



The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Reviewed by Dhruv



Novel, Realistic Fiction

Give a summary without spoilers!

The Great Gatsby is one of the most famous examples of American literature. It is set in New York City in the 1920s. This was a time of great change. The economy was growing fast. The people were getting rich fast. The United States had exited WW1 as a rich and powerful nation. It was a golden age for culture and industry. In this time of great prosperity and cultural change, a man named Nick Carraway moved into the newly affluent West Egg neighborhood in New York City to get into the bond business. Unlike his neighbors, Nick had social connections in the established area of East Egg, home to the "old money". His cousin Daisy Buchanan and her husband Tom lived there. His neighbor, Jay Gatsby, was a very mysterious man. He could be seen outside on his deck at night, looking over at the lights of East Egg, almost reaching out for something. He owned a massive mansion and hosted grand parties every week. All of the city's rich and famous got into their cars and attended these parties. They ate and drank, all free of charge. Nick got a formal invitation to one of these parties. When he went there, he realized that nobody got formal invitations and people just attended. Eventually, Nick got to meet Gatsby who was surprisingly young. He had a charming and understanding smile, one that almost seemed to understand you. He told Nick stories about his life and how he had achieved so much. But how exactly he made his fortune remained a mystery? Why did he host these grand parties? All of these cost a lot of money. Why did he take the effort to do so? There was something he was hiding, something felt off. Why did he build his mansion here? What was he reaching out for looking at East Egg? The answers will be unexpected in this story of many twists and turns.

What drew you to this book?

Economics, and specifically macroeconomics, was a subject that I had always been interested in. Specifically, it is something that is always in the news and a big part of political debate. But it always seemed like nobody really knew what they were talking about. People would throw buzzwords like GDP and inflation but nobody seemed to be explaining what these words were. Thus, when I saw this book, I really liked the concept it was trying to achieve.

Did it remind you of something that you've previously read?

Yes, this book reminded me of the YouTube channel Oversimplified. This is a history channel that makes videos about different events in history. It heavily uses simple stick figure cartoon-like animation and the videos are hilarious. As the title suggests, its aim is to make complicated topics a little more accessible to the general public just trying to learn something new. It utilizes the same hilarious, comic book style animations to explain complicated topics. The only difference is that this is a book and it is about economics rather than history.

To whom would you recommend this book?

I would recommend this book to anyone looking for a basic introduction to economics. If you want to be more informed citizen who can understand all of these buzzwords being thrown around, then you should definitely read this book. It isn't a very long read as it only takes about 2 hours. But in those 2 hours, it touches upon all of the basic concepts of macroeconomics and gives a base to work off of. The cool part is that it requires a lot less effort to learn all of this compared to learning using a traditional textbook.

Overall, did you like it and would you recommend it to others?

Overall, I did like this book as it did fulfill what it promised to do. It gave a solid introduction to macroeconomics in a way that was fun. I would totally recommend this to other people who are curious like me. In today's world, it is really important to understand these concepts. This subject isn't something that is generally taught at school which makes it even more important to learn. My only criticism is with the concept itself. As the book is supposed to be simple, one does lose all of the intricate nuances of the subject and ends up with a somewhat shallow knowledge. It is important to recognize this. If someone wants a more detailed take, they should not read this book.

Anything else that you would like to add to this review? What made you choose it? Did you like the cover? Was it recommended to you? Did you find it at the library?

I bought this book at the MIT Bookstore in Cambridge. You should definitely check that place out. It doesn't have books in the traditional sense. The books there are different and innovative. Though it was overpriced, the concept and cover looked really cool and almost irresistible. It was totally worth it. The book really reflected the innovative spirit of MIT and the books surrounding it.