Fitzgerald's second collection of short stories, Tales of the Jazz Age (1922), includes at least two masterpieces--May Day and The Diamond as Big as the Ritz. This edition reproduces Tales of the Jazz Age in full, along with several uncollected stories from the early 1920s, including Dice, Brassknuckles and Guitar, which closely anticipates the themes and characters of The Great Gatsby. James L.W. West III traces the textual history of the stories, and provides detailed historical notes and references.

My Personal Review:
This paperback Pine Street Press edition of Tales of the Jazz Age (the press is an imprint of the University of Pennsylvania Press) is affordable and well-edited. This edition, printed in 2003, contains the same content of eleven short stories as the original Charles Scribners Sons edition published in 1922.

I was most interested in reading The Curious Case of Benjamin Button because of the winter 2008 release of the Brad Pitt film. This story is not contained in the other two Fitzgerald short story anthologies which I own. The story is a fascinating little foray into straight-forward fantasy, as a man is born fully cognizant (and speaking the Kings English), fully-grown (Fitzgerald never explains how Bens poor mother survived, let alone managed, the birthing ordeal), and obviously very old. Benjamin then proceeds, Merlin-like, to live his life backwards, growing younger and younger. The story is only 32 pages long, and ends rather sadly and abruptly. However, it is so un-Fitzgerald-like that I found it intriguing, and am now anxiously awaiting the movie to see what Hollywood does with it.

Fitzgerald, although an artist and genius of the highest calibar, also had to eat. These stories were written for money, and they are not as well-wrought as the best of his prose stylings in his novels. (Fitzgerald states candidly in his intros to the stories that several of them are re-worked stories which he had first done at Princeton while an undergraduate.) But this is Fitzgerald, after all, and a very young Fitzgerald, at that. So I found this collection highly interesting and devoured it in one sitting.
I will now save my money and purchase the expensive hardback version of this collection for my own library.

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