This Side of Paradise, Book One, Chapter One, Part 2

F. Scott Fitzgerald · 1920

Snapshots of the Young Egotist: two years in Minneapolis, a code to live by, Beatrice in the moonlight at Lake Geneva, a week on the Hudson with Monsignor Darcy, St. Regis' and the well-meaning professor, a wonderful girl on Broadway, the Groton game, and the philosophy of the slicker. The rest of Chapter One, complete.

Performed exactly as Fitzgerald published it in 1920, his spellings included. The chapter's section headings are his, and are read aloud.

LISTEN FOR

— The section titles: the chapter is told in named fragments, and each title tells you how to take the scene before it starts.

— Froggy Parker never appears after Minneapolis, but Amory keeps imagining what Froggy would think: twice on the moonlit walk with Beatrice, and again at Christmas.

— The lists: the books he reads at fourteen, the underwear packed for school, the schools of New England, the books of his eighteenth year, and the two numbered columns at the end.

— What Beatrice confesses about herself and what Amory confesses about himself, and how each of them answers the other.

THE PEOPLE, AS THE BOOK NAMES THEM

Amory Blaine	the son · fourteen, then fifteen
Froggy Parker	the Wednesday and Saturday matinees
Beatrice O'Hara Blaine	his mother · Lake Geneva
Monsignor Darcy	forty-four · Harrow, Yale, and Rome
The Hon. Thornton Hancock	of Boston · ex-minister to The Hague
Mr. Margotson	the senior master, St. Regis'
Paskert	of St. Regis' · fifteen
Rahill	president of the sixth form

THE PLACES

Minneapolis · Lake Geneva · St. Regis' · New York · Monsignor Darcy's

CHAPTERS, WITH THEIR TIMES IN THE VIDEO

0:00	Snapshots of the Young Egotist
4:08	Code of the Young Egotist
7:22	Preparatory to the Great Adventure
16:18	Monsignor Darcy
22:54	The Egotist Down
25:35	Incident of the Well-meaning Professor
27:54	Incident of the Wonderful Girl
31:33	Heroic in General Tone
32:54	The Philosophy of the Slicker

WORDS AND THINGS, FROM THE MARGIN

Snapshots of the Young Egotist The chapter is told in titled fragments, like an album. Fitzgerald's rejected first draft of the novel was called The Romantic Egotist; the phrase survives as the title of Book One.

Arsène Lupin Maurice Leblanc's gentleman-thief. The play by Leblanc and Francis de Croisset opened in Paris in 1908 and crossed to America soon after.

Her electric An electric automobile: quiet, clean, no crank to turn, and sold to wealthy women. Most could do twenty miles an hour. Beatrice prefers two.

The land of schools Every school on the list is real except St. Regis'. Fitzgerald himself went to the Newman School, a small Catholic boarding school in Hackensack, New Jersey, from 1911 to 1913.

Monsignor Darcy Drawn from Monsignor Sigourney Fay, Fitzgerald's friend and mentor at the Newman School. The novel is dedicated to him.

An exiled Stuart king The Stuarts lost the English throne in 1688. For a century their heirs waited in exile, in France and Rome, to be called back.

Thornton Hancock Usually read as a portrait of Henry Adams, the Boston historian, grandson and great-grandson of presidents, and a friend of Monsignor Fay's.

He went all wrong at the start Fitzgerald's own first year at the Newman School went much the same way. He told it again in 'The Freshest Boy' (1928), a Basil Lee story set at a school also called St. Regis'.

The Little Millionaire George M. Cohan's musical, which opened on Broadway in September 1911. Cohan wrote it, directed it, and starred in it.

Princeton Fitzgerald entered Princeton in the autumn of 1913. Chapter Two is called Spires and Gargoyles.

PASSAGES TO HEAR AGAIN

"It was always the becoming he dreamed of, never the being. This, too, was quite characteristic of Amory."
The end of Snapshots, after the waking dreams of the half-back and the Japanese invasion.

"Vanity, tempered with self-suspicion if not self-knowledge, a sense of people as automatons to his will, a desire to "pass" as many boys as possible and get to a vague top of the world... with this background did Amory drift into adolescence."
The last sentence of the Code, after the confession of the Puritan conscience.

"Quite well—as well as I will ever be. I am not understood, Amory. I know that can't express it to you, Amory, but—I am not understood."
Beatrice on the shadowy path at Lake Geneva; listen for what Amory does next.

"You're not sorry to go, of course. With people like us our home is where we are not," said Monsignor."
The parting on the Hudson, at the end of the wonderful week.

"He went all wrong at the start, was generally considered both conceited and arrogant, and universally detested."
The first thing the text says about Amory at St. Regis', in The Egotist Down.

"Years afterward, when he went back to St. Regis', he seemed to have forgotten the successes of sixth-form year, and to be able to picture himself only as the unadjustable boy who had hurried down corridors, jeered at by his rabid contemporaries mad with common sense."
The last sentence of the chapter.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. The Code has three headings, Physically, Socially and Mentally, and then 'a confession.' Set the two lists side by side: what Amory grants himself, and what his Puritan conscience charges him with.
2. Beatrice says 'I am not understood.' What does Amory do and say in reply? Then look at what he tells her about his two years: 'I adapted myself to the bourgeoisie. I became conventional.' Which of them is confessing, and to what?

3. Twice on the walk Amory thinks of Froggy Parker. What does he imagine Froggy would do each time, and who is Amory performing for in that moment?
4. Beatrice wanted Eton and then Christ Church; Monsignor went to Harrow and then Yale; Amory wants Princeton. What reason does each of them give, in their own words?
5. Monsignor and Amory 'accepted in their own minds a relation of father and son within a half-hour's conversation.' List what they say they both hate and both love in that half-hour.
6. Thornton Hancock says Amory's education 'ought not to be intrusted to a school or college.' What does the next paragraph say Amory's intellect was concentrated on for the next four years?
7. The title calls Mr. Margotson well-meaning. Read what he says and how Amory answers him. What does Amory do with the rest of that evening?
8. 'Oh, I was sort of fresh at first,' Amory tells Froggy at Christmas, 'but I got along fine.' Compare that with the paragraph just before it. Which parts of what he says are true?
9. In the Groton game Amory is 'one with' a list of heroes. Who are they, and where has one of them already appeared in the chapter?
10. The Philosophy of the Slicker ends with two numbered columns. Which column does Amory put himself in? Which does Rahill belong to, by Rahill's own account of what he does for his friends?
11. Amory's reading is listed twice, at fourteen and in his eighteenth year. Which titles or authors turn up on both lists, and what reason does the text give for 'Dombey and Son'?
12. The chapter ends with the Amory of years afterward remembering only 'the unadjustable boy.' What does the text say he had forgotten? Why might the chapter end on that and not on the touchdown?

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