



Thank You for the Light

F. Scott Fitzgerald

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This newly discovered short story by one of the greatest writers of twentieth-century American literature, F. Scott Fitzgerald, will surprise and delight. *Thank You for the Light* is a masterfully crafted story—spare, strange, and wonderful, albeit a departure from Fitzgerald’s usual style.

A widowed, corset saleswoman, Mrs. Hanson, whose chief pleasure in life is cigarettes, discovers that social disapproval of smoking is widespread in her new sales territory. Deprived of this simple comfort, she receives solace, and a light, from an unexpected source.

Fitzgerald originally submitted the story to *The New Yorker* in 1936, four years before his death, but it was rejected. The editors said that it was “altogether out of the question” and added, “It seems to us so curious and so unlike the kind of thing we associate with him and really too fantastic.” Almost eighty years later, Fitzgerald’s grandchildren found the story among his papers and the Fitzgerald scholar James West encouraged them to send the story to the magazine once again. This time around the magazine decided to publish it, and now it is available in this special eBook edition.

Thank You for the Light Details

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From Reader Review Thank You for the Light for online ebook

Gary says

A very short story that really seems pointless.

I have previously enjoyed books by F.Scott Fitzgerald and really enjoyed them so decided to read this during my break at work but I don't know why I bothered. A very short tale that I instantly forgot.

Kim says

Three pages of Fitzgerald is sometimes enough to restore all faith in humanity.

Bettie? says

Blurb: *The story was found among the author's papers by Fitzgerald's grandchildren and was passed along to the agent for the estate by the Fitzgerald scholar and editor James West. Fitzgerald had submitted it to The New Yorker in 1936, four years before his death, but it was rejected with the following note:*

'We're afraid that this Fitzgerald story is altogether out of the question. It seems to us so curious and so unlike the kind of thing we associate with him, and really too fantastic. We would give a lot, of course, to have a Scott Fitzgerald story and I hope that you will send us something that seems more suitable. Thank you, anyhow, for letting us see this.'

Treisman speculates that it might have been the story's irreverent treatment of the Virgin Mary that made it "out of the question" in 1936. But times have changed and the Virgin "has undergone a lot worse treatment than she did at Fitzgerald's hands in the years since." Now, Treisman says, the story reads as a "lovely little sketch" and "a curiosity of literary interest."

<http://www.newyorker.com/online/blogs...>

Henry Ca says

Una sencilla historia por el Maestro

Una historia sencilla, que pudo tener un final más fuerte, ya que también Fitzgerald fue un maestro de los relatos cortos. Sinceramente, disfruté de la historia; sin embargo, esperaba mas del maestro, ya que esta es la ultima obra de el encontrada despues de su muerte. Espero leer mas de Fitzgerald en su forma de relato corto para tener una mejor vision del mismo.

Beth Roberts says

I went through a phase in high school and college where I read a lot of classics, but the only Fitzgerald I've read is *The Great Gatsby*.

I'll be honest, this was a cover buy. The image of the woman smoking in the cathedral is striking.

More than that, though, I wanted to see how this story, rejected by *The New Yorker* for publication in 1936, held up in light of "modern" literature.

My answer? Surprisingly well.

Ten slight pages to grab me, make a point and move on. That's a lot to ask of any short story, let alone one about a traveling corset and girdle saleswoman where the sole focus is her nicotine addiction.

Though obviously reflective of Fitzgerald's day, the story itself as a psychological character study remains true and has great empathy.

I need to go back and read this Fitzgerald guy in the light of adulthood.

Actual Rating: 4.5

Format: Kindle

Source: Amazon

Current ebook price: \$0.99

Opinion of Price: Worth it

My Cost: \$0.99

Amy (Other Amy) says

You could look at this tiny story from a dozen angles: as too earnest camp, as too fluffy satire, or as a nice little masterpiece on the one among the world weary receiving exactly what she needs. (Hint: it's the last one.) Me, I feel this woman and her one little comfort, and I am here for her and her transcendent encounter.

Brooke says

Fitzgerald makes me want to write. And sing. And cry. ~~And be Zelda.~~ This story was more of a vignette, but still a gorgeous one.

Brooke Tallent says

This is so brilliantly different from his other works. Stripped away was the facade, leaving his genius literary

soul. This seems so personal, possibly deriving from feelings associated from alcoholism, addiction or simply guilty pleasures.

JJ says

I was super excited and intrigued when the news of this lost story hit the interwebs last Nov, and couldn't wait to read it. It's different than *some* of the other things I've read of his (then again he did write The Curious Case of Benjamin Button). My only gripe was that it wasn't a smidge longer. It is a very short story.

MomIsReading says

Pointless short story. I read his grandchildren fought to have this published after his death as it was rejected by The New Yorker when he originally submitted. BTW don't pay for it. Google it and it's in The New Yorker you can read online.

Laura says

Opening lines:

Mrs. Hanson was a pretty, somewhat faded woman of forty, who sold corsets and girdles, travelling out of Chicago. For many years her territory had swung around through Toledo, Lima, Springfield, Columbus, Indianapolis, and Fort Wayne, and her transfer to the Iowa-Kansas-Missouri district was a promotion, for her firm was more strongly entrenched west of the Ohio.

He wrote better stories than this one.

Tim says

Ik heb nog nooit van F. Scott Fitzgerald gehoord, laat staan iets van hem gelezen. Maar ik kreeg vandaag zo'n flinterdun boekje mee, de vertaling van "Thank You For The Light", een zogezegd verloren gewaand verhaal, tot het teruggevonden werd in 2012.

Het gaat over een zakenvrouw, een handelsvertegenwoordigster, die verslaafd is aan sigaretten. Ikzelf ben tegen roken, ik heb er een gloeiende hekel aan, want te pas en te onpas kom je in contact met sigaretten: op het perron, buiten aan gebouwen, in winkelstraten, enz... Het is tegenwoordig zo erg dat je op den duur met een zuurstofmasker moet rondlopen wil je nog iets van frisse lucht kunnen inademen. Soit, mevrouw Hanson is dus verslaafd en kan niet lang zonder haar nicotineshot. Ze zou er alles voor doen, zelfs (mis)bruik maken van een kerk.

Blijkbaar zorgt goddelijke interventie voor het zogenaamde vuurtje, want ze wordt wakker - na haar gebed - met een brandende sigaret in haar hand.

Op zich, leuk tussendoortje, maar voor het overige: mnah, niet veel soeps. Gezien de grootte van de uitgave

moet ik opletten dat ik het niet verlies of "toevallig" bij het oud papier gooi.

Shae says

A very, very, very short story but enjoyable.

Meredith says

This title is being described as a "departure" from Fitzgerald's previous works. I am not certain what is implied by that, so I cannot entirely dispute it. However, if you've read most of F. Scott Fitzgerald's short stories and his later novel, *Tender is the Night*, "Thank You for the Light" isn't a departure, but it is instead a succinct narrative in comparison to most of his works. Seemingly, it makes a few nods towards Hemingway's "A Clean, Well, Lighted Place" published in 1933 in *Scribner's Magazine* some years before in which an older waiter and younger waiter discuss the nature of suicide and why people are reluctant to go home at night. While "Thank You for the Light" does not touch on suicide, it does touch on the nature of loneliness through Mrs. Hanson, a widow, "a pretty, somewhat faded woman". Her loneliness manifests itself in the comfort of a smoking habit she cannot break. As the story progresses, this habit not only consumes her, but everything that we as the reader know about her. Her associations with clients are marked according to her practice and in a conversation with a friend, her friend makes a distinction between men over fifty, in her issued warning concerning, "The ones who weren't in the war" because "nobody who was in the war would ever object to anyone smoking." The compulsion of Hanson's habit becomes ritualistic, almost a reverence to her. When the place she finds to stop and smoke is a Catholic cathedral, she admits that although not Catholic, the very idea "offends her," but then she excuses this thought and what she has already admitted might conceivably offend others by telling herself the opposite, "'He wouldn't mind,' She thought persistently. 'In His days, they hadn't even discovered tobacco...'" Like most of Fitzgerald's greatest works, which examine human nature, it isn't about rationalizing it, but instinctively feeling it.

Duane says

A short story written by Fitzgerald in 1936 and remained unpublished until 2012. His grandchildren found the story while going through his papers. It had been rejected by *The New Yorker* in 1936 and then forgotten. His family decided to offer it to them again, and of course they were happy to publish it 75 years later. It may not be Fitzgerald's best writing, but that's hardly the point here. It's just good to read something "new" by one of the great American writers of the 20th century.
