Audible Recording

The Great Gatsby, one of the most frequently read books in our culture, has been given wonderful new life through the superb narration of Jake Gyllenhaal. Here is the American classic, giving a vivid insight into one of the most Intriguing eras of our history, the "Roaring Twenties." Fitzgerald's story of the shift in morals and mindset describes the short decade in which flappers, gin, new money and maybe even gangsters illustrated a certain freedom, and definitely a now-stereotyped image of the boom times following WWI.

Nick Carroway, a young man from the Midwest who has settled in the east, tells the story from his vantage point, that of someone drawn into the tumultuous times by the accident of being related to Daisy Buchanan. Daisy is unhappily married to Tom, but the object of such devotion to Jay Gatsby, who dated her in an earlier time but cannot let go of her memory, that he has reinvented himself as a wealthy man in the hope of someday reconnecting with Daisy. Among other things, this book tells the story of what happens when dreams change to cold reality. Because Jay and Daisy do find each other, through Nick Carroway. But only tragedy ensues, which is really the bulk of the entire amazing book.

There is so much one can say about this novel, from the standpoint of symbols and motifs (such as the famous old billboard with the eyeglasses of TJ Eckleburg, who may represent the fading society that is passing, or maybe the eye of God looking down upon an increasingly godless society), or the story of tragic romance, or, as a prescient commentary on that passionate era.

Although most of us read this in school at some point, it is now interesting to revisit it in the aftermath of the great "Dot.com" era, which was followed by an economic downturn, just as the Great Depression succeeded the "Roaring Twenties". I found myself thinking that this is truly a book for our times in many ways, almost a true reminder that history does repeat. If somehow anyone out there missed reading this book as a literature assignment, or even if you have read it dozens of times, you will find Gyllenhaal's narration of it a rare treat! Highly recommend!