Chapter - 5

Tender is the Night - A Novel of the Shortcomings of American Civilization and a Magnificent Failure
Almost after a decade of the publication of the unfailing novel, *The Great Gatsby*, *Tender is the Night*, a gigantic landmark, was published on April 12, 1934. Fitzgerald started writing this fourth novel when he was living on the Rivera in the late summer of 1925. At first he had worked in bursts and had put aside the manuscript for months at a time while he wrote his profitable stories for the *Saturday Evening Post*. But early in 1932 he had found a more ambitious plan for it and had gone into debt to work on it steadily until the last chapters were written and the last deletions made in proof. After having laboured for nine years at last Fitzgerald came to a final version of *Tender is the Night - A Romance* which was serialized in *Scribner's Magazine* during the Winter and Spring of 1933–34.

*Tender is the Night*, the philosophical and psychological novel, is directly connected with the short story, *One Trip Abroad* which was written in 1930. Like the novel, its story is centrally concerned with the gradual decay in Europe of a handsome American couple of good breeding and sufficient wealth to be idle. Almost all the important parts of the final version of the novel are in the short story. Fitzgerald intended to name the novel *The Drunkard's Holiday*. Dr. Diver's Holiday, Dick and Nicole Diver, Richard Diver, and then *Tender is the Night - A Romance*, *Tender is the Night*’s both the title and epigraph are from Keats's *Ode to Nightingale*.

*Already with thee! tender is night.....*

*......But here there is no light,*

*Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown*

*Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.*
It is a great social novel which demonstrates how the intricacies of Psychology can describe, in dramatic form, the effects of an eroded society on human personality. The story of the novel may be explained just in one or two sentences as the life of the well-to-do American expatriates on the Riviera during the 1920's. The essential setting of the book is post-war western world confusion as that world undergoes disintegrations and refashioning in a moraes of identity. It is not a great American historical novel, rather, it is a great American novel about history, a chronicle of post-war loss of kinds of identities associated with stable societies, social altruism, and personal responsibility. The story of the hero Dick Diver is a microcosm of that history.

Tender is the Night, Fitzgerald's most ambitious novel, was his favourite among his works. Although it lacks the technical perfection generally attributed to The Great Gatsby, Tender is the Night contains some of Fitzgerald's first writing, and reveals an extraordinary maturity of perception of the underlying causes of human failure. Fitzgerald's consistent intention in the novel was to show "the break-up of a fine personality... caused not by flabbiness but really tragic forces such as the inner conflicts of the idealist and the compromises forced upon him by circumstances".

His protagonist, Dick. Diver, possesses "all the talents, including especially great charm". He is, in fact, a "Superman in possibilities" but he lacks the "Tensile strength" of the truly great personality". 

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Dick Diver's personal tragedy exemplifies Fitzgerald's abiding fascination with the immeasurable distance between the two worlds of the ideal and the actual. The burden of the novel is Dick's futile attempts to synthesize these two irreconcilable worlds in his personal, social and professional relationships. One man's private agony, however, gradually assumes universal significance in the novel, for Dick Diver and his circle of friends and associates also function as a microcosm of western civilization.

_Tender is the Night_ concerns itself with a set of expatriates who congregate on the French Riviera in the postwar years between 1925 and 1929. Among these international drifters are members of the decadent European aristocracy and a number of wealthy Americans of diversified social and cultural backgrounds. Although the novel begins and ends on the French Riviera, the Principal action shifts between the Rivera and Zurich, Switzerland. A fifty-page flashback fills in Diver's background from 1917, when he is sent by his army superiors to complete his medical studies in Zurich, to the beginning of the action proper on the Rivera in June 1925(2).

The plot of _Tender is the Night_ is presented in Dick Diver's point of view. Dick Diver is a young American psychiatrist of great promise who, while continuing his studies in Switzerland, falls in love with Nicole Warren, a rich and beautiful mental patient. Gradually yielding to Nicole's wistful, persistent offering of herself, Dick marries her against his better professional judgment.
When the novel begins, in June 1925, Dick and Nicole have been married for six years and are living with their two children at the Villa Diana, the luxurious home they have built on the Riviera with Nicole's money. A young actress, Rosemary Hoyt, comes with her mother, Elsie Speers, to spend a few days at nearby Gausse Beach, where Rosemary meets and becomes infatuated with Dick. As Dick gradually responds to Rosemary's overtures, Nicole begins to apprehend the situation and has two sudden violent mental seizures.

Rosemary and her mother leave the Riviera; Dick helps Nicole regain her equilibrium. During their six year marriage Dick has developed a husband—doctor attitude toward Nicole. With each recurrence of her illness he has soothed her anxieties and brought her back to sanity by recreating for her a world in which she finds some measure of stability. After Nicole's second attack, Dick opens a clinic for wealthy mental patients in partnership with a psychiatrist friend, Dr. Franz Gregorovius. At the clinic, situated in Zurich, Dick hopes to provide Nicole with an atmosphere in which she feels secure. This venture, financed by Warren money, is encouraged by Nicole's calculating sister, Baby Warren, whose purpose is to maintain the family hold on the professional services of Doctor Diver for Nicole.

At the clinic, however, Nicole experiences another mental collapse, and causes an automobile accident that almost proves fatal to both the Divers and their children. The constant drain upon Dick's own emotional resources begins to tell, and he unconsciously seeks to free himself of Nicole's devastating, parasitic dependency.
Dick takes a leave of absence from the clinic, and contrives to see Rosemary Hoyt, who has become a highly successful Hollywood actress in the four years since their first meeting. They attempt to resume their romance, but after a brief sexual encounter Dick decided to return to Zurich and Nicole. Dick's partner, Gregorovius, however, alienated by reports of Dick's increasing alcoholism and his adverse effects upon some of the patients, moves to dissolve the partnership.

Dick and Nicole return to their Riviera home, the Villa Diana. As Dick's behaviour becomes noticeably erratic, Nicole regains her mental stability. She initiates a romance with Tommy Barban, a handsome soldier of fortune who has been friendly with the Divers and in love with Nicole for many years. Dick contrives to compel Nicole to assert her independence of him, and he then agrees to a divorce. After Nicole's marriage to Tommy Barban, Dick returns to the United States and drifts from one small New York town practice to another. The novel concludes with Nicola apparently cured, and Dick a professional and psychological failure.

The story on the other hand is presented through the eyes of Rosemary Hoyt. The novel begins with the arrival of a young movie star named Rosemary Hoyt at Cap d'Antibes on the Riviera. When Rosemary goes down to the beach she finds herself between two groups of expatriates. The first is an incoherent mixture. There is "Mama" Abrams, "one of those elderly 'good sports' preserved by an imperviousness to experience and a good digestion into another generation." There is a writer named Albert McKisco who, according to his
wife, Violet, is at work on a novel “on the idea of Ulysses. Only instead of
taking twenty four hours [he] takes a hundred years. He takes a decayed old
French aristocrat and puts him in contrast with the mechanical age…” There is a
waspishly witty young man named Royal Dumphry and his companion, Luis
Campion who keeps admonishing Mr. Dumphry not to “be too ghastly for
words.” The other group consists of Dick Diver and his wife, Nicole, their
friends Abe and Mary North, and a young Frenchman named Tommy Barban.

Rosemary is instinctively attracted to the second group but she is quickly
picked up by the first group, who cannot wait to tell her they recognize her from
her film. It is not a very happy group. For one thing, it is clearly jealous of the
second group. “If you want to enjoy yourself here,” Mrs. McKisco says, “the
things is to get to know some real French families. What do these people get out
of it? They just stick around with each other in little cliques. Of course we had
letters of introduction and met all the best French artists and writers in Paris.”
For another thing, Mr. McKisco is being difficult, as if, in spite of his extensive
collection of second hand attitudes from the best reviews, he does not quite know
who he is or where he is going. When his wife makes a harmless joke, he bursts
out irritably, “For God’s sake, Violet, drop the subject! Get a new joke, for
God’s sake!” and when she leans over to Mrs. Abrams and says apologetically,
“He’s nervous,” McKisco barks, “I’m not nervous. It just happens I’m not
nervous at all.”

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It is the poverty of ideas and the mediocrity of imagination in these people, the shapelessness of their natures, that depresses and discomforts Rosemary and makes her dislike them. It is her glimpses of the opposite qualities in the second group that attracts her. What Rosemary sees in Dick Diver is his consideration, his grace, his sensitivity to others, and—behind them all—his intense vitality. No wonder she falls in love with him.

At this point Fitzgerald goes back to trace Dick's history. He is the son of a gentle, impoverished clergyman in Buffalo, from whom he had inherited his old-fashioned, formal manners and what Fitzgerald calls "good instincts," honor, courtesy, courage." He has gone to Yale, been a Rhodes Scholar, and been trained as a psychiatrist at Johns Hopkins, in Vienna, and in Zurich. After the war, he returns to Zurich, where he meets again a young mental patient named Nicole Warren, who has clung to their slight relation all through the war and her slow recovery from an illness that is not congenital but has been brought on by her father's seducing her.

Dick falls in love with Nicole, and in spite of his professional knowledge that she may be a lifelong mental problem, despite the unconscious arrogance with which the Warrens make it clear they are buying a doctor to take care of Nicole, he marries her. This act reveals the defect of uncontrollable generosity in Dick's character. "He wanted," Fitzgerald says, "to be good, he wanted to be kind, he wanted to be brave and wise...; [and] he wanted to be loved, too..." He had an "extraordinary virtuosity with people... the power of arousing a fascinated and uncritical love." This power was a kind of imaginative unselfishness: "it was themselves he gave back to [people]," as Fitzgerald says, "blurred by the compromise of how many years." This power he could not resist exercising, not merely to give Nicole back her self but to make everyone he came close to feel once more the self he had been at his best.
Dick knows from the start that in taking up his life with Nicole among the Warrens and their kind he is making the task he has set himself as difficult as possible, but with his youthful vitality intact, that seems to him only to make it more challenging and interesting. For five years he meets that challenge effortlessly. Then, at first imperceptible, his life begins to slip from his control. Something within him, some essential vitality, is beginning to decline and he slowly realizes that he has exhausted the source of energy for the superb self-discipline that makes it possible for him to perform for others what he calls his "trick of the heart."

This change occurs very deep in his nature. Fitzgerald is careful to prevent the reader from thinking it is some change controllable by the will, some drift into dissipation or the idleness of the rich. Dick does begin to drift in these ways, but that is only a symptom of his trouble, a desperate search for something to fill the time and stave off boredom after the meaning and purpose have gone out of his life. What destroys Dick is something far more obscure and difficult to grasp, some spiritual malaise that is anterior to any rational cause and it - as has become much plainer since Fitzgerald noticed it - as widespread among sensitive people in our time as was accidie in the middle ages or melancholia, the "Elizabethan malady," in Shakespeare's. Dick Diver is, as Fitzgerald put it in one of his notes for the book, not simply an homme manqué, but an homme épuisé. He is in a state of terrible spiritual ennui that is without visible cause and yet makes men like him - talented, attractive, successful - feel quite literally that all the uses of the world are weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable. "I did not manage. I think in retrospect," Fitzgerald once said of Dick Diver, "to give Dick
the cohesion I aimed at..... I wonder what the hell the first actor who played Hamlet thought of the part? I can hear him say, “The guy’s a nut, isn’t he?” (We can always find great consolation in Shakespeare).”

Perhaps he did not manage to give Dick all the cohesion he might have, but the real difficulty is that the source of Dick’s disaster is indescribable. It can be shown and felt, but it can no more be analyzed than Hamlet’s disaster can. As a result the main action of Tender is the Night is, for all its haunting emotional appeal, as puzzling and unparaphrasable as is the famous passage from Keats’s Ode to a Nightingale from which its title comes.

What Fitzgerald can – and does – do is to create for the reader a group of characters who, as dramatic parallels or contrasts with Dick, show what he is. The first of these we learn all about is Abe North, a musician who, after a brilliant start, has done nothing for the last seven years except drink. When Mary North says, “I used to think until you’re eighteen nothing matters,” he says. “That’s right. And afterwards it’s the same way.” And when Nicole, frightened at what he is doing to himself and irritated by his lack of any visible reasons for doing it, says to him, “I can’t see why you’ve given upon everything,” he can only say, “I suppose I got bored; and then it was such a long way to go back in order to get anywhere.” Dick has understood from the beginning what has happened to Abe, even though he will not know what it feels like until latter. “Smart men,” he has said of Abe, “play close to the line because they have to – some of them can’t stand it, so they quit.” Thus, at the very start of the novel, Abe North has reached the point Dick will reach at its end.
About halfway through the novel, just as Dick is beginning his own desperate battle with the impulse to quit, he hears – in fact: he overhears, as a piece of idle feelingless gossip – that Abe has been beaten up in a New York speakeasy and crawled to the Racker Club to die – or was it the Harvard Club? The gossips’ grumbling quarrel over where it was Abe died fades out around Dick as he tries to face the meaning of Abe’s death, a death more shocking – more grubby and humiliating as well as more terrifying to him – than anything he had dreamed of.

There is also Tommy Barban, a sophisticated and worldly barbarian of great charm, who stands for everything Dick Diver most disapproves of. The carefully ordered life that Dick first constructed for Nicole and himself because it was necessary to Nicole’s health has, as Nicole’s need for it has slowly decreased, been gradually transformed to another purpose, until it has become an alert but elaborate, almost ritualized ordering of the pleasures of a highly cultivated existence. The whole business irritates Tommy, partly because it is all strictly under Dick’s control and holds Nicole, with whom Tommy has been in love for years, a prisoner, but partly too because it represents in itself a way of life that offends him deeply. When he is about to leave the Riviera, Rosemary Hoyt asks him if he is going home. “Home?” he says, “I have no home. I am going to a war,” and when Rosemary asks him what war, he say’s “What war? Any war. I haven’t seen a paper latterly but I suppose there’s a war – there always is.” A little shocked by this, Rosemary asks him if he doesn’t care at all about what he may find himself fighting for, and he says, “Not at all – so long as I’m well treated. When I’m in a rut I come to see the divers, because I know that in a few weeks I’ll want to go to war.”
The novel's central group of characters consists of Dick, Nicole, Rosemary, and these two. It is surrounded by a larger group of minor characters, each of whom shows us an aspect of the world Dick Diver lives in. There is Lady Caroline Sibley-Biers, the latest wild woman from London, petulant and stupid, whose idea of amusement is to dress up as a French sailor and pick up a girl in Antibes. There is Baby Warren, Nicole's sister, "a tall fine-looking woman deeply engaged in being thirty" who "was alien from touch" and for whom "such lingering touches as kisses and embraces slipped directly through the flesh into the forefront of her consciousness." She is supremely confident that the most dehumanized routines of British social life are the ideal existence and that her series of engagements to socially eligible Englishmen, which even she no longer really expects will come to anything, constitutes a full life. There is Albert McKisco, the confused but proud possessor of a host of secondhand ideas that safely insulate him from experience. Such characters define for us the chic grossness, the neurotic orderliness, the lifeless intellectualuality of the world Dick Diver lives in. They are not what they are because they are rich, being rich, they are able to be what they are with a freedom and completeness that ordinary people cannot. Still, they are not what they are merely because they are rich; they are so because the world is.

In this world Dick Diver's need to reach out to people, to galvanize them into life by reminding them of the selves they originally were, is like a wound, a "lesion of vitality" as Fitzgerald calls it, from which his spiritual energy slowly drips away until there is nothing left. At the beginning of the novel, "one June
morning in 1925” when Rosemary meets Dick, the first faint signs of the loss have begun to show. He is still able to produce for people such enchanted moments as the one on the beach that Rosemary has watched with delight, when he holds a whole group of people enthralled not by what he does - what he does is almost nothing – but by the quality of his performance, the delicate sense of the tone and feeling of occasion and audience by which he can make a small group of people feel they are alone with each other in the dark universe, in some magically protected place where they can be their best selves. He performs this trick of the heart once again for Rosemary when she goes to dinner with Divers just after she has met them. At the climax of that dinner, the table seemed for a moment “to have risen a little toward the sky like a mechanical dancing platform” and

The two Divers began suddenly to warm and glow and expand, as if to make up to their guests, already so subtly of their importance, so flattered with politeness, for anything they might still miss from that country well left behind. Just for a moment they seemed to speak to every one at the table, singly and together, assuring them of their friendliness, their affection. And for a moment the faces turned up toward them were like the faces of poor children at a Christmas tree.

But, now, each such moment is followed for Dick by a spell of deep melancholy in which he looks “back with awe at the carnival of affection he had given, as a general might gaze at a massacre he had ordered to satisfy an impersonal blood lust.” Rosemary catches a glimpse of that melancholy, without
recognizing it, her very first morning on the beach when, after all the others have
gone, Dick stops to tell her she must not get too sunburned and she says with
young cheerfulness. "Do you know what time it is?" and Dick says, "It's about
half-past one."

They faced the seascape together momentarily.

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These periods of melancholy are one consequence of his decreasing
vitality; another is his inability to maintain the self-discipline he has heretofore
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momentary impulses that he can fulfill his central need to make the world over
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He goes off alone to try to rest and get himself together and discovers to his horror that he cannot stop yielding to every vagrant impulse of his nature – to charm a pretty girl, to blurt out without regard for his listeners the bitterness in his heart. He sees more clearly than anyone what is happening to him, but since it is happening somewhere below the level of reason, beyond the control of his will, he can only watch helplessly. "He had lost himself – he could not tell the hour when; or the week, the month, or the year.... Between the time he found Nicole flowering under a stone on the Zurichsee and the moment of his meeting with Rosemary the spear had been blunted."

The first faint signs of this loss of self had appeared at that first meeting with Rosemary Hoyt on the beach at Antibes. When, five years later, he and Rosemary meet again on the same beach, now crowded with dull, fashionable people, he says to her, "Did you hear I'd gone into a process of deterioration?... It's true. The change came a long way back-but at first it didn't show. The manner remains intact after the morale cracks." By a desperate effort he can still force himself at moments to exercise that manner, but these moments come more and more rarely and require him to be drunker and drunker, a condition in which he is as likely to assert the black despair in his heart in some outburst of incoherent violence, as he does when he picks a fight in Rome with a detective and in beaten up and thrown in jail, or when at Antibes he gets into a drunken, confused argument with Lady Caroline Sibley-Biers and even she is able to make him look foolish. These scenes are almost intolerably moving, for Fitzgerald's lifelong habit of giving events the value they have for the person who suffers them rather than their conventional public value makes us feel these trivial misfortunes as what they are, the loose ends of life, as Zelda once said, with which men hang themselves.
Finally Dick accepts the exhaustion of his vitality and its consequences, his inability to control himself to any purpose, his inability to love and be loved by others. He sets himself to cut his losses – his responsibilities for Nicole and the children and his friends – and to bury his dead – himself. The task is made simpler by the fact that Nicole has now recovered completely. Though she still depends on Dick, her dependence is now only old habit, not necessity. As she has recovered she has become more and more the superficially orderly, inwardly anarchic barbarian that has always been her true Warren self. As such, she turns instinctively away from Dick and toward Tommy Barban. Dick therefore sets himself to break her dependence on him and to push her toward Tommy. At the last moment he deliberately provokes a quarrel with her and then watches silently while she struggles to deny him and assert her independence. When she succeeds, "Dick waited until she was out of sight. Then he leaned his head forward on the parapet. The case was finished. Doctor Diver was at liberty."

The movement of Tender is the Night is like the trickling of the sands in an hourglass. Nicole's strength accrues from the weakening of Dick's. Each of the three books of the novel is presented primarily from the point of view of one character. The variations in point of view – from Rosemary's to Dick's to Nicole's – also coincide with the shifting of the hourglass, marking the ascendancy of one character over the other.

Dick, Nicole, and Rosemary are the central characters of Tender is the Night. But the novel is enriched by a host of secondary figures, insignificant in themselves, who, nonetheless, provide the vibrant emotional atmosphere in
which Dick and Nicole subsist. Memorable among these minor characters are Abe North, an alcoholic musician, "who after a brilliant and precocious start had composed nothing for seven years," and his charming wife, Mary, who keeps "changing herself into this kind of person or that" in the hope of reforming her husband. After Abe is brutally beaten to death in a speakeasy, Mary becomes the Contessa di Minghetti, the wife of a Middle East potentate. She later reappears in the novel as the lesbian companion of Lady Caroline Sibley-Biers, the "wickedest woman in London."

In addition to these characters are Tommy Barban, the anarchic mercenary soldier whose charm and social graces never quite conceal his primitive brute strength of purpose and desire. There is also Baby Warren, a "tall, restless virgin" with "something wooden and onanistic about her," whose sexual energies are channeled into exploiting people who may prove useful to the Warren family. From a lower level of society are the fledgling novelist, Albert McKisco, and his wife, Violet, who constantly struggles "to make tangible to herself her shadowy positions as the wife of an arriviste who had not arrived." Ironically, McKisco, with a talent only for synthesizing the ideas of the best writers of his time, becomes a successful novelist; while Abe North and Dick, both possessing natural brilliance and early promise, become notable failures.

Of the three principal characters, Dick and Nicole are fully believable persons. They command our involvement in their tormented lives. Their weaknesses and inconsistencies are pathetic reminders that the human person is, at best, a fragmented being groping toward self-realization.
Rosemary Hoyt, on the other hand, is a functional character. She holds our interest because our introduction to the Diver world is through the indiscrimination, romantic eyes of this inexperienced girl, “hovering delicately on the last edge of childhood,” which is precisely the perspective that Dick wants to be seen through.

If Rosemary appears to dominate the first third of the action, leading the reader to believe that she is either the central character or an essential part of the plot, that power expresses Fitzgerald’s intention of making her a “catalytic agent.” Having played her provocative role, therefore, in arousing Dick’s desire for an uncomplicated, carefree love, Rosemary dissolves from the main action.

The ease with which Dick becomes infatuated with Rosemary is the first indication that, although his love for Nicole is the pivotal of his life, it has become a love of compassion, of obligation rather than a mutually enriching emotion. Drawing on the only point of reference available to her, Rosemary intuits that the Divers’ love was “a rather cooled relation, and actually rather like the love of herself and her mother. When people have so much for outsiders didn’t it indicate a lack of inner intensity?” Her comparison of loves rings true to a degree: the Diver marriage is, in one aspect, a sublimated father – daughter relationship. What Rosemary cannot perceive, however, is that so much of that love, the passion that does exist between the Divers must be directed most intensely toward structuring social forms to which Nicole can relate with normality. Rosemary is unaware “that the simplicity of behaviour also, the nursery-like peace and good will, the emphasis on the simpler virtues, was part of a desperate bargain with the gods and had been attained through struggles she could not have guessed at.”
Rosemary’s rapturous evaluation of the Divers, then, is not to be given our full credence. “You have romantic eyes,” Dick cautions her at one point. The irony consists in the disparity between the realities of the Divers’ lives and the effusive misconceptions of a starry-eyed girl. The Divers represent to her “the exact furthermost evolution of a class, so that more people seemed awkward beside them.” Rosemary does not realize – as Dick does – that “in reality a qualitative change had already set in that was not at all apparent.”

At first glance Rosemary appears to function as a foil for Nicole: Rosemary’s naive romanticism contrasting with Nicole’s studied sophistication. In actuality, the similarities between the two women are more notable than the contrasts. Not quite eighteen years old when she arrives on the Riviera, Rosemary is just about the same age that Nicole was when she met and fell in love with Dick. At this age both Rosemary and Nicole are soft, ingenuous, impressionable, but they also possess the potential and inclination to be equally hard, pragmatic, determined. Both girls emerge from institutions designed to exclude jarring experiences.

(Nicole from a mental clinic; Rosemary from a convent school) to worlds that are simulations of reality.

Nicole functions with a measure of stability in an insulated world created and maintained by Dick, who also interprets her attitudes toward society.

Rosemary is drawn into the artifice of Hollywood with the success of her first motion picture, Daddy’s Girl. Her mentor and idol is her mother, Elsie Speers, who directs her daughter’s life as if she were coaching her for her next leading role.
You were brought up to work — not especially to marry. Now you’ve found your first nut to crack and it’s a good nut — go ahead and put whatever happens down to experience. Wound yourself or him — whatever happens it can’t spoil you because economically you’re a boy, not a girl.

Mrs. Speers’s judgment is accurate. Rosemary will never be “spoiled” as an actress. Her capacity for genuine emotional involvement with anyone other than her mother is limited. She experiences life through the rehearsed emotions of the celluloid world of motion pictures. When she begs Dick to make love to her, Rosemary realizes that she is composing the words of a script: “She was calling on things she had read, seen, dreamed through a decade of convent hours. Suddenly she knew too that it was one of her greatest roles and she flung herself into it more passionately.”

Rosemary is the perennial child-woman. In her first film Rosemary is cast as Daddy’s Girl, and this appears to be her leitmotif throughout the novel. Actually, Rosemary is, and remains, very much Mommy’s Girl. With no living father as a referent, Rosemary cannot conceive male persons as men. Her prospective lovers are evaluated by her mother’s standards and measured against the illimitable perfection of her mother’s image.

Rosemary thinks she is in love with Dick; in reality, she is simply encompassing him within the love she has for her mother: “But always there was Dick, Rosemary assured the image of her mother, ever carried with her, that never, never had she known any one so nice, so thoroughly nice as Dick was that night.”
At one point in their relationship Dick becomes irritated with Rosemary’s constant comparisons of him with her mother: “For the first time the mention of her mother annoyed rather than amused Dick. He wanted to sweep away her mother, remove the whole affair from the nursery footing upon which Rosemary persistently established it.” But the novel indicates that Rosemary never evolves beyond nursery status. After their last meeting Dick declares: “Rosemary didn’t grow up.... It’s probably better that way.”

Nicole, the beautiful mad woman, is the pivotal figure of Tender is the Night. A silent, withdrawn woman, she nonetheless exerts an “incalculable force” over those within her sphere of influence. Nicole is a Warren – an “American ducal family without a title” whose “very name.... caused a psychological change in people.” The Warren empire has been built on the cunning manipulation of essential industries in America. Masses of exploited laborers pay “their tithe” to Nicole. Nicole’s is an external strength. Money is her power.

Like the other commodities manufactured by the Warrens, Nicole is “the product of much toil and ingenuity.” Her schizophrenia has rendered her helpless until she is artfully “stitched together” by Doctor Dick Diver. Like an expensive, mechanical doll, Nicole responds to external control. A psychic mannequin, she necessarily moves in the patterns of social forms choreographed by the makers of her fate” her father, Devereux Warren; her sister, Baby; her doctor – husband -keeper, Dick; and finally, her lover, Tommy Barban.
Nicole’s schizophrenia is caused by the incestuous relationship that her father fosters unwittingly, until he physically imposes his sexual will upon her. Nicole’s relationship emerge whenever her illness recurs. Her sense of guilt is expressed in images of blackness. After her marriage to Dick, her first schizophrenic attack coincides with the birth of her second child, her daughter Topsy. The inevitable association of girl child with guilt triggers her fantasy that the “baby is black,” suggesting a satanic paternity.

Both subsequent episodes of insanity erupt in bathrooms, indicating Nicole’s obsession with elimination and debasement. The first occurs after the intrusion of Rosemary, Daddy’s Girl, into Nicole’s marriage, the second, after the murder of the black man in the bedroom of Rosemary’s hotel suite. We are witness to the second attack in which Nicole desperately attempts to wash the bloodstains from the bedspread. She babbles incoherently about being forced to wear a domine, a black hooded cloak worn at masquerades.

The imagery of blackness constantly informs the reader that Nicole’s psychic life is acted out from a remote place in her past beyond the actual places and persons of her immediate life.

Dick Diver is the most complex and the most controversial characters in Tender is the Night. In the brilliance of his promise, he represents all that Fitzgerald, himself, hoped to be; in his fall, Dick foreshadows what Fitzgerald feared he would become.
The conflicts that will later destroy Dick are early discerned by an intellectual university companion, who warns him, "You're not a romantic philosopher - you're a scientist. Memory, face, character - especially good sense. That's going to be your trouble - judgment about yourself."

At the age of twenty-six Dick is a gifted psychiatrist with a distinguished academic record. He has arrived at this point in his career with "less Achilles' heels than would be required to equip a centipede, but with plenty -." Dick's vulnerability resides in his idealism, in his "illusions of eternal strength and health, and of the essential goodness of people." Dick admits that the price of keeping his illusions intact is "incompleteness" as a man. Even Nicole, in her madness, realized that Dick "must touch life in order to spring from it."

Dick's essential idealism is an inheritance from his father, an unworldly clergyman who became his son's "moral guide." Mr. Diver instilled in Dick his own belief "that nothing could be superior to 'good instincts,' honour, courtesy, and courage".

When Dick, sitting in a restaurant with Nicole and Rosemary, sees a group of mothers and wives who have come to France to visit their loved ones' graves, he perceives in these women all the dignity and "maturity of an older America." Almost with an effort, Dick turns "back to his two women at the table ... and the whole new world" - the antithetical Warren world with its new values of money and power - "in which he [now] believed."
Yet, Dick remains attached to the respected traditions in which he has been raised. Standing on one of the French battlefields of World War I, Dick mourns for the irretrievable past that was destroyed there: "All my beautiful lovely safe world blew itself up her with a great gust of high explosive love." Dick's regret is not simple for a past glorified by romantic memories, but rather, for the passing of a culture rooted in centuries of tradition, a culture that fought inch by inch to keep its heritage intact: "This took religion and years of plenty and tremendous sureties and the exact relation that existed between the classes."

The "Sureties" of Dick's upbringing inspire his intention to be "brave and kind... And even more than that to be loved." But Dick's need "to be loved" becomes insatiable, and later compels him to draw relentlessly upon his considerable store of natural talents and graces. Dick recklessly exerts his ability to generate excitement about things "out of proportion to their importance." He is exhilarated by his "power of arousing a fascinated and uncritical love," until he realized the "waste and extravagance involved. He sometimes looked back with awe at the carnival of affection he had given, as a general might gaze upon a massacre he had ordered to satisfy an impersonal blood lust."

Eventually, Dick violates his own nature by giving of himself so totally to those whose admiration he woos that he is left completely sterile, committed to carrying with him "the egos of certain people, early met and early loved and to be only as complete as they were themselves complete." Dick, then, becomes a sponge assimilating all the weaknesses of the people he has loved and pandered to.
Disproportionate love is a perversion of love, and in *Tender is the Night* love assumes many corruptive forms. Love becomes a dehumanizing force in the novel, because it is asked to do things it cannot do. The range of love is also unlimited in the novel, encompassing virtually all kinds of sexual behaviour. Yet, whatever its manifestation, love is rendered debasing, for the most part, because of the quality of emotion the characters impart to the relationship. People use sexuality in *Tender is the Night*, forcing it to create feelings that are usually spontaneously inspired by love.

Nicole overcomes her first fear of Dick as male by investing him, in her mad fantasies, with soft, feline qualities: “However, you seem quieter than the others, all soft life a big cat. I have gotten to like boys who are rather sissies. Are you a sissy?” Her perception of Dick as a sissy persists even after their marriage. On the beach at the Riviera, Nicole hands her husband a “curious garment” she has made for him. Dick obediently puts it on and cause a commotion by appearing to the various groups assembled on the beach, “clad in transparent black lace drawers. Close inspection revealed that actually they were lined with flesh-colored cloth.”

Fitzgerald intimated that Dick’s indiscriminate yearning for love leads him to seek it in abortive or self-destructive relationships. Dick is attracted to “sick women” – first to Nicole; then to the hallucinatory artist – patient at the clinic who is rendered physically repulsive by terminal stages of syphilis. He also enjoys “ickle durls” as Nicole calls them: Rosemary, and later the adolescent daughter of another woman patient at the clinic. Finally, Dick is increasingly preoccupied with his own children, seeking them out, “not protectively, but for protection.”

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Abraham H. Steinberg contends that Fitzgerald deliberately "christened his hero" with a name that would "convey the author's contempt for softness." In gutter slang, the expression "dick diver" suggests sexual impotence (4). The allusions to Dick's sexual softness draw attention to the malleability of Dicks' character. For as long as she needs him, Nicole can manipulate Dick into becoming whatever she desires, even into an extension of her own flawed self. There is even the suggestion that, after ten years of Dick's care, Nicole "is less sick than any one thinks - she only cherishes her illness as an instrument of power."

Fitzgerald's choice of the name, Dick Diver, also directs attention to the impulsiveness with which Dick flings himself into new ventures, or even to the headstrong determination to dive into, to plumb the depths of the unknown. Dick "dives" into the abyss of Nicole's deranged mind, but his emotional involvement destroys the clear, objective vision he must maintain to cure his patient and keep himself intact.

In the character of Dick Diver, Fitzgerald dramatizes his own obsessive fear of "emotional bankruptcy," an irreversible condition that he defines as the "over extension of the flank, a burning of the candle at both ends, a call upon physical [and moral] resources [one does] not command, like a man overdrawing at his bank (5)." Dick Diver, seen through Rosemary's worshiping eyes as the "organizer of private gaiety, curator of a richly incrusted happiness," has already experienced a "lesion of enthusiasm, of vitality." Like Fitzgerald during this sad period of his life. Dick is "drawing on resources [he does] not possess:″ he has been "mortgaging [himself] physically and spiritually up to the hilt (6)."
Under the constant pressure of Nicole's illness and the insidious presence of the Warren money, Dick discovers that he had "lost himself-he could not tell the hour when, or the day or the week, the month or the year." He had not married Nicole for her money, for "he had never felt more sure of himself, more thoroughly his own man, than at the time of his marriage." Yet, the Warren money had gradually eroded Dick's integrity until "he had been swallowed up like a gigolo."

In many small ways, Dick reflects his own work as a psychiatrist had become confused with Nicole's problems, and, eventually, her money had "seemed to belittle his work." Dick finally capitulates to the seductiveness of the Warren fortune when he allows Baby Warren to provide the money for the clinic he establishes in Zurich with Gregorovius.

By the novel's end the sands of the hourglass have drifted down. Dick, the brilliant romantic idealist, is vanquished, forced into emotional bankruptcy; Nicole, the flawed but wealthy pragmatist, having battened on Dick's strength and love for ten years, emerges victorious.

The structural difficulties of Tender is the Night stem from Fitzgerald's handling of its tripartite organization. Although the traditional third-person narrator is used throughout the novel, each of the three parts is related principally (but not exclusively) from the point of view of a different character.

Book I, which takes place in June and July of 1925, introduces the divers and their circle through the indiscriminating point of view of Rosemary Hoyt, who imaginatively endows the Divers' world with glamour and romance. At this point the reader is presented with two conflicting levels of awareness: the glowing romanticism of Rosemary's appraisal of the Divers; the undercurrent of uneasiness generated by consistent ominous hints that the grace and charm of the Divers' way of life is purely superficial.
Fitzgerald’s manipulation of this difficult technique is impressive, but not always successful. There are a few instances in which Rosemary is removed from the action. One of these is the description of Nicole in her garden at the beginning of Chapter 6. When Rosemary reappears on the scene, Fitzgerald abruptly shifts to her consciousness with the awkward transition: “To resume Rosemary’s point of view it should be said that….” This double point of view is usually successful, however, because it communicates to the reader the same ambivalence that Dick experiences within himself.

Book II, which flashes back to Zurich in the spring of 1917, fills in the grimmer realities of the Divers background. The circumstances are revealed that (1) lead Dick to assume the dual role of Nicole’s husband and psychiatrist (2) force him to accept Warren money for the sake of Nicole and their two children (3) cause him eventually to abandon his brilliant professional prospects. The flashback follows Dick’s career from 1917 to 1919, when he marries Nicole, through the six years of their marriage to the summer of 1925 when Rosemary Hoyt meets them on the Riviera. This recapitulation is accomplished in some fifty pages. The transition from the flashback to the present action is skillfully realized in a superbly drawn stream-of-consciousness passage in which Nicole telescopes the six years of their marriage, revealing their first joys, the successful sale of Dick’s “little book” on psychology, their increasing use of Warren money. Nicole’s serious mental relapse after the birth of her daughter, her subsequent cure, and the building of the Villa Diana.
The larger part of Book II resumes the action from the end of Book I. For the remainder of the novel Fitzgerald follows a chronological order. The events of his second part are interpreted (primarily, but again, not exclusively) from Dick’s point of view. This section is positioned strategically in the novel. Having seen Dick from the outside through the eyes of an adoring adolescent in Book I, the reader is now witness to the conflict and struggles of the inner man. Book II limns the progressive deterioration of Dick Diver from the summer of 1925 to 1928.

Book III presents a reversal in the Divers’ positions. As Dick continues to degenerate, Nicole becomes psychologically stronger. Fitzgerald suggests that “the completion of his (Dick’s) ruination will be the fact that cures her – almost mystically.” This last section is seen as much as possible “through Nicole’s eyes. All Dick’s stories such as are absolutely necessary .... Must be told without putting in his reactions or feelings. From now on he is a mystery man, at least to Nicole with her guessing at the mystery (7). The process of Dick’s ruin and Nicole’s growing independence takes about a year. The novel concludes with the Divers’ divorce in the summer of 1929, and Dick’s lapse into professional oblivion.

Unlike The Great Gatsby which is called a “dramatic” novel. Tender is the Night is not a lyrical organization of dramatic moments, but a Jamaican, scenic arrangement of dramatic moments, a visual novel whose scenes are to suggest a philosophy history. The history of manners, in what Fitzgerald meant by the “Philosophical novel”, becomes a cultural clue to the meaning the moral
development, of an era. An entire civilization can be tested and evaluated in the values that surround the fate of the hero of the novel. Fitzgerald through of Tender is the Night as his vanity fair, even calling it The worlds fair in one draft. In technique, as well as in “classification” the novel is one of scenes rather than lyrical, “elaborate and overlapping blankets of prose.” The novel reflects what Fitzgerald learned in Hollywood. “Philosophical, psychological” novel is a social novel which demonstrates here the intricacies of psychology can describe, in dramatic form, the effects of an eroded society an human personality. A total national summation of the uncertainty of identity that Fitzgerald micro cosmically summed up in his most American aspects in the novel.

In Tender is the Night, Fitzgerald supplied an international setting whose series of scenes allowed him a Jamesian philosophical perspective of the two Americas. His Philosophical novel thus allowed him a broader canvas and more complex contrasts than ever before with which to present a moral picture of the two Americas that had appeared as “the actuality” and “the dream”. He felt that Tender is the night was his most complex and profound creation, his confession of faith in his possibilities of goodness that came so complexly from what was self destructive. Into Tender is the Night he put his hard earned beliefs. That work was the only dignity; that it did not keep a serious man to be too much flattered and loved; that money and beauty were treacherous aides; the honour, courtesy, courage - the old fashioned virtues - were the best guides for all.

Fitzgerald told about Tender is the Night to a visitor, “It’s good, good good,” “I’ve got to be good and I can be in my work. I must be loved. I tip heavily to be loved. I have so many faults that I must be approved of in other ways..... I create a world for others.”
**Tender the Night** is so important for Fitzgerald. It must have been absolutely inevitable for Fitzgerald to have turned his story into national and even international biography of western moralities and wealth and in the stunningly fitting metaphor of war that permeates the novel to detail the dying fall of Dick Diver's lovely old world as the history of the loss of his own hopeful past. *Tender is the Night* is Fitzgerald's deepest summation of his books, all of which are filed with ghosts of and farewells to a past that has departed and left him forlorn, benefit of the fondest dreams of his fancy. As Keats discovered with his nightingale, Fitzgerald discovered with his dream of the golden moment that the imagination that can create the enormous and deep significance of the desire for the dream in art is over whelmed by the dissolution of the imaginings in life.

*Tender is the Night*, in literary fact, in biographical fact, and in the psychology of Fitzgerald's intentions, is the sign of the morality of art, of Fitzgerald's imagination miraculously preserved within the crack-up of his life. As always, Fitzgerald was feeding his life into a renewal of his literature; but in this book he was also feeding his literature into a renewal of his life. Memory and desire, loss and hope, were the refractors through which Dick's life, as representative of national history, would give Fitzgerald the meaning and uses of his own personal history. *The novel is* "good" *book, and the novel as nostalgic book, in short, are the same. It was the culmination of the long learning process in which Fitzgerald had come to discover that the personalism of art is also social morality.*
Fitzgerald wrote to Perkins about Tender is the Night. “The happiness thought I have is of my new novel, it is really something NEW in form, idea, structure – the model for the age that Joyce and Stein are searching for, that Conrad didn’t find”. He wrote to Mencken that the novel “will have the most amazing form ever invented”.

Tender is the Night was in many ways a fake; it pretended to all sorts of knowledge and experience of the world its author did not in fact have. But it was not a lie; it expressed with accuracy and honesty its authors inner vision of himself and his experience, however false to literal face that vision might be at certain points. Fitzgerald’s reality was always that inner vision, but he had a deep respect for the outer reality of the world because it was the only place where his inward vision could be fulfilled, could be made actual. The tension between his inescapable commitment to the inner reality of his imagination and his necessary respect for the outer reality of the world is what gives his fiction its peculiar charm and is the source of his ability to surround a convincing representation of the actual world with an air of enchantment that makes the most ordinary occasions haunting.

The novel has certain defects traceable to the conditions in which it was written. As Fitzgerald himself said of it with his remarkable honesty, “If a mind is slowed up ever so little, it lives in the individual parts 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”. Despite these defects the novel is the most mature and moving book Fitzgerald ever wrote.
In the years between *The Great Gatsby* and *Tender is the Night*, Fitzgerald clearly felt the influence of what American literary style had evolved into by 1930; that influence continued to train his trademark evocative genius toward narrative momentum without extended rhetorical flights. A rich history of literary, intellectual, social, and political influences provided an inevitable context for Fitzgerald’s style in his economic dependence on magazine short fiction during the Depression and in his attempts to write for the Hollywood studios. His fiction took on more tints of the realism that increasingly had characterized American fiction since the civil war end also merged with the existentially energized anti-sentimentality of language and event that had characterized American fiction since World War-I. *Tender is the Night* suggested the hardboiled humour, favoured by Esquire magazine, with which Fitzgerald was to characterize his last published efforts, the Pat Hobby stories; it also suggested in style with which he was to compose the compelling, beautiful fragment of *The Last Tycoon*. Seen within the totality of Fitzgerald’s work, in Fitzgerald’s mature stylistic journey *Tender is the Night* is as gigantic landmark as *The Great Gatsby*.

The complex interweaving of themes in *Tender is the Night* is among the richest of aesthetically and intellectually satisfying performances in American literature. The novel is Fitzgerald’s continuation of his moral history of his age, completing the international story where *The Great Gatsby* left off. In *Tender is the Night* Fitzgerald was writing out of his own mature power and experience, knowing yearningly that there never was an American Eden, knowing sadly that the corrupting actualities of human life had always betrayed
what Nick carryway had called that “last and greatest of all human dreams”\(^{(14)}\).

Knowing darkly that America will be America only as long as it understands that
dream. Knowing hauntingly that it is no less than an impossible dream of the
fulfillment of the best and most creative human aspiration in a world whose
idealization thereby become real. But Fitzgerald’s generative paradox is that
impossible as it its attainment without the constant reinvigoration of that dream.
America is lost, with the promise of its youth.

The materials of all of Fitzgerald’s major fictions are dreams, love, money
and marriage. In *Tender is the Night* they are complicated by incest and
madness and hugely enlarged by an international setting. But madness and incest
are not what the novel is about. It is about a world in transition, when
established values crumble when human society’s ideas of goodness, stability,
and moral purpose are lost in corruption, and when the emerging society has not
yet discovered a reason or a way to regain them. *Tender is the Night* is about
the moral chaos attendant upon violent, if inevitable, change in the western world
in the twentieth century and perhaps in all human worlds in all places and times.
The tale of a dying fall is told in the story of one good ruined in the process of
change and, in his way, representative of it in all its sad and tremendous history.

Otto Frederick Comments “Yet inspite of its faults *Tender is the Night* is
unquestionably a great novel. Which *The Great Gatsby* represents Fitzgerald’s
most perfectly expressed insight into the fraud of his own dream of success.
*Tender is the Night* combines that new insight with a new understanding of how
and why the dream disintegrates”\(^{(15)}\).
Henry Seidel Canby claimed "this promising novel is promising only in its first brilliant chapters. Part way through the author loses his grip upon the theme"\(^1\). Peter Quennell, on the other hand, believed that "the second half of book is vivid and memorable"\(^2\). Clifton Fadiman acknowledged that Mr. Fitzgerald's gifts are bewilderingly varied. He has wit, grace, astonishing narrative skill. His prose has polish and yet also bone and muscle. But.... He is certainly not objective he is both contemptuous of and in love with his characters"\(^3\).

John Chamberlain contented that the "Study of a Love affair and a marriage between doctor and mental patient... is as successful a bit of writing as it must have been difficult to create in dramatic terms. Mr. Fitzgerald set himself an incredibly confused problem, but he draws the lines clearly as he works the problem out in terms of two human beings"\(^4\).

Ernest Hemingway, who had first sharply criticized Fitzgerald for his use of Sara and Gerald Murphy in the characters of Nicole and Dick Diver, later wrote to Maxwell Perkins.

"I have found Scott's Tender is the Night. Its amazing how excellent much of it is. Much of it is better than anything else he ever wrote. How I wish he would have kept on writing. It is really all over or will he write again? Reading that novel much of it was so good it was frightening"\(^5\).

The moving and pathetic end of the novel is apt as the hero, Dick Diver's situation is far more complex and tragic. He has actually been released from the
counter – transference, both by the forced removal of his love object and by his own devastating realization that the best, most potentially productive years of his life have been spent in a subtly eroding neurosis which has left him psychically drained. He has not really lived, but rather dreamt out the better part of his life. At least Dick stays at Antibes just long enough to make sure Nicole is safe in Tommy’s hands and then leaves for America, taking with him nothing least of all himself.

2) The latter version of *Tender is the Night*, edited by Malcom Cowley, published in 1951. (Charles Scribners sons, New York)

3) Bruccoli, *Tender is the Night*, cit... PP.214-215.

4) A.H. Steinberg, Fitzgerald’s portrait of a psychiatrist, in Tender is the Night; Essay in Criticism ed. Marvin J.Lattood (Bloomington, Indiana, 1969) P.143.


6) *The Crack – Up*, P.72

7) Bruccoli. Op. Cit.77


9) Cowleys’ introduction to *Tender is the Night, Three novels of F. Scott Fitzgerald*, (Charles Scribner’s Sons, New York – 1953). P.1V

10) Guthrie, quoted in Turnbull. P.261

11) Letters, P.182

12) Ibid. P.481
13) Letters P.212


16) Bruccoli & S. Baughman Gudith - Reader’s Companion to F. Scott Fitzgerald’s Tenders is the Night (University of South Carolina Columbia, 1996). P. 371- 381.

17) Ibid. P381

