



This Side of Paradise

F. Scott Fitzgerald (1896 - 1940)

Read by:	Mark F. Smith	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	9 hours 49 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1056
Language:	English	UPC:	0684758936387
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$9.99
Genre:	Fiction		

This Side of Paradise, F. Scott Fitzgerald's first novel broke the wave of youthful energy pent-up and ready to explode in the United States after the First World War. Periods of High Romanticism tend to flourish in the wake of wars, and the character of that exuberant flowering of the self depends in large measure on whether the war was won or lost. In the 20's America was victorious and wealthy and confident and young, and *This Side of Paradise* focuses its considerable energy and style on the victorious, the wealthy, the confident and the young. The story, a rewrite of Fitzgerald's first manuscript with the working title, *The Romantic Egoist*, explores the life of Amory Blaine, Princeton University student, a literary young man in love with beauty and the women with family money and last names who descend to conquer those

handsome, talented young men who, in their turn, aspire to lives above themselves on America's invisible though very real class system. The tragedy inherent in Amory Blaine's quest is the illusion of ascent. His initially innocent and well-intentioned efforts at love are damaged by the underside of his worldly ambitions: greed and the acquisition of social superiority.

Born in St. Paul, Minnesota in 1896, **F. Scott Fitzgerald** is the archetype of the youthful, handsome, tragic, Romantic American writer burdened with the heat of genius and the sting of excessive appetite. Fitzgerald was America's first pop-star writer. He ushered in the Jazz Age with his first novel, *This Side of Paradise* and a collection of short stories, *Flappers and Philosophers*. Fitzgerald attended Princeton, where he wrote and drank incessantly, did poorly, and made friends with the literary critic, Edmund Wilson, the man Fitzgerald called his aesthetic conscience. He did not graduate, but entered the Army in 1917 as World War I came to its close. Assigned to Camp Sheridan outside Montgomery, Alabama, he met and pursued Zelda Sayre (1900-1948), the golden girl from Alabama who possessed Fitzgerald from first sight. He courted her, and they were engaged until she broke it off, concerned that the writer and ad man would not be able to provide for her. Fitzgerald returned to his Minnesota home where he rewrote his first novel, which Scribner & Sons accepted for publication in 1919. With the success of *Paradise* Zelda agreed to marry the young writer. Fitzgerald and Zelda moved to Paris where he became friends with Hemingway and other ex-patriots. He wrote five novels in all. *The Great Gatsby* (1925) is considered his masterpiece and *The Last Tycoon* was published posthumously. Fitzgerald had been alcoholic since his college days, and during the 20's his legendary drinking damaged his health. In his mid-forties he suffered two severe heart attacks, the second taking his life at the home of Sheila Graham on December 21, 1940. His influence on writers is felt to this day. Despite all the press and stories and legends, F. Scott Fitzgerald was "all that" and more. In effect Fitzgerald was better than Fitzgerald.