

Original cover art

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



Original cover art The cover of *The Great Gatsby* is among the most celebrated pieces of art in American literature.[9] It depicts disembodied eyes and a mouth over a blue skyline, with the image of a naked woman reflected in the irises. A little-known artist named Francis Cugat was commissioned to illustrate the book while Fitzgerald was in the midst of writing it. The cover was completed before the novel, with Fitzgerald so enamored of it that he told his publisher he had "written it into" the novel. [9] Fitzgerald's remarks about incorporating the painting into the novel led to the interpretation that the eyes are reminiscent of those of Dr. T. J. Eckleburg (the novel's erstwhile optometrist on a faded commercial billboard near George Wilson's auto repair shop) which Fitzgerald described as "blue and gigantic – their retinas are one yard high. They look out of no face, but instead, from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a non-existent nose." Although this passage has some resemblance to the painting, a closer explanation can be found in the description of Daisy Buchanan as the "girl whose disembodied face floated along the dark cornices and blinding signs".[9] Ernest Hemingway recorded in *A Moveable Feast* that when Fitzgerald lent him a copy of *The Great Gatsby* to read, he immediately disliked the cover, but "Scott told me not to be put off by it, that it had to do with a billboard along a highway in Long Island that was important in the story. He said he had liked the jacket and now he didn't like it." [10] [edit]

Title Fitzgerald was ambivalent about the title, making it hard for him to choose. He entertained many choices before settling on *The Great Gatsby*. Fitzgerald shifted between *Gatsby*; *Among Ash-Heaps and Millionaires*; *Trimalchio*; *Trimalchio in West Egg*; *On the Road to West Egg*; *Under the Red*,

White, and Blue; Gold-Hatted Gatsby and The High-Bouncing Lover. Initially, he preferred Trimalchio, after the crude parvenu in Petronius's *Satyricon*. Unlike Fitzgerald's protagonist, Trimalchio participated in the audacious and libidinous orgies that he hosted. That Fitzgerald refers to Gatsby by the proposed title once in the novel reinforces the view that it would have been a misnomer. As Tony Tanner observed, there are subtle similarities between the two.[11] A notable difference between Trimalchio and *The Great Gatsby* is a less complete failure of Gatsby's dream in Trimalchio. In Trimalchio, the argument between Tom Buchanan and Jay Gatsby is much more even, although Tom still wins in that Daisy returns to him. On November 7, 1924, Fitzgerald wrote to Perkins. – " I have now decided to stick to the title I put on the book [...] Trimalchio in West Egg" but was eventually persuaded that the reference was too obscure and that people would not be able to pronounce it. His wife and Perkins both expressed their preference for *The Great Gatsby* and the next month Fitzgerald agreed.[12] A month before publication, after a final review of the proofs, he asked if it would be possible to re-title it Trimalchio or Gold-Hatted Gatsby but Perkins advised against it. On March 19, Fitzgerald asked if the book could be renamed *Under the Red, White and Blue* but it was at that stage too late to change. *The Great Gatsby* was published on April 10, 1925. Fitzgerald remarked that " the title is only fair, rather bad than good".[13] [edit] Plot The main events of the novel take place in the summer of 1922, narrated by Nicholas " Nick" Carraway, a Yale graduate and World War I veteran from the Midwest who takes a job in New York City as a bond salesman. He rents a small house on Long Island, in the (fictional) village of West Egg, next door to the lavish mansion of Jay Gatsby,

a mysterious millionaire who holds extravagant parties. Across the bay, Nick's second cousin Daisy lives with Tom Buchanan, her old-money husband who attended Yale at the same time as Nick. The Buchanans ask Nick to dinner at their home, where they introduce him to Jordan Baker, a well-known but emotionally evasive golfer whom Nick finds attractive, despite her unscrupulous sporting record. The atmosphere of the dinner is spoiled when Tom answers a telephone call that Jordan suggests is from his mistress, Myrtle Wilson. Myrtle is the discontent wife of George Wilson, who owns an unsuccessful garage in the "Valley of Ashes" on the outskirts of New York City. One day, Tom takes Nick privately to a flat in Manhattan where they rendezvous with Myrtle and have a small party, but Tom again ruins the occasion, this time by breaking Myrtle's nose following an argument regarding whether Myrtle should be allowed to speak Daisy's name. Nick eventually gets an invitation to one of Gatsby's huge parties next door, where he soon spots Jordan. Most guests seem to be uninvited and do not know their host, who keeps himself aloof; however, Nick is coincidentally recognized by Gatsby from their division in the war and the two instantly become friends. For the remainder of the novel, Nick revels in the enigma of Gatsby's larger-than-life persona, accentuated by a lunch in Manhattan shared between Gatsby, Nick and Gatsby's business associate, a notorious Jewish gangster called Meyer Wolfshiem. Later, Jordan reveals that in 1917, Gatsby, originating from a penniless Midwestern family, had courted Daisy and hoped to marry her, but was sent to Europe to fight during the war, briefly studying at Trinity College, Oxford,[14] during which time Daisy married Tom. Gatsby's goals are now made clear: he has reinvented himself,

become rich through self-made efforts, bought a house near Daisy, and thrown his enormous parties in the hope that she would, by chance, find her way there one night. Jordan, whom Nick casually begins dating, now asks Nick on Gatsby's behalf to arrange a reunion between Gatsby and Daisy. Nick agrees to have both Gatsby and Daisy to tea. Although the reunion is initially awkward, Daisy, who is unhappy with Tom, appears ready to revive her relationship with Gatsby. Daisy and Gatsby soon rekindle their affair, and Daisy ultimately asks Gatsby, Jordan, and Nick to a lunch date at her house, while Tom is present. At the lunch, Daisy suggests that they all go into Manhattan, and Tom, who is clearly suspicious of Gatsby, gets into Gatsby's yellow car with Jordan and Nick, while he encourages Daisy and Gatsby