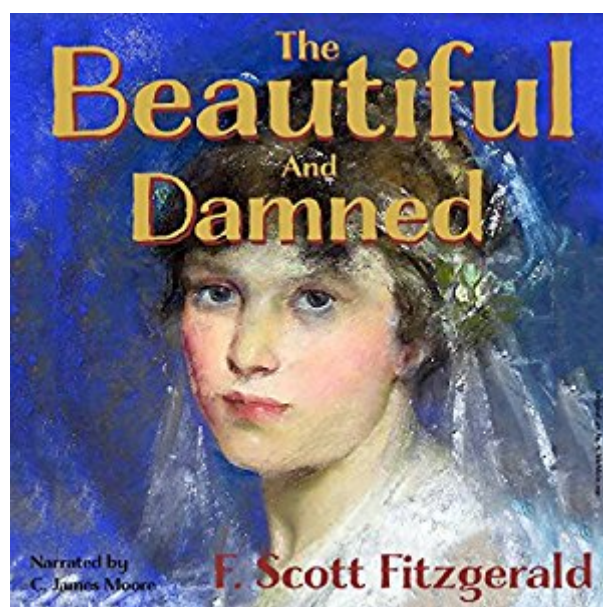


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The Beautiful And Damned



Synopsis

The Beautiful and Damned, F. Scott Fitzgerald's 1922 novel, introduced Fitzgerald fans to 22-year-old Gloria Gilbert, a drop-dead gorgeous, selfish, gumdrop-addicted beauty from Kansas City, and 25-year-old Anthony Patch, a handsome, heir-to-a-fortune, careless, spoiled Harvard graduate and New York bon vivant. The novel opens in 1913, a time of flappers, jazz clubs, silent movies, and, for those who could afford it, a 24/7 world of parties, booze, and social extravagances. Golden-haired Gloria, by her own admission known as "Coast-to-Coast Gloria", dabbles in men's affections as other women might dabble in a kitchen - trying one recipe for love after another, never quite finding the perfect emotional meal until she meets Anthony Patch. She has broken many hearts, leaving in her wake a trail of love-besotted men from the small towns in the Midwest to the emerging studios of the motion picture industry. Only one man, the arrogant and ruthless Joseph Bloeckman of Films par Excellence, retains an emotional hold on Gloria, and that hold is tested often throughout the decade of the novel. Anthony, supported by his two best friends and Harvard classmates, the erudite Maury Noble and the rising novelist Dick Caramel, studiously avoids any mental preoccupation with the concept of actual employment. He is, after all, the presumptive heir to a \$30 million estate, soon (he hopes) to be left to him by his tyrannical grandfather, Adam Patch. For Anthony, life in his second-floor apartment on 52nd Street between Fifth and Sixth Avenues is merely what he expects it should be: an entitlement due his station in life. His motto could easily be "what? Me work?" If Gloria had a motto in 1913, it would be "I must always be pretty and admired". Quite a pairing of two genuinely clueless young people who, as their story unfolds, will find a stark reality awaiting with a baseball bat down a very dark alley of disappointment. The Beautiful and Damned brings Anthony and Gloria together in the way only Fitzgerald could manage: in a desperate search not for life's meaning but for any meaning at all beyond their small circle of family, friends, and denizens of the smoky cafes, pretentious ballrooms, and clamoring dance halls of pre-Prohibition New York City. Under Fitzgerald's sometimes deft, sometimes frenetic guidance, Anthony and Gloria set off on a rough-and-tumble journey of passion, fear, frustration, addiction, faithlessness, recrimination, bitterness, and restoration. If employment is not suited to Anthony, what is? If beauty cannot sustain Gloria's life, what can? The vision of a life of inherited luxury morphs into a bloodshot tableau of a penny-pinching couple eking out married life lost in booze, departed friends, and faded dreams.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

A look into the rich of the early 1900s New York. Anthony Patch is waiting for his grandfather to pass to inherit his millions. At the start of the book he is living on \$7500 a month, has finished college, has traveled but came home because his grandfather is sick. The big issue with Anthony is he refuses to work. He is "too good" for anything. Then he meets the beautiful Gloria Gilbert who has had many relationships but never settles down. Anthony and her meet then he plays hard to get and ends up with the girl. This novel goes through their marriage and the lawsuit to inherit grandfather's money after he lost his inheritance to Edward Who was caring for his grandfather. Basically it comes down to Anthony and Gloria being both spoiled and used to money that they are so immature in life that they start to lose everything. Their marriage is a game to both and eventually they get "bored" and start partying and drinking on long binges. Grandfather Patch walked in on one party and they lose the inheritance when he dies because Edward the caregiver would not let the weak willed Anthony see his grandfather again. Basically the entire book is Anthony and Gloria thinking they are so much better than everyone but really Anthony is manic depressive and Gloria loses her independence by staying with Anthony. Both have ideas of working but Anthony passes up on chances for Gloria and Gloria passes up chances for Anthony. Then we read about the parties, drinking and they drag each other down and down the entire book. Eventually after rock bottom they do inherit the money and Anthony thinks he was right to never work and that's the end. Why a three star Book? It's a classic and does an excellent job of portraying the spoiled rich. It was just depressing to read but real life can be like that.

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