CHAPTER FOUR

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Fitzgerald's life was rooted in the manners and morals of the twenties. The boon and the crash of the period bear a striking resemblance to his meteoric rise and premature death. The important things in the twenties were the disillusionment with Great causes and the revolution in morals and manners. The disillusionment with contemporary life again, led to some sort of alienation typified in the fiction of Sinclair Lewis, Ernest Hemingway and a host of others. They take refuge in a certain artistic mode to forget their worldly miseries. Driving home this point, Augusto Centeno vivifies what art is:

Art is a pure, irreducible activity, one that supplies its own peculiar, content, provides its own meaning and includes its own morality. Its subject matter, as such, may be shared in common with other natural and human world, but its substance is its own (The Intent of the Artist 5).

Fitzgerald’s art has always encompassed his life transformed into fiction. His best work possesses its beauty and value because it is formed within literary traditions and social settings that transcend an artist's personality. In this connection Augusto Centeno further remarks:

The artist is the man so endowed as to feel, think, and act in a manner that leads inexorably the creation of a work of art, and in such a way that were he deprived of every opportunity for artistic
creation, his life would become an acute misery (The Intent of the Artist 7).

Fitzgerald always brought his personal experience into his fiction and he often wrote with a desire to relieve and to cope with his sense of hurt. Like Keats, Fitzgerald struggled between objectivity and subjectivity. John Doss Posses called Fitzgerald's work “a combination of intimacy and detachment” (The Crack-Up 342). It is the author's ability to participate in his fiction and at the same time to stand aside and analyse that such participation gives his work maturity and power. Although Fitzgerald values the aspect of detachment in his work he came to use it with considerable skill and he is more concerned with the subjective approach to art. This was true because he is a romantist, who felt that self-revelation is one of the most vital components of creativity:

I used to think that my sensory impression of the world came from outside. I used to actually believe that it was as objective as blue skies or a piece of music. Now I know it was written, and emphatically cherish what little is left (The Crack-Up 275).

Fitzgerald felt that the young writer must listen to the voice within, that encourages him to record his feelings and actions because these feelings and actions are actually his style, his personality – eventually his whole self as an artist: “Sometimes, Scott once complained, I don’t know whether I’m real or whether I’m a character in my own novels” (Mizener Far Side of Paradise: A Biography of F.Scott Fitzgerald 106).

Fitzgerald wished to present a social character in which he felt his identity as an American. There are three basic characters that Fitzgerald took
from himself; first the innocent and secondly the moral commentator. The innocent has high hopes and believes in the American Dream. The moral commentator is the Fitzgerald, who is aware of the historical, actual America as well as of the America that is a metaphor for the dream of the New Post-War world. The third basic composite character is the golden girl, a part of Fitzgerald's own self. He once boasted: "I am half feminine – that is, my mind is... My characters are all Scott Fitzgerald. Even the feminine characters are feminine Scott Fitzgeralds" (The Crack-Up 132). The promise represented by the golden girl is the result of the arrogant carelessness and over-whelming and selfish irresponsibility born of precocious good looks, physical health, pampered youth and wealth. The betrayal of the seeking innocent by his own naivete and by the golden girl to whom he dedicates his entire identity is a national history observed by the moral commentator. Fitzgerald's fiction becomes the story of America as to how she leads him on and in betraying his expectations, destroys his Adamic redemptive identity.

Fitzgerald in and through his protagonist was living a vicarious life of his own tracing universal patterns of quest and reduction in America during the post-war period. His work explored the collective unconscious of the Americans immersed in their American Dream. C.G.Jung aptly remarks on such a characteristic of an artist:

Art is a kind of innate drive that seizes a human being and makes him its instrument. The artist is not a person endowed with a free will who sees his own end, but one who allows out to realise its purposes through him. As a human being he may have moods and will and personal aims, but as an artist he is ‘man’ in a higher
sense – he is collective man’ one who carries and shapes the unconscious, psychic life of mankind (Twentieth Century Literary Criticism 175).

Fitzgerald’s novel reflects his divided nature, dual mind and dichotomous vision of contemporary life. He presents the turbulent emotions of his generation—a generation whose adolescent years were shaped by the war and the age coincided with the unprecedented phenomenon in history, The Jazz Age. Fitzgerald reacted that: “I ... was pushed into the position not only of spokesman for the time but of the typical product of all the same moment” (The Crack-Up 27).

Fitzgerald’s life and work were so interwoven that the distinction between them blurs in a sense he imagined and created his life and lived in his own fictional Protagonist. In living up to a dream, an ideal of dramatic selfhood Fitzgerald merged his personality into his artistic representation. It is said that his fiction writing is a response and reaction to the pressures and perceptions within himself. Fitzgerald never resolved his ambivalent feelings toward the universe of his childhood, the unsatisfactory marriage of the problematic woman and the man who was a gentle failure. His dissatisfaction gave rise to the stringent demands he made on himself--his pursuit of the prized debutante, his compulsive hero worship. Also, the two major themes of his fiction were courtship and the conjugal life. At an impressionistic age, he lost a girl Ginevra King because he was not rich enough. The girl Zelda Sayre he finally married broke down mentally. Dissipation and waste clotted his path. False starts and unrealized plans haunted him. He once wrote in his Notebook: “I take things hard – from Ginevra King to Joe Mankiewicz, referring to the girl
he lost in 1917, and to his disappointment twenty years later as a Hollywood
writer, he said ‘the stamp that goes into my books so that people can read it
blind like Braille’” (The Crack-Up 180).

Fitzgerald’s life--Princeton, Ginevra King, Zelda, the Rivera,
Hollywood-becomes the material for his fiction. Fitzgerald knew that his
experiences embodied the glamour of the wild twenties and pathetically
suggested the dead end conclusions of that life and the horror of the thirties. In
line with such a suggestion, D.H.Lawrence too views that “the business of art is
to reveal the relation between man and his circum – ambient universe, at the
living moment” (The Calender of Modern Letters 527). He tried to find visible
forms-- and he did not have to go very far outside of his own life--to objectify
the spirit of his times.

Fitzgerald’s first novel This Side of Paradise stands out, as it was his
simultaneous development as a writer of popular magazine fiction. He was
living the very life he described. Fitzgerald was obsessed with three events in
his life when he was writing this novel viz., his failure to win the love of
Ginevra King and Zelda Sayre, his failure to get a Princeton degree and his
romantic fascination with the perils of war. The protagonist Amory Blaine is a
young and ambitions Fitzgerald. Amory has a romantic conception of himself
that goes with Fitzgerald’s concept of youth: “Amory marked himself a
fortunate youth, capable of infinite expansion for good or evil” (17-18).
Fitzgerald had a definite attitude toward youth that was basic to almost
everything he wrote. He came to think of youth as a fixed quantity of energy
and vitality -- a kind of emotional capital -- to be invested with such care that it
would pay the highest dividends. He believed that youth was a time of
promise, a time to create the Platonic image of what one wished to be. Amory, his protagonist puzzles about what he wants to be. He goes in search of new experience expecting each adventure to unlock the mysteries of life. At the end he feels that he sacrificed his youth to dead gods, to the false ideals of the past.

Amory is a synthesis of the superficial social qualities that Fitzgerald longed for. Fitzgerald states Amory's resentment of social barriers in a sour-grapes recollection of social insecurity. All his life Fitzgerald remembered bitterly his failure to achieve social success as an undergraduate at Princeton. It was his first independent experience of the world and he threw himself into realizing his ambitions exactly as if Princeton had been the great world itself. For Amory, his protagonist, finding himself at Princeton means creating an entity. Princeton is primarily a richly complex American social order with very attractive possibilities for a bright young man:

By afternoon (of his first day at Princeton) Amory realized that now the nerviest arrivals were taking him for an upper classman and he tried conscientiously to look both pleasantly blase and casually critical, which was as near as he could and analyze the prevalent facial expression (38).

Princeton gives identity that overlays the fundamental Amory and the overlays are all the phony and tinsel stances from which the poseur expects to drive an advantage. Amory to be a 'top cat' wrote for the Princeton and Triangle club. He uses them to create an image of himself. He came very close to success at Princeton, except that he neglected what was to him the trifling business of passing his courses. It seemed to him a great bore and just as he was about to
come into his kingdom as a big man on campus, he was forced to leave the university.

This typical episode in Fitzgerald’s life made him feel that society always has power to enforce its own values. It was foolish of him to ignore the university’s academic requirement because they were insignificant to him. Amory, the American, let his studies go in order to achieve the social status in which he can pretend that he belongs securely to the elite and that he need not insist upon it. It was the romantic atmosphere at Princeton, the prestige, the social life, the opportunities to be a big man on campus that Fitzgerald remembered and celebrated in his novel This Side of Paradise. Fitzgerald recognized the significance of America as a nation seeking social mobility. Amory’s exclamation “we’re the damned middle class” (45) is the impatience born of fear of all below and desire for all above. Amory’s anger is merely a conscious and temporary gesture on the part of Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald provided his hero with a mother. Beatrice O’ Hara Blaine is more the mother he wanted than the mother he had. She is beautiful with impeccable taste. Her fatuous admiration for her son encouraged Amory to believe that his desires and needs were of paramount importance. He became so egocentric in his relationships with his friends. Amory began to realize that the rest of the society did not share his mother’s adulation and that his egotism was one of the causes of rejection by his peers. Fitzgerald- via Amory is aware of the phony in his elders.

Stephen Blaine, Amory’s father, is based on Edward Fitzgerald, Fitzgerald’s father. He barely caused a ripple in the plot other than leaving a
mismanaged inheritance. Amory chooses Monsignor Darcy – patterned after Cyril Webster Fay, as a surrogate father. He writes to Amory, “I’ve enjoyed imagining that you were my son, that perhaps when I was young I went into a state of coma and beget you... it’s the paternal instinct, Amory-celibacy goes deeper than the flash”(158). Father Fay did speak often about parturition but the doctrine seems to have been Fitzgerald’s own.

Fitzgerald was deeply moved, even thrilled by Father Fay’s gift of outright friendship. His feelings for the priest were deeper than anything he felt for his parents. Everything he wrote about Darcy is true of Fay who stressed the man’s well being worldly self-assurance, harmless vanity and boyish love of adventure and secrecy. His tribute to Father Fay glows in This Side of Paradise: “He was intensely ritualistic, startlingly dramatic, loved the idea of God enough to be a celibate, and rather liked his neighbor” (61). But it was a more profoundly felt emotion that Fitzgerald expressed when he said that, aside from his father it was Fay, who had taught him the few things he ever learned about life. He gained encouragement and security from his friendship with Father Fay after he left prep school and entered Princeton. Likewise, Darcy became the guiding spirit of Amory’s young manhood.

A sense of mission depends upon the power of imagination. One has to have an image of himself and then works to realise the image. The image can betray but without it life becomes colorless. Amory always dreamed of becoming never the being. This idea becomes a corner stone for Fitzgerald’s narrative as he was able to escape to a splendid realm on the wings of imagination. Amory’s cousin, Clara Page, a young widow tells him that he
easily became the victim of his imagination: “you’re a slave, a bound helpless slave to one thing in the world, your imagination”(143).

Amory’s infatuations with various men have a curious interest. Fitzgerald presents the personality – idol a matter of moral instruction and social report. Dick Humbrid, Amory’ epitome of desires and wishes, represents one of Fitzgerald’s idealized selves. He was dark haired, dark-skinned, a boy with aristocratic bearing, and tentative leader of men: “People dressed like him, tried to talk as he did” (77). Amory thought that Dick Humbrid was everything to make him wish that he were in his place. Humbrid is what Amory Fitzgerald the personality would have chosen to be: “He seemed the eternal example of what the upper class tries to be” (78). When Amory learns that Humbrid’s wealth comes from the wholesale grocery business, he has a curious sinking sensation. The beguiling appearances of Dick Humbrid are a fatal misrepresentation. They are the evil nightmare, underside of the dream, for they provide a false mould in which the creative energies of the heightened sensitivities to the promises of life are contained. Fitzgerald begins Amory’s education by reducing Humbrid to the actualities of time. Humbrid’s life ends in drunkenness and a squalid automobile accident: “All that remained of the charm and personality of the Dick Humbrid he had known—oh, it was all so horrible and unaristocratic and close to earth” (86-87). What Amory witnesses in Humbrid’s death is the terror and heartbreak. Fitzgerald had to subordinate his personality to his personage.

When Amory goes out with Sloane for a party he was pursued by a devil. He fled down the street. Before his eyes a face flashed over and it was the face of Dick Humbrid. Fitzgerald was too self-consciously representative
of a flaming youth and popular Daughter’s bewildered parents, to be completely a social puritan. The evil is so much in the manners as in the character that they disclose. The party boys, party girls and their party manners came to represent for Fitzgerald a fascinating, attractive, life-destroying ascendancy of personality. Their essential trait is irresponsibility. Fitzgerald comes to associate with Humbrid in a way of life that denies earth, inorganic and freakish, devours the personage, the worker.

The face of Humbrid reappears in the female faces of Golden Girl or popular Daughter, who is the center of adoration, adulation, beauty, youth, emulation and destruction. They have their birth in the actualities of Ginevera King and Zelda Sayre. Fitzgerald wanted these girls very much as he wanted the ecstasy of the dream-success he had when This Side of Paradise was published. It is their transformations and life in art that shows a position that all the phantoms are exorcised and that there is only a thin sadness evoked by the ghostly rumble among the drums. The golden girl is represented as American longing, the dream and the revelation of the vast, vulgar, adolescent emptiness of that dream in its attainment. The wooing of the golden girl is the following of a grail with all the accompanying ritual. The winning is a destructive triumph, a handful of dust. They become the dreams whose natures are summations of Fitzgerald’s historical sense of the degeneration of national vision, and the shallowness of American moral identity. The fever and the betrayal of the old American dream of transcendent existence become dramatized in the relationship between the golden girl and her questing lover.
In *This Side of Paradise* our first introduction to the golden girl is a generic description of the nation:

The popular Daughter becomes engaged every six months between sixteen and twenty-two, when she arranges a match with young Hambell, of Cambell and Hambell, who fatuously considers himself her first love, and between engagements the P.D. has other sentimental last kisses in the moonlight, or the five light, or the outer darkness (58).

Fitzgerald personifies P.D. through Isabella Borge. She is the teen-age queen of moments and surfaces. She is not capable of love though capable of limitless love affairs. She is too young, too chameleon-like all of her qualities making her the child of blithe and unaware irresponsible selfishness. Amory can match Isabelle's narcissism and vanity. In the world of moment and surfaces, he seems not to be innocent and wears a mask as much as she:

Isabelle and Amory were distinctly not innocent, nor were they particularly brazen. Moreover, amateur standing had very little value in the game they were playing, a game that presumably would be her principal study for years to come (66).

Fitzgerald modelled Isabelle, with Ginevra King, a very healthy and beautiful girl. She outclassed him both financially and socially. She carried on numerous flirtations and handsome Scott charmed her. They saw each other only infrequently and Scott hoped that she would consent to marry him. They quarreled seriously and consequently Ginevra terminated the relationship. She
became the prototype of the golden girl who was to fire the imagination of so many of Fitzgerald’s male protagonists.

Rosalind Connage is an irresponsible and spoiled little beauty. Fitzgerald meant to praise Zelda in his delineation of certain aspects of Rosalind’s character: “She loves shocking stories; she has that coarse streak that usually goes with natures that are both fine and big” (171). But the courage and the faith in romance she shares with the innocent quester, Amory Blaine, are defeated by her pampered centrality as an absorber in the golden world. Fitzgerald wrote about his heroine: “Women she detested. They represented qualities that she felt and despised in herself-incipient manners, conceit, cowardice and petty dishonesty” (171). Even after five weeks of their romance she does not have the courage equal to the mundane prospects offered by Amory’s penniless love. She sacrifices a real love in order to marry the money (represented by Dawson Ryder), which is the quintessential element in the youth and beautiful world. The young Fitzgerald guesses that the ever-young Americans pay for all they have with all they are. Here Fitzgerald takes a lateral glance at his frenetic courtship of Zelda.

Fitzgerald transformed Eleanor into the complete cliche representative of the lost generation. The devilishness of Eleanor does not exist in the surface. Beneath her is the irresponsible and pestering abandonment of all moral values. She makes Amory’s paganism swell and soar. But Fitzgerald intended to identify a growing belief in God on Amory’s part with a belief in moral standards, which would mark him as a personage. Amory argues with Eleanor for the existence of morality by which human beings treat human beings humanely. Amory questions the sincerity of Eleanor’s avowed atheism,
stating that “like most intellectuals who don’t find faith convenient... you’ll yell loudly for a priest on your death-bed” (239). The argument is a study in Fitzgerald’s distinction between his heritage of social Puritanism (what is nice) and his attempt to articulate his moral Puritanism (what is good). As a spokesman of flaming youth he had an obvious temperamental affinity with Eleanor. Yet he is forced by his strong need to discover moral standards in Amory for becoming a personage. It may not be an exaggeration to say that Fitzgerald is both Eleanor and Amory.

Isabelle, Rosalind and Eleanor were pagans to Fitzgerald’s moral Puritanism, but Clara is an angel. Her life has been bent in a direction opposite to deviltry. Amory falls in love with Clara, whom he refers to as St.Cecelia. She was alone with two small children. In total contrast to Eleanor, who insists that love is ninety-nine percent sex and all the golden girls are always and out of love. But Clara says: “I have never been in love” (145).

Clara insists that she will never marry again. The golden girls in Fitzgerald’s American, is either a fleshless ideal or a bitch. With the moral shallowness beneath their ideal appearances, they are very much a reality for the world of friction. In a world, where unreality is real and perfection is not, only in the imagination does exist the American world of unfulfilled promises and unattainable angels. The reality to be transmuted into meaning is the corrupted filth of Humbrid’s corrupting gorgeousness.

Amory is aware that the personality delights of corruption are all involved in the process of losing one’s innocence. He says: “I don’t want to repeat my innocence. I want the pleasure of losing it again” (258). Amory via
the young Fitzgerald is becoming aware that the moral commentator is the being that makes the innocent meaningful. Only in the loss of the innocence is it’s meaning discerned, is the seeker then awakened within the self by the recognition of the future that the innocence had promised. For instance, Amory saves Alec Connage, Rosalind’s brother, in an Atlantic City hotel by telling the house detective that he, not Alec, brought a girl to the room. When he makes the decision to save his friend “Amory realized that there were other things in the room besides people” (247). It is the ghost of Monsignor, who died on the same night, watches the beginning of the change from personality to personage. Amory’s sense of evil is his growing awareness of the loss of innocence. Fitzgerald himself bemoans the Lost Generation’s confusion in which evils and virtues remain undefined. It is with a sense of loss Fitzgerald says of Amory that the strong sense of evil had diminished to the faint aura and Amory’s instinct perceived the fetidness of poverty. The weakened perception sees cleanliness in wealth, which staves off poverty: “Poverty may have been beautiful once but it’s rotten now. It’s the ugliest thing in the world” (256). Fitzgerald observes all that remains attractive is the corrupt and corrupting fascination of the American world. He provided his own temperament and of his contemporaries: “Life was a ... foot-ball game with everyone off-side and the referee got rid of everyone claiming that the referee would have been on his side (265). Fitzgerald, having fought to acquire self-understanding, was now ready to understand his morality by realising the nature of his experience. The narcissus in turn, becomes the priest. Fitzgerald, through Amory, welcomes the excitement of the golden life ahead. He was aware that he could count on himself in combat with those excitements: “And (Amory) could not tell why the struggle was worthwhile, why he had determined to use to the utmost
himself and his heritage from the personalities he had passed” (282). Fitzgerald was to come to know of the evils, virtues, hells and moments he had envisioned. He was to become himself the personality, personage, artist whose later books were to be the fulfillment of all the intimations that lay just this side of a paradise to be regained. The knowledge that the expected Utopia was lost in the moment in which it was obtained changed a boy through pain and anticipation and nostalgia into a man and writer.

Fitzgerald managed to draw a single novel from each phase of his life. They summarized the lessons of his experience. *This Side of Paradise* had explored the collegiate enthusiasms and the premature nostalgia of the fledgling writer, and undergraduate, his random love affairs and early sorrows. *The Beautiful and Damned* was Fitzgerald’s book about marriage, a narrative about the minor, and major skirmishes of two egos, the traces and capitulations of love, and living together. He had begun it out a bare three and a half months into his own honeymoon. Fitzgerald examined the issue of early marriage a phenomenon that concerned the media almost as much as petting in early 1920’s. While praising youth’s commitment to the institution of marriage, people discouraged early entry into that responsibility. A favourite phrase of the era insisted it was better to wait than to mate. Gloria Patch describes the marital ideal of many girls of her age:

> Marriage was created not to be a background but to need one. Mine is going to be outstanding. It can’t, shan’t be the setting – it’s going to be the performance, the live, lonely, glamorous performance, and the world shall be the scenery (147).
Barely six months after their wedding Anthony and Gloria Patch discover that "the breathless idyll of first love is an extortion of youth that quickly flees on to other lovers" (156).

In Anthony Patch, Fitzgerald presented the meaninglessness of life leading to decay of character. He believes that "he would one day accomplish some quiet subtle thing that the elect would deem worthy, and passing on, would join the dimmer stars in a nebulous, indeterminate heaven half-way between death and immortality (23). He wants "to arrive without having really sweated" (24). He is not lazy but afraid to sustain effort to any worthy thing. Anthony never visits the sweaty world of the bourgeois and the proletariat without a faintly contemptuous condescension. The inheritance of Adam cross Patch's millions becomes the guarantee for Anthony of eternal immunity from the world. Fitzgerald, with his preparatory school and Princeton background must have known many men of this type--men who were waiting for inheritances. He observed the ways in which prospective wealth influenced the character and the sense of purpose in these men. Fitzgerald portrayed in Anthony how money became one of the two larger forces in American society, the other being the romance of infinite possibilities giving an identity. Fitzgerald tried to convey along with the fairy tale enchantment of wealth, Anthony's characters and the world he inherit is either inhuman or corrupt.

Fitzgerald introduced into the novel his alter ego in the form of Richard Caramel, Anthony's college-mate and friend. He is the author of a best selling novel, The Demon Lover (the title Fitzgerald had once considered for the novel he was actually writing). Caramel is the commercial writer, eager for praise,
and adulation, thin — skinned about critical comment that Fitzgerald imagined he might himself become:

“My publishers, you know, have been advertising me as the Thackeray of American — because of my New York novel. ‘Yes’, Anthony managed to muster. ‘I suppose there is a great deal in what you say’. He knew that his contempt was unreasonable (423).

Fitzgerald’s understanding of the vanity of authors was as accurate as it could be.

The scene in which Marry, Noble comments upon Bible is Fitzgerald’s explicit attempt to follow up the self-conscious, lost generation vision of all wars fought, all faiths shaken that made him a spokesman of his younger generation: “We produce a Christ who can raise up the leper— and presently the breed of the leper is the salt of the earth. If anyone can find any lesson in that, let him stand forth” (255).

The speech is more revealing to Fitzgerald’s art as the personality participant gets in the way of the personage-writer. Fitzgerald’s fussiness may glitter on the surface of his work, but there is an undercurrent of psychological acuity. In The Beautiful and Damned, Anthony Patch will never be anything more than a dilettante as a writer and Gloria anything but an obstacle to his ambitions. Fitzgerald could have drawn on his awareness of his own weak will and Zelda’s selfishness to produce the scathing authenticity of this scene:
“Work” she scoffs, “Oh, you sad bird! You bluffer! Work means a great arranging of the desk and the lights, a great sharpening of pencils” (212).

Anthony believes in the futility of life and he never finds anything in life worthy of his commitment. His leisure is to have an intellectual basis, as Fitzgerald puts it “in justification of his manner of living there was first, of course, The Meaninglessness of Life” (54). Fitzgerald presented this theme almost in all the characters. Maury says: “And I shall go on shining as a brilliantly meaningless figure in a meaningless world” (23). Gloria says: “There’s only one lesson to be learned from life, anyway ... That there’s no lesson to be learned from life” (255). And Anthony remarks: “I don’t understand why people think that every young man ought to go down-town and work ten hours a day for the best twenty years of his life at dull, unimaginative work, certainly not altruistic work” (65). The lack of purpose is apparent in Anthony, for Gloria continues to weave about her immeasurable illusions, immeasurable distances and immeasurable light. Her mission in life is to give luster as her name suggests. Fitzgerald wrote: “The most enormous influence on me in the four and a half years since I met her has been the complete, fine and full-hearted selfishness and chill-mindedness of Zelda” (The Letters 331). The full heartedness is the pampered, zestful and free courage to seize the moment that Fitzgerald marveled at in his golden girls. Although Fitzgerald wrote that he, and Zelda had a better time than Anthony and Gloria the woman Anthony marries seems very much like Zelda. Like the Fitzgerald’s their relationship is abrasive from the beginning. Fitzgerald described Gloria as “a girl of tremendous nervous tension and of the most high handed selfishness” (157). Gloria is egocentric, pleasure seeking, wild, impractical and careless.
She is primarily concerned with getting her boys tanned, spends money with reckless abandon and she drives like a maniac. Fitzgerald is using this novel as a kind of daydream, achieving through his imagination what he could not realize in life. He is also using this novel as a catharsis, depicting Gloria in a way that satisfied Fitzgerald emotionally—as a kind of vamp whose demands upon Anthony are excessive and debilitating.

Fitzgerald used his second novel for some emotional purpose, and it marked an advance over his first novel *This Side of Paradise* and in the course of changing times, Fitzgerald developed a sense of self-mockery. Caramel remarks: “Everywhere I go some silly girls asks me if I’ve read *This Side of Paradise*. If it is true to life, which I don’t believe, the next generation is going to the dogs” (421). Anthony feels superior to Dick that “he felt a touch of the old pleasant contempt for his friend” (423). Caramel and Anthony are in a way bifurcation of their creator. Caramel is the novelist with an intense sense of purpose. He has written one successful book, but now he is wasting his time writing popular trash for quick money. Fitzgerald had the ability to project himself into the future— with a sense of hope, and also with a sense of uncertainty. Caramal personifies the horror of what Fitzgerald felt might happen to him. Fitzgerald melodramatically refers that youth is a fixed quantity that Anthony and Gloria are drawing heavily upon it. They discover that youth is punishable and are held in trust. Fitzgerald’s age consciousness was the product of a culture in which aging became synonymous with deterioration and degeneration. More than any author of the era, he was observed with the symbolism of age milestones, often making their passage the dramatic crux of his plots. Anthony and Gloria so dread the onslaught of middle age that their
descent to squander their youth before time can claim it. The story is interrupted as an assessment of the stages of life voiced by Fitzgerald:

It is in the twenties that the actual momentum of life begins to slacken, and it is a simple soul indeed to whom as many things are significant, and meaningful at thirty as ten years before. ... The unmistakable stigma of humanity touches all those impersonal, and beautiful things that only youth ever grasps in their impersonal glory (169-70).

Anthony begins to look older fearing the loss of youth and its sense of promise. Gloria’s beauty begins to fade. Anthony feels life slipping by him. For Gloria the sense of lost time comes as a shock when she is turned down for a movie role because she looks old. It marks the end of her youth and everything else in her life is anticlimactic. Fitzgerald says that life becomes humdrum and it loses romance once it loses the lustre of youth: “After the sureties of youth there sets in a period of ... twilight where we value safety above romance” (283-84).

The novel is a story about wasted youth---wasted because it was improperly committed. Fitzgerald talks about “a sense of time rushing by, ceaselessly and wastefully” (93). And with the waste comes the sense of regret. Anthony and Gloria ache for time past. Their nostalgia stems from the loss of looking at reality and from the physical loss of youth. They reach an advanced state of decline, when Adam Patch disinherits them, witnessing their drunken party. When Anthony and Gloria break the old man’s will and come into a fortune, they have lost youth and beauty. They no longer have anything with the money, which at one time was supposed, is meaningful. Fitzgerald’s
protagonists are damned as non-belongs reflecting his sense of never really belonging to the rich world he observed. His snobbery and early racism are integral parts of his vision of his materials. His awareness of the shallowness of the adolescent dream grows more profound in his later use of his materials. The Beautiful and Damned is Fitzgerald’s last act of apprenticeship as a novelist as he moves closer to a full moral awareness of his materials. When he was well educated in the authority of failure, in his retrospective view of life with Zelda, his memory was submerged in the specific agonies of nostalgia, grief, remorse and kindness.

Fitzgerald in his third novel The Great Gatsby brought out his hurt over Ginevra King, and his feeling of social inadequacy in the Chicago world of Prairie Avenue and Lake Forest. When he was courting Ginevra someone told him: “Poor boys shouldn’t think of marrying rich girls” (The Crack-Up 70). Soon Ginevra broke with him and was engaged to William Mitchell from an extremely wealthy family. Fitzgerald came away from Ginevra with a sense of social inadequacy, a deep hurt and longing for the girl. He exposed these sentiments in his novel. “The whole idea of Gatsby is the unfairness of a poor young man not being able to marry a girl with money. This theme comes up again and again because I lived it” (Turnbull 150). Gatsby’s romantic and frustrated desire for Daisy Fay is recognized as an expression of the author’s youthful obsession first for Ginevra King and later for Zelda Sayre. With his obscure and penniless background, Gatsby represents the young Fitzgerald, “one of the poorest boys in a rich boy’s school” (Mizener The Far Side of Paradise: A Biography of F. Scott Fitzgerald 24), having his winter dreams of wealth and beauty while haunted by insecurity.
The wound over the loss of Ginevra never healed and it is the skin wound on a haemophile. When he lost Ginevra, he believed the need to preserve a romantic state of mind where the imagination and the will are arrested in a state of suspension-- by an idealized concept of beauty and love. As the loss creates an eternal striving and hope keeps the world beautifully alive, Fitzgerald writes, “It is sadder to find the past again and find it inadequate to the present than it is to have it elude you and remain forever a harmonious conception of memory” (The Crack-Up 50).

Gatsby, the protagonist found Daisy Fay married to Tom Buchanan when he returned from the army. He had an affair with Daisy five years earlier when he was penniless. So to abandon Daisy would be to lose his sense of self. He wants to turn back the clock and to start over at thirty two where he left off at twenty seven. Nick knows that Daisy can never come up to Gatsby’s imaginative expectations. Gatsby cannot repeat the past, just as Anthony Patch could not buy back his lost youth. Fitzgerald depicts the dreamer trying to turn back the clock. His hopeless task, his fidelity of purpose, even the shoddiness of the dream itself – all combine to make Gatsby’s attempt poignant and touching. Gatsby is a Sisyphus without self-knowledge or cosmic understanding. Gatsby himself is a romantic, as his creator, who had lost a girl because he had no money.

The insights Fitzgerald offered into the conditions posed by wealth (by the possession of it, the desire for it, the expectation for it) were many and
varied. He observed that privilege and mobility were granted to those who were born into money:

Let me tell you about the very rich, Fitzgerald begins, They are different from you and me. They pass and enjoy early and it does something to them, makes them soft when we are hard and cynical where we are trustful, in a way that unless you were born rich, it is very difficult to understand. They think deep in their hearts, that they are better than we are because we had to discover the compensations and refuges of life for ourselves. Even when they enter deep into our world they, still think they are better than we” (The Rich Boy 355-56).

Fitzgerald was convinced that the most important moral choice a man could face existed in the fully developed form among the rich--the real, achievable choice between fineness of perception and of moral discrimination and the brutality of unimaginative, irresponsible power. He thought any failure on their part to use their wealth constituted a crime that we are not given an opportunity to commit. It was this crime for which he condemned Daisy and Tom Buchanan: “They smashed up things, and creatures, and then retreated back into their money” (180-181).

Tom is a fully conceived case of the undeveloped imagination and Daisy, who chose to live the sophisticated life rather than the loving life. Fitzgerald’s own experience, his own sense of combat, the dreamer in conflict with a rigid reality, the promises of youth in conflict with the ravages of time, and the man of suspect means in conflict with the established rich is pictured in
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Gatsby and Tom. Ginevra rejected Fitzgerald for being socially inferior. He extended the difference between himself and Ginevra by making Gatsby into the essence of the social impostor. Gatsby conveyed others that he is an Oxfordian, an exaggerated expression of Fitzgerald’s own feelings with the high rich of Lake Forest.

Fitzgerald fantasized that he was not his parents’ offspring. He imagined that he was a foundling descended from the royal Stuarts. He confessed: “I had lived so much, not exactly within myself, but within mirrors of me that I found in other people that I couldn’t imagine myself a mortal. In the first place I was not to die my whole family without a qualm but myself—no!” (The Crack-Up 75). These notions found their expression in his creation of Jay Gatsby, the man with no presumed ancestry, the man who sprang from his Platonic conception of himself. A link is established between Jay Gatsby, who is dissatisfied with his family’s lowly origins and his creator, Scott Fitzgerald, who is equally dissatisfied with his ineffectual father, and his inescapable black Irish heritage. Fitzgerald describes Gatsby as son of God:

He was a son of God—a phrase which, if it means anything, means the service of a vast, vulgar, and meretricious beauty. So he invented just the sort of Jay Gatsby that a seventeen—year—old boy would be likely to invent, and to this conception he was faithful to the end (45).

This vision emerges from Fitzgerald’s experience as a practical man and as a dreamer.
Fitzgerald used Nick Carraway, a bridge to connect the world of the Buchanans with that of Gatsby. He presents Nick as the heir to his father's advantages—an older America of duty and honor and good manners to which Fitzgerald was more devoted than to his new world of flaming youth. Nick Carraway’s father set the tone of wealth, and noble oblige in the novel: “Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone,’ Nick is told, just remember that all the people in this world haven’t had the advantages that you’ve had” (5). As a consequence Nick has learned to postpone making judgements of others: “Reserving judgements is a matter of infinite hope” (5). He gives the moral judgement of those materials at the beginning before the story is told. Through Nick Carraway, Fitzgerald is able to bring to surface two ambivalent facets of his own character—his sense of life’s promise and his fear of wasting time, his distrust of the very rich and his envy of their larger life. Gatsby embodies that element in Fitzgerald, which gave an enthusiastic and unexamined consent to the wonder of life. Nick embodies the other element in Fitzgerald, which became excited by life’s possibility, but was prone to brood over the past, and to be irredeemably hurt by disappointment. Nick embodies Fitzgerald’s character from inside and out, as both the agent of his experience, and the object of analysis, as both seeing and seen: “I was within, and without” Nick says “simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life” (36). The cultural patterns of the West Egg, and East Egg in Fitzgerald’s America are related to the themes of innocence and experience or purity and corruption. Just as the difference between the fact (the East) and the dream (the West) Fitzgerald sees that what has become the dream of the past is inescapably present. Almost all Americans are indistinguishable from each other in the betrayal of the idea of America by the wealth of America. The
American dream for Fitzgerald was the individual dream he could move to abstractions through particulars. Gatsby and Tom standing respectively for an "American ... idealism so impalpable that it has lost touch with reality and materialism so heavy that it was inhuman" (Raleigh 59).

Nick learns that Gatsby is never able to learn that illusions have moral consequences and that the dreams of twenty-five have to be re-examined in the light of further knowledge and mature experience. Youth with its spirit of adventure and hope of achievement can encourage the vision. But a day comes when one has to be objective and see himself as he is rather than as he could be or would like to be Nick does this and part of the sadness he feels for Gatsby's end stems from the sadness he feels for his own lost youth. Daisy rejects Gatsby for she will never give up the security of established Buchanan money. Gatsby loses more than Daisy--he loses the spirit of youth, the eternal hope, the sense of expectancy, and promise that Fitzgerald predicated of the age between seventeen and thirty. Edwin Fussel points out the position very clearly:

Driven by inner forces that compel him towards the personal realization of romantic wonder, the Fitzgerald hero is destroyed by the materials which the American experience offers as objects and criteria of passion... the search for eternal youth and beauty... is equated on the level of rational ideology with a transcendental and Utopian contempt for time and history (English Literary History 2).

At the end of the novel the Buchanans use Gatsby and ruthlessly sacrifice him. One of the ironies of the novel is that Gatsby had to die so that Daisy and Tom
could live on. Nick knows that man is born to dream, but he is realist enough
to feel that all dreams are built on compromise. He takes flight returning to the
West Egg indicating that he does not know how to make use of his knowledge,
and that he will remain torn between a romantic and realistic disposition of
mind. Once he has to reconcile the dream to reality he suffers from spiritual
paralysis and moral inertia. The suspended moment gives way to the
suspended will. Irony, the mind both accepting and rejecting the same idea, is
the rhetorical extension of this state of being, the means by which Fitzgerald
was able to realize his sense of life’s dilemma.

Fitzgerald came to believe that there was a better self he had left in the
past, just as Nick equates Gatsby’s dream with the American past. When he
tried to creep up on that lost self he never finds quite the same self again:

But never again (will I find my lost self) as during that all too short
period when he, and I were one person, when the fulfilled future,
and the wistful. Past were mingled in a single gorgeous moment –
when life was literally a dream (The Crack-Up 89).

Fitzgerald’s sense of man’s tragic condition stems from his belief that the
dream persists -- that the ideals of youth often remain unchanged-- while one
ages and the world falls further away from the ideal. Fitzgerald’s vision is
Keatsian-- there is the desire to cling to a sublime and perfect moment. There
is also the realization that all life, all beauty is subject to mutability, and decay.
Thus the outworned, is once removed from the temporal order.

Fitzgerald worked best with the antithetical elements -- the dream
against reality, time in flux against realm, as in Gatsby’ case can betray
because the dream, like Keat’s Grecian urn, becoming against being, time as the seed of possibility against time as the seed of decay. Fitzgerald’s is the double vision—first forward and then backward, there is first the promise then the nostalgia. This belief takes him beyond the story of America to the story of man himself. In *The Great Gatsby* we move from a personal sphere (a story of unrequited love) to a historical level (the hope and idealism of the frontier and of democracy in conflict with a rapacious and destructive materialism), to a metaphysical sphere (man’s desire to preserve, and relive the idyllic moment).

The novel reveals’ the author’s penetration and profundity of vision of life. Fitzgerald recreated the myth of the tragic plight of mankind at all times, everywhere, particularly it refers to the nineteen–twenties Jazz–Age New York, a playground of irresponsible millionaires, darkened by the sinister shadows of bootleggers, racketeers and subtle insidious corruption that goes with money. Gatsby’s heroic struggle against disenchantment is doomed to end in defeat, for Daisy is not the golden girl of Gatsby’s dream and in the ashen wasteland of modern American dreams certainly do not come true.

Fitzgerald presents the vision of the earthly Paradise by the Dutch sailors, afforded by the first glimpse of the New World, which remains unfulfilled. Yet Gatsby’s essential innocence prevents him from grasping that three centuries of American history had placed it forever beyond man’s reach. Marius Bewley is reading the novel as “the betrayal of the American dream by a desolate present emphasizes the Americanness of Gatsby’s tragedy” (*F. Scott Fitzgerald and the Collapse of the American Dream* 259).
The crassness and cowardice that signalise the moral corruption at the heart of the Buchanan’s world match Gatsby’s loyalty to Daisy, the manifestation of the moral incorruptibility that Nick senses beneath his corruption. In them is Fitzgerald’s deadliest indictment of the wealthy. The double vision of Fitzgerald himself, as he shared Gatsby’s dream, winning fortune, Zelda and fame, so did he share Nick’s disillusion and criticism of that life. He wished that he could like Nick and go back to the more secure moral virtues of his youth in the Middle West. Fitzgerald includes himself, and Gatsby among the pursuers of the dream: “So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past” (189). The narrator’s voice is a song of the significance of the author’s life and it indicates how compellingly and cohesively Fitzgerald had finally merged his vision, his memory, and his materials into a moral history of the meaning of America. In the earlier books the fragments had provided squeaking Isabelle or the embarrassing cynicism of Maury Noble and the Patches. In The Great Gatsby they were united into a sorrowful, lovely realm of coherent meaning.

Fitzgerald thought of the failures in his life as the moral consequence of his being: “the beautiful bad example of self-indulgent apostasy from Goodness” (The Letters 79). He felt that his generation’s departure from the good gone world of the old commandments of work and discipline and politeness was a symptom of a general breakdown and insanity in western civilization. He had come to see Zelda’s insanity and his own alcoholism as painful symbols of the disintegration of a time and nation. His own Jazz-age golden moment was an insular American idyll that turned out to be a sordid corruption of its own promise. When he saw Gerald and Sara Murphy,
American expatriates in Europe, he wished to capture them in all the tensions, and ambivalences of the old virtues and the old graces. They were the older, vanished, promising America. Fitzgerald by infecting his own increasingly chaotic, and catastrophic experience, as an index to the morally chaotic state of the new young world, into Murphy’s impeccable and apparently enviable life, turned towards his art to express his personal statements. On a remorseful stage he found the meaning of his own experience in his novel Tender is the Night, and its protagonist, Dick Diver. Into this novel he put his hard-earned beliefs:

Work was the only dignity; that it didn’t help a serious man to be too much flattered and loved; that money and beauty were treacherous aids: that honor, courtesy, courage – the old fashioned virtues – were the best guides after all (Turnbull 241).

Fitzgerald felt that his marriage to Zelda had taken its toll on his energy. Zelda hindered his ambitions, because she wanted him to work too much for her and not enough for himself. Fitzgerald said: “Zelda was spoiled and meant no good to me” (The Letters 32). Then Zelda broke, he continues:

It was too late also for me to recoup the damage. I had spent most of my resources, spiritual and material, on her, but I struggled on for five years till my health collapsed, and all I cared about was drink and forgetting (The Letters 32).

Fitzgerald complicated his own relationship with Zelda by making Dick Diver the victim of the very rich. The Warrens, like Buchanans, are a wealthy Chicago family. Warren is a cruel distortion of Charles King, Ginevra’s father,
a fantasy projection of Fitzgerald's hurt feelings, and his lively imagination. Baby Warren, sister of Nicole, is Fitzgerald's invention to embody the ruthless spirit of the very rich, which gets the upper hand of Dick and rejects him once he served his purpose. She reveals his bitterness towards the rich: “I have never been able to forgive the rich for being rich and it has colored my entire life and works” (Turnbull 150). His loss of Ginevra seems most responsible for his attitude toward the very rich, most responsible for the unsympathetic Chicago families of wealth that appear in his best fiction.

The dream in Fitzgerald’s fiction is betrayed from within and without as well. From without, it hits upon the rocks of crass materialism, flounders in contact with people, viz., the Buchanans and the Warrens, hardened by wealth, and their innate superiority. From within, misjudgment and self-indulgence betray the dream. Dick misjudges Nicole’s influence on him. Dick’s self-indulgence is more physical. The good life—the life of leisure and elegance—lures him to a point where the man of discipline in him is smothered. The carelessness of the Warrens has to be taken in context with Dick’s carelessness toward himself. Dick’s dual nature— that he is used by others because he allows himself to be used and is responsible in part for his failure. He is a spoiled priest, who has betrayed the sense of duty, lost self-discipline and given way to excesses. Fitzgerald once said of himself that “strict self-discipline was the secret of his charm: ‘when you let that balance becomes disturbed, don’t you become just another victim of self-indulgence? breaking down the solid things around you, and moreover, making yourself terribly vulnerable?’” (The Crack-Up 209).
Dick's main flaw is his desire to be loved and to be the center of attention. Both Fitzgerald and Dick liked to feel people dependent upon them. He once said of himself: "I must be loved. I tip heavily to be loved. I have so many faults that I must be approved of in other ways" (Turnbull 265). Dick is also the victim of his vanity and throughout the novel he goes out of his way to help others. Fitzgerald suggests that it is his desire to help Nicole, which leads to their marriage. He liked to give lavishly of his strength, cater to egos and his vanity made him vulnerable. At the end of the novel, Nicole tells Baby Warren, her hard-hearted sister: "Dick was a good husband to me for six years .... All that time I never suffered a minute's pain because of him, and he always did his best never to let anything hurt me" (312).

Her sister replies that Dick was educated for that only. This is the thankless rich speaking, but inevitably Dick played into their hands. Dick's desire to be needed remains with him to the end. Even as Nicole is about to discard him, Dick answers the call for help from Mary North, and Lady Caroline "wanting above all to be brave and kind, he had wanted, even more than that, to be loved. So it had been" (302).

Dick's romantic readiness, his eagerness to expend himself for others, decides him to dedicate his life to Nicole, disregarding old Professor Dohmler's warning. Nicole is the breath of decay and the promise of destruction. She is also the essence of Dick's American illusions. Dick falls in love with the illusions that betray and destroy him. It is his weakness to love her so much, in sacrificing himself for her sake and Dick acquires a tragic grandeur in his defeat. Fitzgerald associates Nicole with feudal aristocracy and privilege. Her madness is a symptom of the disintegration of American society that has its
counterpart in the torn battlefields of Europe. Her father’s incestuous relationship with her is responsible for her mental disorder. Fitzgerald’s criticise that wealthy Americans exercise immense power without the moral responsibility of a traditional aristocracy. The graciousness of their way of life is no more than a cloak for inner corruption and perversion. Devereux Warren’s wanton destruction of his daughter’s innocence is the correlative of the barren spiritual inheritance that her generation owes to the rapacious robber barons of nineteenth century America. To effect Nicole’s cure Dick creates for her a stable social environment on the Riviera. He abandons his practice and lives on the Warren fortune. Dick, going against his upbringing and training, finds himself forced for Nicole’s sake to adopt false values of an aristocracy founded on money. In the process he becomes himself infected with the rotten softness that attacks the core of civilization that makes affluence its only good. The futility of Diver’s life is mistaken for rich and varied experience. The leisured aristocracy carries within itself the seeds of its own dissolution. By a tick of the heart Dick brings out the best in everyone he invites to the Villa Diana, but he cannot disguise the despairs (Nicole’s madness) that constantly break surface. The spiritual destruction of the rich is illustrated as Fitzgerald probes beneath the grace and gaiety to the deadness within. Abe North, composite portrait of Fitzgerald, foreshadows Dick’s breakdown. He seeks deliverance from time in drunkenness: “The drink made past happy things contemporary with the present, as if they were still going on, contemporary even with the future as if they were about to happen again” (180).

Dick, finds like Abe that alcohol obliterates the present. The dedicated and innocent seeker, committed to the service of his love, his ideals, his vision
expands totally to discover that the cause he gave his life to is an irresponsible and selfish, gilded corruption. Diver’s story is the central story of Fitzgerald’s life and art.

When Dick falls in love with Rosemary, a film actress who represents all the immaturity of the race reveals how he had abandoned his self-discipline. Fitzgerald allowed Rosemary to represent himself. She symbolizes a state of being, the very spirit of youth and success that Dick has known, and lost. Rosemary is the personification of the feeling: “happy to live in the past” (103), just as Ginevra King the personification of this feeling for Fitzgerald. Rosemary gives excitement to life, keeps the world alive, the bloom on the rose. Her beauty is something to be longed for. Fitzgerald gives double focus-back toward the glory that was, forward toward the promise that might be, although the future seemed bleak in the novel. Dick represents what Fitzgerald thought he might become, Rosemary represents the spirit of what he once was. At the beginning of the novel, Dick feels that he holds Rosemary in trust, that he must guard her like a father who protects a child. At the end, as his decline becomes more serious, he seduces her. Dick betrays a trust as Dick and Fitzgerald believed that they had betrayed their own youthful talent, were reckless with time’s promises and taken too many wrong paths.

Just before Dick consummates his love affair with Rosemary, his father dies. Dick has been brought up by his father to believe in the old virtues good instincts, honor, courtesy and courage. His father’s death symbolically parallels his own loss of authority and self-discipline. When Nicole falls in love with Dick, he takes the place of her father. The fact that she falls out of love with him and that Dick commits symbolic incest with Rosemary, an act
which leagues him with Devereu Warren, reveals Dick’s failure to become a responsible father, a position which Fitzgerald seems to equate with maturity.

Dick is torn between allegiance to past and present as he thinks back on his father: “a southern sympathizer, the old loyalties, and devotions fought against the whole new world in which he believed” (106). Dick ultimately rejects his father’s world, the aristocratic and conscious good manners of the young southerner and “despised them because they were not a protest against how unpleasant selfishness was but against how unpleasant it looked” (194).

Dick’s father died in New York and was buried in Virginia. Dick brings the body south “only as the local trains hambled into the low-forested clayland of West moreland county, did he feel once more identified with his surroundings” (204). Fitzgerald could write with feelings, because his own father died in Minnesota and was buried in Maryland. When Dick takes leave of his father, he puts behind him an old and different way of life:

Dick had no more ties here now, and did not believe he would ever come back. He knelt on the hard soil. These dead, he knew them all, their weather beaten faces with blue flashing eyes, the spare violent bodies, the souls made of new earth in the forest – heavy darkness of the seventeenth century (204).

Fitzgerald wrote these words out of his own feelings:

I loved my father – always deep in my subconscious I have referred judgement back to him, what he would have thought or done... I was born several months after the sudden death of my two
elder sisters and he felt what the effect of this would be on my mother, that he would be my only moral guide .... He came of tired stock with very little left of vitality, and mental energy but he managed to raise a little for me (The Apprentice Fiction of F. Scott Fitzgerald 67).

Dick’s father died in Buffalo and Dick returned to Buffalo after his decline. Fitzgerald lived in Buffalo from the age of two to eleven and it was here, that Mr. Fitzgerald was fired from Procter and Gamble that he witnessed his father’s cruellest defeat. The Fitzgerald family returned sadly and without success to the Midwest. Dick also is without success in Buffalo and gradually disappears into New York. Fitzgerald in his novel Tender is the Night chose the details out of his own catalogue of emotional experience. Fitzgerald saw a strange parallel between the story of Dick, himself and his own father. They were all men who knew two ways of life--who could look back on a glorious, or a proud past, but who had been defeated in various ways by life. Behind the real world in a Fitzgerald novel is a golden one that is slowly vanishing from view. He felt this was true in general as well as individual way. Dick’s story is the story of Western civilization in its process of decline.

Fitzgerald once said, “I am, part of the break up of the times” (Turnbull 261). The Jazz Age, days of promise and gaiety, ended with depression, and what Fitzgerald believed to be the pattern of human growth turned out to be the pattern of twentieth-century history. As Dick wasted his intelligence with riotous living, and had only failure to show for it, so too Fitzgerald came to feel the riotous twenties led directly to the catastrophe of the thirties. As the Jazz
age drew too heavily on its financial resources, so did Dick draw carelessly on his emotional resources and in both cases it led to bankruptcy, economic as well as personal.

Fitzgerald often moved through metaphor from the personal to the historical level that “the excitement Dick and Rosemary visit a cemetery of the war dead. Dick sees the First World War as bringing an end to class distinction and he nostalgically regrets the death of the old order. He says thus romanticizing the relationships that existed between the classes: “This was the last love battle” (60). Dick’s decline parallels the decline of the west. He abandoned the old virtues of his father and dissipated his energies, just as Western culture had abandoned the old aristocratic virtues for a crass materialism.

In Keats’ Ode to a Nightingale, the poet longs for a state of eternity while recognizing that he is subject to a state of temporality— a state, where youth grows pale and specter— thin, and dies. Like Keats, Fitzgerald longed for a world of arrested time where love will be forever warm and forever young. But he knew that no such world was possible for men. Jay Gatsby was never able to learn this, and Dick learned it too late. Fitzgerald learned that all things fade, and that the golden moment glistens lastingly only in memory. The golden girl, Zelda, never guided him to the enchanted land he imagined. But in his dark, destructive reconnaissance, as he journeyed alone within his talent, he found the only permanent radiance he was to know the true and lasting gold of his own bright art.
When Fitzgerald began to work on *The Last Tycoon* he was thinking of history in personal terms. Fitzgerald never finished his personal history of the Middle Age -- its development from youth to old. He was also never to finish *The Last Tycoon*, his personal history of Hollywood. Fitzgerald went to Hollywood and met Irving Thalberg, who had worked his way to the very top of the industry. The feudal between Thalberg, who maintained that the movies were an art form and his rival Louis B. Mayer insisted it as merely a profitable industry was a matter of principle. Fitzgerald has depicted in Gatsby and Dick the idealist in a materialistic world, so he could warm to the struggle between Thalberg and Mayer. The personal qualities of Thalberg, a man of energy, power and decision, who lived a heightened and glamorous life, also excited him. Fitzgerald made Monroe Stahr, the protagonist, into the image of Thalberg, and then fused his image with that of his own. Once again he poured himself into the golden vessel of his imagination.

Fitzgerald starts as Thalberg with his energy, vitality, drive and purpose and ends as Fitzgerald, sick, frail, vacillating and tired. At the beginning of the novel as Stahr handles a board meeting, he fires a director, criticizes the rushes, he is shrewd and decisive, makes accurate decisions and is always in control. He is the source of unity, the emotional nucleus of the studio. He is the object of admiration, fear and worship. At the end of the unfinished manuscript, as he talks with a communist labour leader, he is loud and aggressive, boasts, misjudges his man, loses self-control and makes a fool of himself. Fitzgerald portrayed in Stahr, a man, who had helped to build a dynasty, created the world of movies, and then to show that world come tumbling down around him.
Fitzgerald portrayed his divided nature in *The Last Tycoon* by creating in the person of Wylie White, an antimask of Monroe Stahr. Stahr embodies some aspects of Fitzgerald’s life and character, Wylie White embodies, Fitzgerald the romantic. Wylie White, like Fitzgerald, is separated from his wife and is cynical about Hollywood, unable to write scripts that satisfy the producers. Wylie White, like Fitzgerald, got the brunt of blame for the unacceptable script. Stahr disappointed with one of his scripts, tells: “We’ve got an hour and twenty five minutes on the screen—you show a woman being, unfaithful to a man for one third of that time and you’ve given the impression that she’s one third. Whore” (40). Wylie is later held responsible for a weak gangster scenario:

> “Who wrote the scene?” Stahr asked after a minute.

> “Wylie White”.

> “Is he Sober?”

> “Sure he is”

> Stahr considered.

> “Put about four writers on the scene tonight.” he said.

> “See who we’ve got” (55).

Fitzgerald hated the way the studios assigned writers to work, behind him and the way his scripts were mercilessly cut. One of the biggest disappointments in his life was when Joseph Manckiewicz, a producer, rewrote his script: “I am utterly miserable ‘at seeing months of work and thought negated in one hasty week.” (*The Letters* 564)
Wylie White, who seems to embody Fitzgerald’s frustrations with Hollywood script writing, betrays Stahr. Fitzgerald seems to put his own experience in ironic context, writing against the grain of his own feeling by sympathizing with the Hollywood producer rather than the writer. He identified with Stahr and White, put them in opposition, seeing one as a kind of destructive complement to the other. He was again bifurcating his own dual nature embodying both the mask and the antimask of that nature seeing the writer in him destroyed and portraying the source of destruction. Stahr represents what Fitzgerald would have liked to become, White represents what Fitzgerald feared he would become.

Zelda in a North Carolina institution, Sheilah Graham took her place in Fitzgerald’s life as Kathleen Moore takes the place of Minna, Stahr’s deceased wife. Stahr, who loved his wife dearly, is attracted to Kathleen because she looks like Minna just as Fitzgerald was attracted to Miss Sheila Graham who looked like Zelda. Miss. Sheila Graham ponders: “If I was Kathleen, Minna was Zelda [...]. Had he, has he - been reliving with me his life with Zelda?” (Beloved Infidel 243). The past has a tremendous appeal for Stahr, and he carries with him the memories of his wife Minna and his growing love for Kathleen. His attempt to recapture the dead past is to get back his lost sense of youthful excitement and romance. Stahr realizes that Kathleen is his last hope. His old and more vital point of view depends upon his marrying her: Stahr “This is your girl, she can save you, she can worry you back to life”(115). Like Dick, Stahr needs to have people depend on him and Kathleen: “Will take looking after and you will grow strong to do it” (115). Kathleen, “Promises to give life back to Stahr” (151). Kathleen’s sudden marriage inspiring Stahr’s
drunken behaviour, enters the novel on the shoulders of the Goddess Siva, the Destroyer. This tale of ruin is the story Fitzgerald retold in his fiction. It was the story he came to live.

Stahr is seen through the youthful eyes of Cecilia Brady, Fitzgerald's narrator, the nineteen-year-old daughter of William Brady and Stahr's rival. She has fallen in love with Stahr, and admits that she had “the young illusion that most adventures are good” (11). It comes as a shock for her to see Stahr humiliated by Brimmer, the communist, who is trying to organize labor in the movie industry as Stahr considers himself a paternalistic employer and it angers him to think that his workers would ever want a union. In her embarrassment for Stahr, she wishes that he were ten years younger not tired, worn-out and physically sick man she sees. Fitzgerald had himself his sickness in his mind. Fitzgerald through Stahr's doctor thinks: “He was due to die very soon now. Within six months one could say definitely. What was the use of developing the Cardiograms?” (109-110).

Fitzgerald puts the emphasis not totally upon the loss of the protagonist's youth, the loss of illusion, or genius. He shifts the focus to a glamorous film industry to which some of his heroines aspired; Gloria Blaine, and Rosemary Hoyt, and the decline takes place in the industry when it destroys its last tycoon.

The split between the controllers of the movie industry, on the one hand, and the various groups of employers, on the other, is widening and leaving no place for real individualists of business like Stahr, whose successes are personal achievements and whose
career has always been invested with a certain glamour .... In Hollywood he is the last tycoon (131).

The novel spirals out from a story of an individual to a story of history; in other words, from the personal to the public. Monroe Stahr loses his vitality and goes into decline so also does Hollywood and America itself. Romantically identifying his personal crises with the larger cultural, political, and economic crises of the inter-war years. Fitzgerald inserts himself into the texts of history and society.

Fitzgerald’s maturation, both as an artist, and as a person is exhibited in a carefully and wholly conceived vision of life and experience: “everything Fitzgerald wrote was drawn from a firm intellectual center ... he had a consistent point of view which determined all the fiction” (Chambers 105).

Fitzgerald’s own statement reflecting his sense of the self as multiple, and conflicted deserves mention: “There never was a good biography of a good novelist. There couldn’t be. He is too many people if he’s any good” (The Crack-Up 177), a self-protective statement, but true to the extent that the novelist defined his selfhood in terms of his fictive creations. He wrote to bring into his life through fiction a special emotion, a special experience. He was too obsessed with avoiding the reality of failure to be fascinated with its psychological causes and complexities. His craft was a means of flight for him--into a brighter and better world where he could relive his hurts and where people would act as he could expect. Fitzgerald, like his protagonists Nick and Dick, longed to escape into a kind of boyhood world where the authority of the father would be a solace, a source of comfort in defeat and in a very real way
he found such an avenue of great escape. Sigmund Freud significantly made a remark in this regard:

The artist, like the neurotic, had withdrawn from an unsatisfying reality into this world of imagination; but, unlike the neurotic, he knew how to find a way back from it and once more to get a firm foothold in reality. His creations, works of art, were the imaginary gratifications of unconscious wishes, just as dreams are (The Life and Works of Sigmund Freud 421).

For Fitzgerald, escape into his fiction led him to have a true permanent achievement. Thus Fitzgerald undertakes a heroic struggle through his protagonists to expose the American Dream. That, in turn, illustrates the philosophy of nihilistic existentialism through the quest that life, at best, is merely a trajectory between zero and zero. To sum up, both the artist and his creation evolve out conspicuously from a personality to a personage.