

韦林
WE LEARN

纯英文注解版

了不起的盖茨比
菲茨杰拉德

朱伟 许乃夫 | 主编 陈庆勋 | 注解

The Great
Gatsby

F. Scott Fitzgerald



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序 言

几年前，第一次阅读《了不起的盖茨比》就被作者细腻的文风和娴熟驾驭语言的能力所吸引。开篇第一句作者用了“vulnerable(易受伤害的，脆弱的)”这个词来形容“years(年代)”，预示这个年代包含了各种辛酸；只此一句便将我深深吸引，促使我决定将这本美国中学生必读作品一口气读完。

随着自己阅读量增加和人生经历的不断丰富，《了不起的盖茨比》却一直在案头陪伴我多年，而我也总能在书中勾勒出来的人物和时代背景中寻到和当下的相似之处。更令人兴奋的是，当英语不再是阅读路上的绊脚石，你自然会跟随作者的笔触跨越时空回到 20 世纪 20 年代的美国，去玩味作者的句式和选词，去体会故事里人物的性格特征，去琢磨投射在当今的人或事。

我相信这是阅读英文名著才能带给我们的感受。因此，我鼓励读者要像学好中文一样学好英语，通过广泛阅读来丰富我们的谈吐和汲取某个时代给我们的滋养，让内心充盈着自信和人文情怀，让我们的精神世界像物质世界一样丰富。

美国梦的破灭

《了不起的盖茨比》是以美国 20 世纪“兴旺的 20 年代”(the Roaring Twenties) 或称“爵士时代”(the Jazz Age) 为背景的伟大文学作品，也是作者弗·司各特·菲茨杰拉德(F. Scott Fitzgerald)于 1925 年出版的巅峰之作。

它讲述了一个美国梦式的悲剧故事：生在美国中西部一个普通农家的

青年军官杰伊·盖茨比(Jay Gatsby)敢于为理想和浪漫而奋斗。在南方一个大城市驻守时,他钟情于“大家闺秀”黛西,并私定终身。但戴着军功章从战场上载誉归来时,他却发现心爱的黛西已经嫁给纨绔子弟汤姆·布坎农。盖茨比沉醉于爱情的梦幻中,他决定艰苦创业(从事非法的私酒生意),从一个贫病的军官“奋斗”成为年轻的百万富翁,并在纽约长岛购置豪华别墅,与汤姆布坎农夫妇隔海湾相望。他一直希望能和黛西重温旧梦。久别重逢的黛西为盖茨比对爱情忠贞而深受感动,倾倒在他所创造的财富官殿下。后来,汤姆发现两人的隐情后,和盖茨比摊牌并揭露了他从事的非法生意。黛西在此时陷入了选择的泥潭,最终还是选择和汤姆继续余生;然而她却在驾车返途中,意外撞死了汤姆·布坎农的情妇威尔逊太太。汤姆谎称是盖茨比驾车滋事,并唆使威尔逊枪杀了盖茨比。

爵士时代的文学先锋

弗·司各特·菲茨杰拉德是美国 20 世纪 20 年代杰出的小说家,和海明威、福克纳并称为“美国 20 世纪初的三大泰斗级文学家”。菲茨杰拉德把第一次世界大战以后、经济大萧条之前约十年的时间称作“爵士时代”,在他的作品中浓墨书写这个美国历史上最会纵乐、享受的时代。因此,人们往往称他为“爵士时代”的“编年史家”和“桂冠诗人”。

我在授课中常讲到读书的三个境界:读故事,读作者,读自己。为什么菲茨杰拉德能够在特定的历史时期创作出这么多优秀的作品? Everything happens for a reason.(任何事情的发生总归有原因)。一方面是他从小接受良好的教育,对写作产生极大的兴趣,并在中学和大学时代,逐渐成为“执着的作家”;另一方面是个人经历的积累和诸多磨炼,使得他成为那个时代的一颗璀璨明星,例如:被迫退学、失恋的打击、参军,一个让他沉迷的女人——Zelda Sayer(泽尔达·塞耶)等。

更为重要的是,他并不是那个时代的旁观者,而是一个纵情于“爵士时代”的参与者。他把自己完全融入作品中,栩栩如生地描绘出那个时代的

社会、人文风貌。但是，作为天秤座的他也少不了冷静的思考，他用严峻的道德标准去衡量花天酒地的享乐、拜金生活方式，用凌厉的口吻为“迷惘的一代”书写了时代挽歌。对于美国梦的理解之入木三分，尤其是把爱情和婚姻融入了这个时代，确实让人阅读后常常泛起一丝窒息般的凉意。

三角恋的悲剧

历史上文学大师的感情经历都是丰富的，创作灵感和人物原型往往也源自生活、又高于生活。菲茨杰拉德对于泽尔达·塞耶的钟爱犹如盖茨比对黛西的痴迷，在整个创作的历史背景下，这些人生经历都能经过文学创作后跃然纸上。在菲茨杰拉德去世十年后，他的作品才被美国和西欧重新重视，获得评论家和学者们的高度评价。而今，这部经典的爱情悲剧已成为美国中学生的必读作品，也是家喻户晓的文学经典。

让我们翻开书看看戏剧冲突和高潮的这一段，纨绔子弟汤姆·布坎农的情感几乎处于奔溃边缘时的状态：

He had discovered that Myrtle had some sort of life apart from him in another world, and the shock had made him physically sick.

他发现莱特尔背着他在另外一个世界里有她的生活，而这个震动使他的身体患病了。

His wife and his mistress, until an hour ago secure and inviolate, were slipping precipitately from his control.

他的妻子和情妇，直到一小时前还是安安稳稳、不可侵犯的，现在却冷不防正从他的控制下溜走。

汤姆·布坎农作为作品中的重要人物之一和盖茨比的对手戏真是非常精彩，加上黛西纠缠在两个男人之间，你总能在现实生活中找到类似的故事。如果用互联网思维去思考的话，菲茨杰拉德笔下的人物形象在现实

生活中的用户画像应该是一群什么样的人？

作品太精彩，不仅仅因为菲茨杰拉德出神入化的语言功底，更因为他对爱情的痴念。在利欲熏心的美国 20 年代，能保持一颗克制的心、去抨击那个令人厌烦的社会，去让人们思考人生的意义和未来的走向，这弥足珍贵。

天妒英才，年仅 44 岁的菲茨杰拉德虽然如同巨星陨落，但是他的作品却沿着文学大河流传至今，可谓是“乱世”中的一盏明灯，照亮后人前行的路。

非常感谢在创作过程中参与讨论的常宇杰、涂军、彭雪莉和王珉悦。

许乃夫

网师学院创始人兼 CEO

We Learn 英文名著精读系列首席讲师

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Chapter 1

In my younger and more vulnerable^① years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since.

“Whenever you feel like criticizing any one,” he told me, “just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had.”^②

He didn't say any more but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. In consequence I'm inclined to reserve all judgments, a habit that has opened up many curious natures to me and also made me the victim of not a few veteran^③ bores. The abnormal^④ mind is quick to detect and attach itself to this quality when it appears in a normal person, and so it came about that in college I was unjustly accused of being a politician, because I was privy to the secret griefs of wild, unknown men. Most of the confidences were unsought—frequently I have feigned sleep, preoccupation, or a hostile levity^⑤ when I realized by some

① vulnerable *a.* weak and easily hurt physically or emotionally 易受伤害的, 脆弱的

② whenever *conj.* no matter when 每当, 引导时间状语从句, 相当于 when, 但语气较为强烈。这句话可以翻译成: “每当你想要批评什么人的时候,” 他对我说, “你要想想, 这世上并不是人人都拥有你所具有的优势。”

③ veteran *a.* very experienced or skilled in a particular activity 经验丰富的, 老练的

④ abnormal *a.* different from what is usual or expected 不正常的, 反常的

⑤ levity *n.* a manner of lacking seriousness 轻浮

unmistakable sign that an intimate revelation was quivering on the horizon—for the intimate revelations of young men or at least the terms in which they express them are usually plagiaristic and marred by obvious suppressions.^① Reserving judgments is a matter of infinite hope. I am still a little afraid of missing something if I forget that, as my father snobbishly suggested, and I snobbishly repeat a sense of the fundamental decencies is parceled out unequally at birth.

And, after boasting this way of my tolerance, I come to the admission that it has a limit. Conduct may be founded on the hard rock or the wet marshes, but after a certain point I don't care what it's founded on^②. When I came back from the East last autumn I felt that I wanted the world to be in uniform and at a sort of moral attention forever; I wanted no more riotous excursions with privileged glimpses into the human heart. Only Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this book, was exempt from my reaction—Gatsby who represented everything for which I have an unaffected scorn. If personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something gorgeous about him, some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life, as if he were related to one of those intricate machines that register earthquakes ten thousand miles away. This responsiveness had nothing to do with that flabby^③ impressionability which is dignified under the name of the “creative temperament”—it was an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person and which

①每当我明白无误地看到了苗头，他们即将要向我倾诉衷肠时，我对这些悄悄话多半是不予理睬——通常，我都会装睡，装得心不在焉，要不就是装得玩世不恭——因为年轻人这些亲密无间的倾诉，或者至少是他们倾诉时用的语言，都是东剽西袭而来，而且断章取义，词不达意。

②人们的品行有的好像建立在坚硬的岩石上，有的好像建立在潮湿的泥沼中，但是超过一定限度的话，我就不管它立于何处了。

③flabby *a.* out of condition 不稳当的，不可靠的

it is not likely I shall ever find again. No—Gatsby turned out all right at the end; it is what preyed on Gatsby, what foul dust^① floated in the wake of his dreams that temporarily closed out my interest in the abortive sorrows and short-winded elations of men.

My family have been prominent, well-to-do people in this middle-western city for three generations. The Carraways are something of a clan and we have a tradition that we're descended from the Dukes of Buccleuch, but the actual founder of my line was my grandfather's brother who came here in fifty-one, sent a substitute to the Civil War and started the wholesale hardware business that my father carries on today.

I never saw this great-uncle but I'm supposed to look like him—with special reference to the rather hard-boiled painting that hangs in Father's office. I graduated from New Haven^② in 1915, just a quarter of a century after my father, and a little later I participated in that delayed Teutonic migration^③ known as the Great War. I enjoyed the counter-raid so thoroughly that I came back restless. Instead of being the warm center of the world the middle-west now seemed like the ragged edge of the universe—so I decided to go east and learn the bond business. Everybody I knew was in the bond business so I supposed it could support one more single man. All my aunts and uncles talked it over as if they were choosing a prep-school for me and finally said, “Why—yees” with very grave, hesitant faces. Father agreed to finance me for a year and after various delays I came east, permanently, I thought, in the spring of twenty-two.

① dirty dust: 意指他身边的那些肮脏的人物

② New Haven: 纽黑文, 为耶鲁大学所在地, 代指该学校

③ Teutonic migration: 条顿人大迁徙, 有人认为这是第一次世界大战的起因之一

The practical thing was to find rooms in the city but it was a warm season and I had just left a country of wide lawns and friendly trees, so when a young man at the office suggested that we take a house together in a commuting town it sounded like a great idea. He found the house, a weather beaten cardboard bungalow at eighty a month, but at the last minute the firm ordered him to Washington and I went out to the country alone. I had a dog, at least I had him for a few days until he ran away, and an old Dodge and a Finnish woman who made my bed and cooked breakfast and muttered Finnish wisdom to herself over the electric stove.

It was lonely for a day or so until one morning some man, more recently arrived than I, stopped me on the road.

“How do you get to West Egg village?” he asked helplessly.

I told him. And as I walked on I was lonely no longer. I was a guide, a pathfinder, an original settler. He had casually conferred^① on me the freedom of the neighborhood.

And so with the sunshine and the great bursts of leaves growing on the trees—just as things grow in fast movies—I had that familiar conviction that life was beginning over again with the summer.

There was so much to read for one thing and so much fine health to be pulled down out of the young breath-giving air. I bought a dozen volumes on banking and credit and investment securities and they stood on my shelf in red and gold like new money from the mint, promising to unfold the shining secrets that only

① confer v. present, give as an award, 给予

Midas^① and Morgan^② and Maecenas^③ knew. And I had the high intention of reading many other books besides. I was rather literary in college—one year I wrote a series of very solemn and obvious editorials for the “Yale News”—and now I was going to bring back all such things into my life and become again that most limited of all specialists, the “well-rounded man.” This isn’t just an epigram—life is much more successfully looked at from a single window, after all.

It was a matter of chance that I should have rented a house in one of the strangest communities in North America. It was on that slender riotous island which extends itself due east of New York and where there are, among other natural curiosities, two unusual formations of land. Twenty miles from the city a pair of enormous eggs, identical in contour and separated only by a courtesy bay, jut out into the most domesticated body of salt water in the Western Hemisphere, the great wet barnyard of Long Island Sound. They are not perfect ovals—like the egg in the Columbus story they are both crushed flat at the contact end—but their physical resemblance must be a source of perpetual confusion to the gulls that fly overhead. To the wingless a more arresting phenomenon is their dissimilarity in every particular except shape and size.

I lived at West Egg, the—well, the less fashionable of the two, though this is a most superficial tag to express the bizarre and not a little sinister contrast between them. My house was at the very tip of the egg, only fifty yards from the Sound, and squeezed between two

① 迈达斯(Midas),希腊神话中的国王,富可敌国而且贪财,能点石成金。

② 摩根(J. P. Morgan, 1837—1913),美国富豪、金融家、实业家,创办了通用电气公司(1892),美国钢铁公司(1901),摩根公司(1910)等世界级企业。

③ 麦克纳斯(Gaius Maecenas, 公元前70—公元8年),古罗马皇帝渥大维的亲信,诗人和艺术家的保护人,在西方语言中他的名字是富有的艺术赞助人的代名词。

huge places that rented for twelve or fifteen thousand a season. The one on my right was a colossal affair by any standard—it was a factual imitation of some Hotel de Ville in Normandy^①, with a tower on one side, spanking new under a thin beard of raw ivy, and a marble swimming pool and more than forty acres of lawn and garden. It was Gatsby's mansion. Or rather, as I didn't know Mr. Gatsby it was a mansion inhabited by a gentleman of that name. My own house was an eye-sore^②, but it was a small eye-sore, and it had been overlooked, so I had a view of the water, a partial view of my neighbor's lawn, and the consoling proximity of millionaires—all for eighty dollars a month.

Across the courtesy bay the white palaces of fashionable East Egg glittered along the water, and the history of the summer really begins on the evening I drove over there to have dinner with the Tom Buchanans. Daisy was my second cousin once removed and I'd known Tom in college. And just after the war I spent two days with them in Chicago.

Her husband, among various physical accomplishments, had been one of the most powerful ends^③ that ever played football at New Haven—a national figure in a way, one of those men who reach such an acute limited excellence at twenty-one that everything afterward savors of anti-climax. His family were enormously wealthy—even in college his freedom with money was a matter for reproach—but now he'd left Chicago and come east in a fashion that rather took your breath away: for instance he'd brought down a

① 诺曼底的某座市政厅

② eye-sore: 有碍观瞻, 寒碜

③ end: 球队的边锋

string of polo ponies^① from Lake Forest. It was hard to realize that a man in my own generation was wealthy enough to do that.

Why they came east I don't know. They had spent a year in France, for no particular reason, and then drifted here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together. This was a permanent move, said Daisy over the telephone, but I didn't believe it—I had no sight into Daisy's heart but I felt that Tom would drift on forever seeking a little wistfully^② for the dramatic turbulence of some irrecoverable football game.

And so it happened that on a warm windy evening I drove over to East Egg to see two old friends whom I scarcely knew at all. Their house was even more elaborate than I expected, a cheerful red and white Georgian Colonial mansion overlooking the bay. The lawn started at the beach and ran toward the front door for a quarter of a mile, jumping over sun-dials and brick walks and burning gardens—finally when it reached the house drifting up the side in bright vines as though from the momentum of its run. The front was broken by a line of French windows^③, glowing now with reflected gold, and wide open to the warm windy afternoon, and Tom Buchanan in riding clothes was standing with his legs apart on the front porch.

He had changed since his New Haven years. Now he was a sturdy, straw haired man of thirty with a rather hard mouth and a supercilious^④ manner. Two shining, arrogant eyes had established dominance over his face and gave him the appearance of always

① polo ponies: 马球队用的矮种马

② wistfully *adv.* showing sadness 惆怅地, 幽怨地

③ French window: 落地窗

④ supercilious *adj.* showing arrogant superiority 倨傲的

leaning aggressively forward. Not even the effeminate^① swank of his riding clothes could hide the enormous power of that body—he seemed to fill those glistening boots until he strained the top lacing and you could see a great pack of muscle shifting when his shoulder moved under his thin coat. It was a body capable of enormous leverage—a cruel body.

His speaking voice, a gruff husky tenor^②, added to the impression of fractiousness he conveyed. There was a touch of paternal contempt in it, even toward people he liked—and there were men at New Haven who had hated his guts.

“Now, don’t think my opinion on these matters is final,” he seemed to say, “just because I’m stronger and more of a man than you are.” We were in the same Senior Society, and while we were never intimate I always had the impression that he approved of me and wanted me to like him with some harsh, defiant^③ wistfulness of his own.

We talked for a few minutes on the sunny porch.

“I’ve got a nice place here,” he said, his eyes flashing about restlessly.

Turning me around by one arm he moved a broad flat hand along the front vista, including in its sweep a sunken Italian garden, a half acre of deep pungent roses and a snub-nosed motor boat that bumped the tide off shore.

“It belonged to Demainethe oil man^④.” He turned me around again, politely and abruptly. “We’ll go inside.”

① effeminate *adj.* unsuitably feminine and pretentious quality 柔软的,有女人气的

② 声音洪亮,嗓门粗哑

③ defiant *adj.* boldly resisting 目中无人的

④ 石油大王德麦因

We walked through a high hallway into a bright rosy colored space, fragilely bound into the house by French windows at either end. The windows were ajar^① and gleaming white against the fresh grass outside that seemed to grow a little way into the house. A breeze blew through the room, blew curtains in at one end and out the other like pale flags, twisting them up toward the frosted wedding cake of the ceiling^②—and then rippled over the wine-colored rug, making a shadow on it as wind does on the sea.

The only completely stationary object in the room was an enormous couch on which two young women were buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon. They were both in white and their dresses were rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house. I must have stood for a few moments listening to the whip and snap of the curtains and the groan of a picture on the wall.^③ Then there was a boom as Tom Buchanan shut the rear windows and the caught wind died out about the room and the curtains and the rugs and the two young women ballooned slowly to the floor.

The younger of the two was a stranger to me. She was extended full length at her end of the divan^④, completely motionless and with her chin raised a little as if she were balancing something on it which was quite likely to fall. If she saw me out of the corner of her eyes she gave no hint of it—indeed, I was almost surprised into murmuring an apology for having disturbed her by coming in.

The other girl, Daisy, made an attempt to rise—she leaned

① ajar *adv.* slightly open 半开半掩

② 图案犹如婚礼蛋糕上的糖霜的天花板

③ 我准是站了好一会儿，倾听着窗帘的噼啪声和墙上挂的一幅画的吱嘎声。

④ divan *n.* a long backless sofa 长沙发，躺椅