

The Diamond as big as The Ritz

By F. Scott Fitzgerald

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First published in the June 1922 issue of *The Smart Set* magazine, *The Diamond as Big as The Ritz* is one of F. Scott Fitzgerald's under-rated masterpieces.

John T. Unger is a sixteen-year-old boy from an affluent family in Hades, Mississippi on his way to St. Midas' preparatory school in Boston, the most exclusive and expensive prep school in the world. There, he hobnobs with the wealthy and meets another student named Percy Washington. Percy invites John to spend the Summer with his family "out West," and John, who loves being with the super-wealthy, agrees. On the train wide West, Percy reveals that his father is the richest man in the world. He has a diamond the size of the Ritz-Carlton Hotel. John soon discovers that Percy is telling the truth. Percy's father, Braddock T. Washington, has built an enormous chateau on a mountain that is literally one solid, flawless diamond.

The diamond sits in the middle of five square miles in the woods of Montana – the only part of the country that has never been surveyed. The United States doesn't know that these five square miles exist at all, and the Washingtons plan on keeping it that way.

The story was initially rejected by publishers because of its not-so-subtle satirical messages about American capitalism. The scenario criticizes Americans as obsessed with wealth, and considers exploitation inherent in building and expanding the country. American critics didn't react well to the story upon publication. After all, who likes being told they're greedy?

But Fitzgerald didn't seem too fazed by these reactions. He said of the story: "[It] was designed utterly for my own amusement. I was in a mood characterized by a perfect craving for luxury, and the story began as an attempt to feed that craving on imaginary foods."

Here it is, Fitzgerald's rarely talked about 'gem' of a short story, *The Diamond as Big as The Ritz*.

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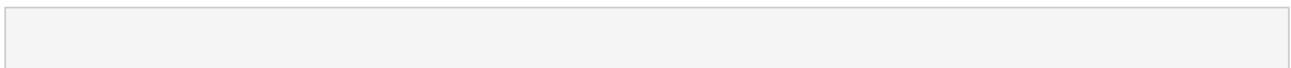
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The Diamond as big as The Ritz By F. Scott Fitzgerald Bibliography

- Rank: #3087790 in Books
- Published on: 2014-03-21
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .10" w x 6.00" l, .17 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 44 pages



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Editorial Review

About the Author

FRANCIS SCOTT FITZGERALD was born in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1896, the son of a salesman, and namesake of his distant relative, Francis Scott Key. While attending Princeton University, he wrote a novel that a Scribner's editor thought good enough to publish, if Fitzgerald would revise it. Fitzgerald, however, was in academic trouble and left school to join the army. Stationed in Alabama, he met and proposed marriage to Zelda Sayre, who refused to marry him until his rewritten novel, "This Side of Paradise," made him an irresistible success. Two years later, the Fitzgeralds were leading a furious, booze-fueled social life, and his story collection of 1922, "Tales of the Jazz Age, " gave the era its name. In 1925, while sojourning in France--where he befriended Ernest Hemingway--he wrote "The Great Gatsby." But his relationship with Zelda grew destructive, and by 1932 she was in a mental institution and he had descended into alcoholism. Fitzgerald moved to Hollywood to work as a scriptwriter, and died there of a heart attack in 1940.

Users Review

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Lisa Marsh:

Information is provisions for anyone to get better life, information nowadays can get by anyone with everywhere. The information can be a expertise or any news even an issue. What people must be consider any time those information which is in the former life are challenging to be find than now is taking seriously which one is suitable to believe or which one the particular resource are convinced. If you have the unstable resource then you buy it as your main information it will have huge disadvantage for you. All those possibilities will not happen in you if you take The Diamond as big as The Ritz as your daily resource information.

Frank Johnson:

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Stephen Stovall:

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