The Great Gatsby*）。该书在评论界口碑不错，被誉为美国文学之经典，至今已有30多种语言的译本，为菲茨杰拉德赢得了不朽的声誉。1934年，菲茨杰拉德推出了构思长达七年之久的《夜色温柔》（*Tender Is the Night*），当时评论界的反响并没有预想的那么“火爆”，书的销量也不尽如人意。此后，菲茨杰拉德便到好莱坞写剧本以求生计，同时开始创作好莱坞题材的小说《最后的一个巨头》（*The Last Tycoon*），但刚写完第六章，便于1940年12月21日因心脏病突发而去世。此后埃德蒙·威尔逊编辑出版了他的《最后的一个巨头》和《崩溃》

(*The Crack up*), 这两本书很快引起评论界及读者的热切关注。到20世纪70年代, 菲茨杰拉德已成为现代美国文学史上的一位重要作家, 地位不可动摇。菲茨杰拉德一生创作了五部长篇小说, 出版了164篇短篇小说。短篇小说集如:《少女与哲学家》(*Flappers and Philosophers*, 1920)、《爵士年代故事集》(*Tales of the Jazz Age*, 1922) 和《所有悲伤的年青人》(*All the Sad Young Men*, 1926) 等至今仍颇受评论界的重视。

《天堂的这一边》的出版是菲茨杰拉德文学创作上的新起点, 也是他一生的转折点。早在普林斯顿时, 他就开始创作这部小说, 参军入伍后他仍笔耕不辍, 利用休息时间继续写作, 终于完成了这部小说。这部小说具有很强的自传性, 主人公的经历很多都带有作者自己的影子。《天堂的这一边》准确地表现出了当代美国青年成熟的人生设计理念, 菲茨杰拉德对年轻人的虚荣、自尊、恋爱心理描摹得细致深刻, 这些描写激起了读者内心深处的共鸣。这里之所以多着一些笔墨, 主要原因是, 作者后来不少作品的主题、基调和艺术手法都是这部作品的延伸和发展。

1925年4月,《了不起的盖茨比》出版后受到现代主义先锋派代表人物T·S·艾略特、格鲁德·斯坦的称赞, 也受到传统作家高尔斯华绥、卡贝爾和批评家门肯的赞誉。评论界引用最多的是艾略特给菲茨杰拉德的信中的赞语:“事实上, 在我看来, 它是自亨利·詹姆斯以来美国小说迈出的第一步……”。《了不起的盖茨比》曾多次再版, 1957~1970年间, 仅斯克里伯斯出版社就销售了100多万册, 遍销世界各地。有关这本书的研究文章、学术专著, 汗牛充栋。这部小说已成为20世纪20年代美国及其文化的代表作, 它不仅是在美国拥有读者最多的小说, 也是世界上最受欢迎的小说之一。

《了不起的盖茨比》的成功既有艺术上的, 也有社会方面的, 但在社会方面上的成功更显突出。盖茨比的形象突显出转型时期美国社会中人们对于现代化的个体感受, 在传统与现代之间挣扎的盖茨比真实地反映出美国现代

人的形象。《了不起的盖茨比》同马克·吐温的《哈克贝利·费恩历险记》一样，“让其他国家的人知道什么是美国人，让美国人感受到他们自己是谁”。这也许就是这部小说长盛不衰的真正原因所在。

纵观菲茨杰拉德的创作生涯，正如有些评论所说，他作品的分量虽不足以代表20世纪美国小说的发展状况，但却代表了二三十年代美国的社会文化，这一点已没有争议。读菲茨杰拉德的小说不仅可以了解上个世纪二三十年代的美国文化，更可以深入把握现代美国社会。

《夜色温柔》的主人公迪克是一名医生，娶了富裕的女精神病人尼科尔为妻。这场婚姻交易使迪克表面上进入上流社会，却从未真正使他成为一分子。他日渐沉沦，未老先衰。他与女明星梦丝玛丽的无结果的感情纠葛使妻子对他的依赖越来越少，终于投入他人怀抱。

《夜色温柔》把衰败作为其主题。小说的绝大部分材料来源于作者自己的经历——酗酒、生活潦倒、妻子的病以及他对自己的恐惧，同时也表达了他对一个更大世界里人们的失望，对他生活的那个花花世界的失望。在这个世界里，到处是餐会、舞会，到处是酗酒、作乐。菲茨杰拉德的大部分生活都是在这样的环境里度过的。小说《夜色温柔》正是他家庭生活和精神生活的写照。在《天堂的这一边》里他极力称赞爵士乐时代；在《了不起的盖茨比》里他表达了对这个爵士乐时代的依依不舍；在《夜色温柔》里他吟唱的则是爵士乐时代的一曲悲切的哀歌。

菲茨杰拉德是敏锐善感的社会小说家，他一生的经历及其创作正是那个时代的成长与毁灭的生动见证。《夜色温柔》细腻传神地传达出年轻人在那个时代的成长历程，那些人物是美国现代社会的生活缩影。他在作品中的描写不仅是外在的观察，更是表现出了内心深层的感觉。作为“美国梦”的实践者，金钱与爱情是菲茨杰拉德的追求，也是“美国梦”幻灭的主要原因。《夜色温柔》是他的晚期作品，写的是现代美国人和美国社会，是他自己某

种感觉和心境的流露,是金钱和爱情对人的巨大刺激和毁灭作用的戏剧性现身说法。海明威对菲茨杰拉德这一点不以为然,殊不知这正是菲茨杰拉德的可贵之处。菲茨杰拉德在给自己的女儿写信总结自己的一生时说:“我不是个伟大的人,但我的天才有种无私的客观性质,我一小块、一小块地牺牲它,为了保存它的基本价值,还有一种史诗式的庄严。”^①

从心理学上说,《夜色温柔》着意探索主人公的道德伦丧与财富对人的心理侵蚀,向读者展现出一个灭亡中的美国——它灭亡在酒吧间的争吵中,灭亡在堕落的生活里,灭亡在精神的贫瘠和生活的无意义中。所有这些都是当代美国所特有的,作者独具一格地将这种内心世界呈现在读者面前。《夜色温柔》的独特之处,不仅是从美国人的心理上把现代美国社会刻画得入木三分,更重要的是它使读者进入了人物的内心世界,使读者切身感受到人物的悲切形象。

尽管《夜色温柔》有些明显的缺憾,如结构上不连贯、无内聚力、语调自怜,但总体上它仍然是一部动人的、令人难忘的佳作,有些方面甚至超过了那部广受赞誉的作品——《了不起的盖茨比》。《夜色温柔》是作者在极为失望的情况下写出的,它从遥远的地方走向菲茨杰拉德自己所称的“明智和悲惨的生活”。

① 查尔斯·显恩:《司各特·菲茨杰拉德》,林以亮译,见威廉·俄康纳编:《美国现代七大小说家》,三联书店,1988年5月版,第131页。

TO
GERALD AND SARA
MANY FÊTES

INTRODUCTION

F. Scott Fitzgerald remains one of the most enduring American novelists of this century. His name still conjures up the magic of the Jazz Age and his immortality rests secure upon his literary masterpiece, *The Great Gatsby*, which with almost miraculous economy and flawless craftsmanship captures in so short a volume both an era of the American experience and the romance of the American Dream. But for the author's *soul* we must look elsewhere—in his own favorite among his novels, the one that cost him almost a decade of literary labor and private pain: *Tender Is the Night*. For its final title Fitzgerald chose a phrase from Keats's "Ode to a Nightingale":

Away! Away! for I will fly to thee
 . . . on the viewless wings of Poesy
Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night . . .

The title evokes the transient, bittersweet, and ultimately tragic nature of Fitzgerald's "Romance" (as he had originally subtitled the book). By the time the novel was finally published in 1934 Fitzgerald had lost his own personal battle to save his wife Zelda from her mental illness and their marriage from the inevitable consequences. The novel is as much a product of the author's own experience of struggle and heartbreak as it is his credo of fidelity, perseverance, and romantic love. It will always be one of his most beloved works because it rings absolutely true, because it *is* true.

But the novel was initially conceived in a very different spirit, back in 1925, when Scott and Zelda were still basking in the Riviera sun, and the future was colored in Mediterranean hues. There, following the publication of *The Great Gatsby*, in the idyllic company

INTRODUCTION

of Sara and Gerald Murphy (to whom the book was eventually dedicated), Fitzgerald planned a far more ambitious novel, "something really *new* in form, idea, structure—the model for the age that Joyce and Stein are searching for, that Conrad didn't find." In the meantime, disappointed by the sale of *Gatsby*, he turned out a spate of short stories to support himself in the luxurious expatriate manner to which he had irrevocably grown accustomed. Those days at La Garoupe beach and evenings at the Murphys' Villa America were perhaps the closest Scott and Zelda ever came to paradise, and the ambience is captured in the opening chapters of *Tender Is the Night*, in which Nicole and Dick Diver are endowed with the social magnetism and unique charm of Sara and Gerald Murphy presiding over a season of memorable *fêtes*.

One of the earliest references to the new novel in progress is an amusing afterthought in a letter of July 1925 to Maxwell Perkins, Fitzgerald's editor at Scribners: "The novel has begun. I'd rather tell you nothing about it quite yet. No news. We had a great time in Antibes and got very brown and healthy. In case you don't place it it's the penninsula between Cannes and Nice on the Riviera where Napoleon landed on his return from Elba." Then, in October, Perkins received one of many prophecies reflecting the author's less-than-guarded optimism: "The novel is going to be great." Later, in December, in cold Paris: "I write to you from the depths of one of my unholy depressions. The book is wonderful—I honestly think that when it's published I shall be the best American novelist (which isn't saying a lot) but the end seems far away. When it's finished I'm coming home for awhile anyhow though the thought revolts me as much as the thought of remaining in France. . . . My work is the only thing that makes me happy—except to be a little tight—and for those two indulgences I pay a big price in mental and physical hangovers. . . . My novel should be finished next fall."

INTRODUCTION

The following February, an unusual request was made of Perkins: "In regard to my novel. Will you ask somebody what is done if one American murders another in France. Would an American marshal come over for him? From his state of residence? Who would hold him meanwhile—the consul or the French police? Why isn't that so if one Italian kills another Italian in America? It's important that I find this out and I can't seem to. In a certain sense my plot is not unlike Dreiser's in the *American Tragedy*. At first this worried me but now it doesn't for our minds are so different." Perkins consulted the celebrated lawyer (and Scribners author) Arthur Train, who replied that the American would be treated like any Frenchman apprehended by the French police, and tried in the French courts. "I hope this fact won't upset some plan you had for the novel," added Perkins, who was duly thanked for the legal advice.

"My book is *wonderful*," Fitzgerald wrote in May 1926. "I don't expect to be interrupted again. I expect to reach New York about December 10th with the manuscript under my arm. . . ." But as early as a month later: "The novel, in abeyance during Zelda's operation, now goes on apace. This is confidential but *Liberty*, with certain conditions, has offered me \$35,000 sight unseen. I hope to have it done in January." But it was only toward the end of 1928 that Perkins had at last read two chapters, and commented: "About the first we fully agree. It is excellent. The second I think contains some of the best writing you have ever done—some lovely scenes, and impressions briefly and beautifully conveyed. . . . I think this is a wonderfully promising start-off. Send on others as soon as you can."

By June of the following year, in Cannes, Fitzgerald was "working day and night" on the novel, "from a new angle that I think will solve previous difficulties." But, meanwhile, Zelda's condition was deteriorating so rapidly that she had to be hospitalized

INTRODUCTION

in a sanitarium of Lake Geneva. Fitzgerald wrote Max Perkins in September 1930: "This illness has cost me a fortune. . . . The biggest man in Switzerland gave all his time to her—and saved her reason by a split second."

The emotional cost would yield Book Two, the multifaceted character of Dr. Richard Diver, and the Swiss backdrop for the psychiatric drama of Diver's ill-starred romance with his patient/wife Nicole. Fitzgerald eventually went so far as to graph on a sheet of paper the parallel psychiatric "histories" of Nicole and Zelda, ending with two poignant question marks pointing to the future.

But the immediate future seemed bright enough. Zelda had been pronounced "cured" and in the fall of 1931 the Fitzgeralds returned on the *Aquitania*, settling in Montgomery, Alabama. Work on the novel was soon interrupted by Fitzgerald's trip to Hollywood to work for MGM.

In January 1932, a month before moving to Baltimore, Fitzgerald wrote to Perkins that "at last for the first time in two years and a half I am going to spend five consecutive months on my novel . . . Don't tell Ernest or anyone—let them think what they want—you're the only one who's ever consistently felt faith in me anyhow." By August it was "plotted and planned, never more to be permanently interrupted." A month *and a year* later, "the novel has gone ahead faster than I thought. . . ." The draft was soon completed. "I will appear in person carrying the manuscript and wearing a spiked helmet . . . *Please do not have a band as I do not care for music.*"

Andrew Turnbull, Fitzgerald's young friend and eventual biographer, describes that autumn at La Paix in Maryland, where Scott now labored fruitfully while Zelda, having suffered a serious relapse, was losing her battle.

INTRODUCTION

Back of La Paix was a stretch of road where Fitzgerald used to pace hour by hour, refining the last draft of *Tender Is the Night*. There he meditated on the Murphys—their organized sensuousness, their fine gradations of charm—and there he dreamed of the Îles de Lérin, those blessed isles off Antibes where you went in the excursion boats. Returning to his study, he penciled it all down in his rounded, decorous hand on yellow legal-sized paper. Interrupting him at work, I remember the illumination of his eye, the sensitive pull around the mouth, the wistful liquor-ridden thing about him, the haunting grace of motion and gesture, the looking at you, through you, and beyond you—understandingly sweet—with smoke exhaling.

Having finished at last, Fitzgerald then admonished the everpatient Max:

Be careful in saying it's my first book in seven years *not to imply that it contains seven years work*. People would expect too much in bulk and scope. This novel, my fourth, completes my story of the boom years. It might be wise to accentuate the fact that it does *not* deal with the Depression. *Don't* accentuate that it deals with Americans abroad—there's been too much trash under that banner. No exclamation 'At last, the long awaited etc.' That merely creates the 'Oh yeah' mood in people.

The novel was first to be serialized in four installments in *Scribner's Magazine*, originally announced under its penultimate title, *Richard Diver, a Romance*. Fitzgerald himself undertook the cuts required for the serialization, but with considerable apprehension that its structure, already fragile, would be weakened by those cuts and that reviewers would fault it without later reading the published book. He had equal concerns about how the novel was

INTRODUCTION

to be presented to the public: "Don't forget my suggestion that the jacket flap should carry an implication that though the book starts in a lyrical way, heavy drama will presently develop." Apropos of advertising, he added: "Please do not use the phrase 'Riviera' or 'gay resorts.' Not only does it sound like the triviality of which I am so often accused, but also the Riviera has been thoroughly exploited by E. Phillips Oppenheim and a whole generation of writers and its very mention invokes a feeling of unreality and unsubstantiality."

Among the early comments, one of the most favorable was by his fellow Scribners novelist Marjorie Kinnan Rawlings, who found it

disturbing, bitter, and beautiful. I am totally unable to analyze the almost overpowering effect that some of his passages create—some of them about quite trivial people and dealing with trivial situations. There is something terrifying about it when it happens, and the closest I can come to understanding it is to think that he does, successfully at such times, what I want to do—that is, visualizes people not in their immediate setting, from the human point of view—but in time and space—almost, you might say, with the divine detachment.

Fitzgerald, still working on the proofs, was grateful for the praise, but irked by "her calling my people trivial." She meant no slur, but the word hit a sensitive nerve.

The novel was published on April 12, 1934, to mixed reviews. But even the hostile critics acknowledged the magical power of Fitzgerald's prose. And the approving ones truly *understood*. From John Peale Bishop: "You have shown us what we have waited so long and impatiently to see, that you are a true, a beautiful, and a tragic novelist." From Lady Florence Willert, who had met Scott and Zelda on the Riviera: "It is a *living* thing—it is a miracle. It is

INTRODUCTION

writing and painting in one—and instantaneous photography too, transmuted into the highest art. . . . It is a colossal work—you must have sweated blood to write this—*Gatsby* was good enough—a classic now. But this is superlative. And you might be a hundred years old in your wisdom and knowledge of the hearts of men and women.”

The left-wing reviewers hated, of course, the self-indulgence of the expatriate characters. The Depression had intensified their antagonism to Fitzgerald. The reviewer for the Communist *Daily Worker* scolded the author: “Dear Mr. Fitzgerald, you can’t hide from a hurricane under a beach umbrella.” But these barbs were to be expected. The one that really hurt was that of Hemingway, who charged his fellow writer with self-pity (“Forget your personal tragedy . . .”) and with creating false composite characters in merging Sara and Gerald Murphy with Zelda and Scott, instead of inventing Nicole and Dick Diver from the imagination alone. The latter criticism elicited an impassioned apologia by Fitzgerald, an admirable literary defense that would have pleased his old Princeton professors:

Following this out a little farther, when does the proper and logical combination of extents, cause and effect, etc., end and the field of imagination begin? . . . Think of the case of the Renaissance artists, and of the Elizabethan dramatists, the first having to superimpose a medieval conception of science and archeology, etc., upon the Bible story; and, in the second, of Shakespeare’s trying to interpret the results of his own observation of the life around him on the basis of Plutarch’s *lives* and Holinshed’s *Chronicles*. There you must admit that the feat of building a monument out of three kinds of marble was brought off. You can accuse me justly of not having the power to bring it off, but a theory that it can’t be done is

INTRODUCTION

highly questionable. I make this point with such persistence because such a conception, if you stick to it, might limit your own choice of materials. The idea can be reduced simply to: you can't say *accurately* that composite characterization hurt my book, but that it only hurt it for you.

A year later, in sober hindsight, Fitzgerald did confess a basic flaw to Perkins: "If a mind is slowed up ever so little it lives in the individual part of a book rather than in a book as a whole; memory is dulled. I would give anything if I hadn't had to write Part III of *Tender Is the Night* entirely on stimulant. If I had one more crack at it cold sober I believe it might have made a great difference." But without the constant setbacks, the prolonged labor and pain, the bouts of "stimulant," it would never have emerged as the novel it is—the imperfect but authentic masterpiece that has deeply moved thousands of readers for half a century.

The best appraisal of the essential value of the novel, the most illuminating "review" of all, is found in Fitzgerald's own inscription in a friend's copy of *Tender Is the Night*: "If you liked *The Great Gatsby*, for God's sake read this. *Gatsby* was a tour de force but this is a confession of faith."

Charles Scribner III

Contents

Introduction	iii
--------------------	-----

Book 1 1

i	3
ii	8
iii	13
iv	18
v	25
vi	28
vii	36
viii	42
ix	45
x	49
xi	54
xii	59
xiii	64
xiv	69
xv	72
xvi	76
xvii	82
xviii	88
xix	91
xx	99
xxi	105
xxii	110
xxiii	116
xxiv	119
xxv	125

Book 2 131

i	133
ii	136
iii	146
iv	151
v	155