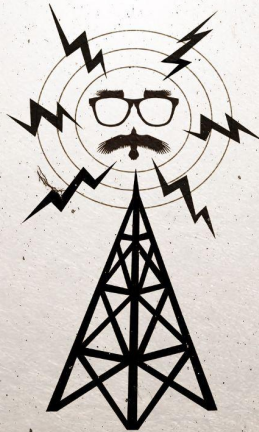


— THE CASE OF —
THE GREATER GATSBY
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THE CASE OF THE GREATER GATSBY
EPISODE 13 - THE WORLD HAS TURNED AND LEFT ME HERE
TRANSCRIPT

[The Case of the Greater Gatsby opening credits music plays]

Announcer: Now presenting Fig and Ford in The Case of the Greater Gatsby. Episode 13: The World has Turned and Left Me Here. Written and created by Sean Persaud and Sinéad Persaud. This episode is brought to you by Hunt A Killer.

[The WHIR of the tape recorder starting up. The tape recorder SWITCHES ON.]

Vivian Nightingale: Hmm, how do you do this? (*clears throat*) September 25th, 1940. A gorgeous dame walked into the room, but I, F. Scott Fitzgerald am a dour, no-good, sad little boy. The world has turned and left me here, just where I was before you appeared, and in your place, an empty-

F. Scott Fitzgerald: (*walking towards the recorder from a distance*) Vivian! Stop that! Turn it off before you break it.

Vivian Nightingale: Break it? Is that all you think I do? Break things?

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Listen, if Sheilah knew you were here, she'd kick me out, and then where would I go? Shack up with you and your husband? I don't need actual evidence of you being over here.

Vivian Nightingale: Please, like she doesn't already know. It's literally her job.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Yes. I think she suspects something. She's a sharp one. It's what I love about her.

Vivian Nightingale: I think you love what you can't have. It happened with Zelda, once you finally got her to agree to marry you, it all fell apart rather quickly, didn't it? You caught the car and didn't know how to drive it.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Now, you just keep Zelda out of this.

Vivian Nightingale: You can't really have me, of course. *The Grapes of Wrath*, you didn't really care until it was taken from you. And Sheilah...there's always been something under the surface with her. You've said it yourself. Something that you can never truly give her. And now that you suspect she's been sneaking out behind your back, it's lit a fire under you. I can see it burning.

[*A pause.*]

Hmm. Why haven't you turned off the recorder yet?

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Honestly, this is great stuff. Might use it for *The Love of the Last Tycoon*. You've got a real way of understanding people.

Vivian Nightingale: Yes. I do know how to get under people's skin I suppose. I know how to get what I want.

[*Fitzgerald GULPS.*]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Uhh... better uh, turn this thing off.

[Tape recorder clicks.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: October the 12th, 1940. I've made a real breakthrough in the *Greater Gatsby* screenplay. The down on his luck screenwriter character and Nick Carraway should be one and the same. Yes. Nick moves to LA, perhaps with the germ of an idea of turning his adventures with Gatsby into a-

[A KNOCK on the door. It opens. TD enters, sneezes as he does so.]

TD Hammermeister: Mr. Fitzgerald? May I come in?

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Doesn't anyone wait for a door to be answered anymore? Come in TD, what do you want? Here to fire me from another job?

TD Hammermeister: No, no. I would never.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Well then, you're a good man.

TD Hammermeister: Well it's just I don't have that kind of authority.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: I see. Well why are you darkening my door?

TD Hammermeister: I actually have a favor to ask you. I know that's probably a bit out of order given what's gone on with you and the wife, but uh, well.... I was wondering if I could be in your social club.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Hmmm... What social club?

TD Hammermeister: The uh, the one you started with Dorothy Parker. *(clearing his throat)* Terribly sorry. Still drinking that pesky chamomile, I see!

[TD BLOWS his nose in a hanky.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Well then. Nothing gets past ol' TD Hammermeister. It seems you've passed the first test.

TD Hammermeister: Wow! An initiation!

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Mmhmm. Only 49 more to go.

TD Hammermeister: 49? Did Darby Farnsworth have to do all 50 tests?

[Fitz SIGHS.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Darby wasn't my favorite addition to the group. But I guess her usurping me on your wife's film wasn't really her fault.

TD Hammermeister: Nope. It was 100% Mel's call. She was awfully excited about it, too. Whoops. Probably shouldn't have said that part. (*he sneezes*) Anyways, what's the next test?

[TD blows his nose a little in his hanky.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: The next test? Listen up and listen well, TD. The next test is you returning home and telling your no-good hack of a wife that she's a lousy producer, she's bungling what could have been a fantastic picture, and that in no way will she be getting her hands on *The Greater Gatsby*. The deal is off!

TD Hammermeister: But, but, you agreed-

F. Scott Fitzgerald: And now I disagree. She fired me after months of hard work, and she was excited to do it? Well hopefully she'll be excited to hear that I am no longer in business with her. In fact, I have another producer who is very interested. Met with him about something the other day and maybe I'll be going back to sign a deal. You can tell her that.

[A beat as we hear scribbling.]

Are you writing this down?

TD Hammermeister: Yes, sorry, you talk very fast.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: JUST GET OUT OF HERE!!

TD Hammermeister: Gahhh!!

[TD RUNS away, sneezing and SHUTTING THE DOOR behind him.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Your move, Hammermeister.

[Click. Fitzgerald is drunk. He lets out a big SIGH.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: October the 14th, 1940. No grapes for me, but for some reason, here I am commiserating with the child who is replacing me. Yes, I am meeting with Darby Fernsworth to go over some -

Darby Farnsworth: Farnsworth, it's Farnsworth with an A.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Sorry about that, it looks like an E here. (*hiccup*) Isn't it funny? Just a little squiggle and it makes all the difference.

Darby Farnsworth: Also it's October 25th. What's wrong with you?

F. Scott Fitzgerald: What's wrong with you?

Darby Farnsworth: Are you drunk?

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Are you going to badger me this entire time?

Darby Farnsworth: Maybe!

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Look here, I am meeting with you as a (*hiccup*)- a professional courtesy to Mel Hambermeister. Though I'm not sure why. She showed me none when relieving me of my duties as screenwriter. Speaking of relieving, I must find my way to the loo. And you can find your way to the door. You can justify the tap dances on your own. If Mel needed me, she'd still be paying me. Good luck, tiny child, you'll need it.

[A music cue.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: My dearest Zelda. Thanksgiving approaches, earlier this year than usual, and though I am not usually so sentimental when it comes to these things, it's given me some time to reflect. I'm having a hard time reconciling this script with... with what, exactly? My morals? Do I have any? An idea of the man I should be? The man you thought I was when we first met? This script has grown beyond my control. It is no longer a mere sequel to a mediocre novel, it's no longer a metaphor for the American dream. This script will destroy people. And I do not know if I can -

[Sheilah CRIES OUT from another room.]

Sheilah Graham: SCOTT! COME QUICK!!

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Blast! Not again. I thought we put a stop to this.

[He clicks off the recorder. Hunt-A-Killer ad music starts up.]

Announcer: Friends, I've just arrived home from my trip into the future and let me say, it's lit! Ha, you won't understand that for a few more years. It basically means, it's swell. So swell it could catch on fire! Hoo boy, do I have things to tell you about the way things are going to go down, but first! You'll be happy to hear that Hunt-A-Killer is still thriving in the year 2023. Detective films never go out of style and anyone can don a fedora and piece together evidence and solve a crime! Although the only people who wear fedoras in the future are musicians and it seems to be a point of controversy. I sure went at the right time. Two new games had just been released when I touched down in the scorching hot valley of 2023 California. RIP at the Rodeo-

[SFX: YEE HAW!]

And Homicide at the Heist! Those lucky future folks can solve the murder of Patches the Clown at the Hawk Spring Rodeo OR find out what went wrong during a high stakes diamond heist that led to the mysterious demise of safe cracker Nicky Wagner! What I love about that is that all of those things could have happened today! In 1940. Hunt-A-Killer transcends time! Unlike cell phones, which are small rectangles that all my great grandchildren used to ignore me during my entire trip!

[SFX: Sad Trombone]

But Hunt-A-Killer in 2023 is cutting edge as well! Technology is your friend as you try to sift through clues and suspect statements. Some of the premium and multi-episodic games showcase digital components that help a budding sleuth such as yourself with the case! Real actor interactions and voicemails help bring the story to life! Don't know what the word 'digital' means, since it's 1940? Don't worry! Plus, in the future you can purchase Hunt-A-Killer online or at your local Target or Walmart retailers! Those stores don't exist yet here, but just you wait! You'll walk in thinking you're going to buy just one candle and then suddenly you've spent your entire paycheck!

[Announcer starts hyperventilating.]

Perhaps I shouldn't have gone into the future. The hubris of man will be our downfall. Why do we insist on asking questions of the universe that aren't meant for our fallible consciousness? Reality is transitory! Do you have what it takes to Hunt-A-Killer?

[Hunt A Killer music ends. The tape COMES TO LIFE with a WHIRR. Fitzgerald, Dorothy Parker, and Sheilah have after dinner drinks.]

Dorothy Parker: Oh, that's what it does. Scotty, I think I've gone and turned it on.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: It took you significantly less time to figure it out than me.

Sheilah Graham: He wouldn't even go near the thing for close to two weeks.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: I was a fool. It has helped me manage and compartmentalize my thoughts a great deal this year. Who knows how it shall help me in 1941. How exciting. Only one month until New Year's Day.

Sheilah Graham: You know, perhaps we should have recorded this meeting of the Algonquin Round Table Part II.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: If I had to guess, I don't think Dorothy would quite like that idea.

Dorothy Parker: You know me well, Fitzy. Not that we're doing anything illegal, or even immoral. Just friends meeting and discussing culture, life, art, politics. But still, if we don't need to provide anyone with any evidence, then let's not. As for the Algonquin label, I think we need a proper name. We're a group of writers and wits, surely we can come up with something clever.

Sheilah Graham: Donald is good at that sort of thing.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Don't bring up- why would you bring up Donald?

Dorothy Parker: Donald leaving is a black mark on not only our group but the history of high society!

F. Scott Fitzgerald: You are being ridiculous! And also, he left of his own accord.

Dorothy Parker: He left because of this *Greater Gatsby* nonsense. Everyone in the group agrees, they're all incensed about you writing out everyone's secrets. You can't just-

[A KNOCK on the DOOR.]

Sheilah Graham: Who could that be?

[She gets up to answer it. The door OPENS, revealing:]

Barnaby Nightingale: Well well well, look at these three Tasty Mulligans!

Sheilah Graham/Dorothy Parker/F.Scott Fitzgerald: Tasty what?/Who?/How now?

Barnaby Nightingale: I was in the neighborhood and thought I'd drop in to address your recent request.

Sheilah Graham: Ah yes. Please, Mr. Nightingale, come in, have a seat.

Barnaby Nightingale: You can call me Barnaby. Mr. Nightingale was the soldier I killed and whose identity I assumed when I was back from the war. Hahaha!! That was a joke!!

F. Scott Fitzgerald: And a very good one, but I don't think we should impose on Mr. - uh, Barnaby. He's probably very busy and needs to-

Sheilah Graham: Why so uncomfortable, honey?

Barnaby Nightingale: A lover's squabble? How awkward. Then I'll make my time here brief. Yes, on behalf of the Nightingale Gazette, I'd like to extend an offer of delivery of the early edition paper for your social club. As long as we're treated with admiration and positivity whenever the opportunity might present itself. Quid pro quo, vis a vis, carpe diem, et cetera. You understand?

Dorothy Parker: Quite. And not a problem, Barnaby, we'd be happy to. Thank you.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Yes, thank you. Is that all?

Barnaby Nightingale: Let me think. Ah yes, one more thing. *(to Fitzgerald, his tone suddenly severe)* Stay away from my wife.

[An awkward pause.]

Well, that'll be all. Happy holidays, you Boobie Giuseppes!

Dorothy Parker: You'll do well to workshop that one!

Barnaby Nightingale: Thanks for the feedback, Miss Parker.

[He leaves, shutting the door behind him. An awkward pause.]

Dorothy Parker: Well, I suppose this awkward pause is as good a time as any to announce that I have a lead on a meeting place. I don't think our membership can or wants to keep crossing legs in cramped living rooms. But the back room at Bixby's seems to be open and available. It's lush and discreet. And very close to a lot of alcohol.

Sheilah Graham: *(unhappy)* Fitzzy's favorite place. I'm going to bed. Goodnight, Dorothy.

Dorothy Parker: Goodnight, Sheilah.

[A door SLAMS.]

Dorothy Parker: You've really done it this time.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Oh, turn that off.

[CLICK.]

[Fitzgerald turns on the tape recorder. Pours himself a drink. He's drunk and upset.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: December the 20th, 1940. Or is it the 21st yet? Who knows. Who cares. Merry Christmas to all and to all a good night. Zelda, perhaps you'll find these tapes one day and laugh at me. Laugh as I've been dosed some of my own medicine. What I learned tonight at the Hammermeister party, well... *(a rueful laugh)* It's going straight into the script. Just the final twist it needed to become a hit. I've left those Hollywood hyenas to their mistletoe and carols to come here. To this desk. To finish my magnum opus. The Greater Gatsby shall be-

[A KNOCK at the door.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Who the devil?

[Fitzgerald answers. The door OPENS.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Shouldn't you be out making your husband buy you something furry to wear around your neck?

Vivian Nightingale: I'm afraid I've been dreadfully misbehaved this year and all that's in my future is coal. Also, I'm against animal cruelty.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: What if Sheilah'd been here?

Vivian Nightingale: Sheilah wouldn't leave a Hammermeister Christmas party so early. Plus if she had been here...well, gosh, all I'm doing is bringing you both little Christmas gifts. Thought I'd leave them on the steps but then I saw the light.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Kind of you.

Vivian Nightingale: Go on. Open yours!

[He unwraps the gift.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: A tie clip? It's so... ornate.

Vivian Nightingale: And as for Sheilah, some peroxide. For her ill-kept roots.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: You certainly do misbehave. Not sure when she'll be home so this thoughtful gift will have to wait. Oh, do get out Vivian, I have work to do and you have everything you could ever want.

Vivian Nightingale: I don't have you though.

F. Scott Fitzgerald: And if you did, we'd find a way to make each other miserable.

Vivian Nightingale: Misery begets the best writing. Merry Christmas, Fitzy.

[A kiss. Then she leaves. Fitzgerald shuts the door behind her.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: As if I needed more distractions tonight.

[A car REVS its engine outside.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: And now what's that?

[Fitzgerald OPENS THE SLATS OF THE BLINDS and peeks out the window.]

F. Scott Fitzgerald: Ah great, a mysterious vehicle parked out front making a bloody racket. If that's Citizen Jasper Fox again- let me take down the license plate and ask. *(writing)* 1ADLR1. Great. Now perhaps I can get back to work. Where was I? Ah! I think this new revelation can go on page 77 right before the denouement. Interior, soundstage, night. Nick Carraway enters the buzzing premiere party with trepidation and-

[A knock at the door. Fitzzy SIGHS.]

I shall never know peace!

[He grumbles as he walks to open the door. The sounds are fuzzy as he speaks with whoever is there.]

Oh. Come in, come in! Can I get you a drink? No? All right then. Why the long face? Don't answer that. I'm sure you have every reason to be cross. One moment, let me just put my tapes away and I'll be all yours.

[He walks back to the recorder and SHUTS IT OFF.]

[Ford shuts off the tape machine.]

Fig Wineshine: This whole time. She's been lying to us this whole damn time! The night of the murder. She was there! Why hire us if this could come out?

Ford Phillips: But someone else came to the house after her.

Fig Wineshine: Could have been a distraction. She easily could have come back to the house right after and done the man in. I've had it with this red headed rascalion.

Ford Phillips: We've gotta go. Let's see what Claudette's got for us before we make a new suspect list.

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): Though I tried to keep my cool, Fig was right. This didn't look good for Vivian and I simply couldn't understand her angle. If only Fitzgerald hadn't turned off the recorder, if only he'd greeted his visitor by name. If only he had done any number of things different, maybe I wouldn't be in this situation, being deceived by a devious dame. Maybe he'd be alive. Maybe he'd be dead but we would have solved his murder. Now it just felt like we were ten steps behind.

Fig Wineshine: For once my mouth couldn't keep up with my brain. I was sorting through the various scenes from Fitzgerald's tapes. An angry mistress. A friendship eradicated.

A hasty firing. And of course...a late evening visit from a mysterious guest. And yet...no answers.

[The bustling police station is still busy even at the late hour.]

Claudette Knickerbocker: Fig? Ford? You both look like you've seen a ghost!

Ford Phillips: We've spent the last hour with one.

Claudette Knickerbocker: Was he see-through? I always wondered if ghosts were really see through.

Ford Phillips: You had something to tell us?

Claudette Knickerbocker: Yes, well it's-

[Rex rushes over to them.]

Rex Punchwhistle: It's this!

Ford Phillips (Voice Over): Out of nowhere, Rex Punchwhistle - upper lip still in bandages - ran over and thrust a piece of paper in Fig's face. Another threatening letter.

[Fig SNATCHES the letter away.]

Fig Wineshine: Holy oatmeal raisin, this blackmailer is handing these out like peanuts at a baseball game. (reading) "Drop out of *The Grapes of Wrath* or your twosome will suddenly become a bit more gruesome."

Rex Punchwhistle: I knew we never should have come back here! This city is on a hellmouth!

Ford Phillips: Keep your houndstooth vest on. No one has seen any repercussions from these notes yet. I don't think you're in any imminent danger.

Rex Punchwhistle: It's herringbone. And yes they have, Lex is missing!

Ford Phillips: I take it back. You can remove your vest.

[Rex SCREAMS until he's cut off by the theme music.]

Sean Persaud: Shipwrecked Comedy presents The Case of the Greater Gatsby

Written and created by Sean Persaud and Sinead Persaud

Directed by William Joseph Stribling

Featuring:

Mary Kate Wiles as Vivian Nightingale

Daniel Vincent Gordh as F. Scott Fitzgerald

Blake Silver as TD Hammermeister

Ginny Di as Darby Farnsworth

Julia Cho as Sheilah Graham

Whitney Avalon as Dorothy Parker

Tommy Hobson as Barnaby Nightingale

Sinead Persaud as Fig Wineshine

Sean Persaud as Ford Phillips

Joanna Sotomura as Claudette Knickerbocker

And Brian Rosenthal as Rex Punchwhistle

Original music by Dylan Glatthorn

Audio recording by Noah Hunt Audio

Mixing and Sound Design by Lizzie Goldsmith

Executive Producers Paul Komoroski & Michael Walsh

Produced by Sean Persaud, Sinead Persaud, and Mary Kate Wiles

Special thanks to Kickstarter backers Katie Adamczyk, Ally Bertz Brown, Zainab Khan, Shao Chih Kuo, Jane Leach, Avalee Long, Lisel Perrine, Halsea Root, The Rude Mechanicals, Heather Tennant, and Justin Waterman.

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