

## Chapter 1

'Whenever you feel like criticizing any one,' my father told me, 'just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had.'

Fade in.

Chatter of old Dodge motor car winding down Inwilliers Road lined thick with trees. Sun shines through bursts of leaves overhead, radiating pools of green light in the summer afternoon.

He didn't say any more but we've always been unusually communicative in a reserved way, and I understood that he meant a great deal more than that. Reserving judgments is a matter of infinite hope. I am still a little afraid of missing something if I forget that a sense of the fundamental decencies is parcelled out unequally at birth.

Black Dodge with its canvas top down pulls into a rocky drive, past a scattered hedge and glimpses of a neighboring estate, of a perfect lawn.

My family have been prominent, well-to-do people for three generations. The Carraways are something of a clan, but the actual founder of my line was my grandfather's brother who arrived in fifty-one, sent a substitute to the Civil War and started the wholesale hardware business that my father carries on today.

Car brakes under its shed by the side of a weather beaten bungalow at the end of the drive, along a shoreline that melts into flat water.

I graduated in nineteen-fifteen, just a quarter of a century after my father, and a little later I participated in that delayed Teutonic migration known as the Great War. I enjoyed the counter-raid so thoroughly that I came back restless. Instead of being the warm center of the world the middle-west now seemed like the ragged edge of the universe -- so I decided to go east and learn the bond business. Everybody I knew was in the bond business so I supposed it could support one more single man. Father agreed to finance me for a year and after various delays I came east, in the spring of twenty-two.

Car door creaks open and Nick Carraway steps out, heading to the front door. He is a gentleman, a charming, most attractive young man. He snaps his fingers silently, remembers what he's forgotten, and returns to the car. Retrieves a book, red hardcover, no jacket.

I had a dog, at least for a few days until he ran away, and a Finnish woman who made my bed and cooked breakfast and muttered Finnish wisdom to herself over the electric stove.

Nick steps to the front door, and walks in.

I bought a dozen volumes on banking and credit and investment securities and they stood on my shelf in red and gold like new

money from the mint, promising to unfold the shining secrets that only Midas and Morgan and Maecenas knew. And I had the high intention of reading many other books besides.

Sunshine falls on the bungalow.

I was rather literary in college -- one year I wrote a series of very solemn and obvious editorials for the "Yale News" -- and now I was going to bring back all such things into my life and become again that most limited of all specialists, the "well-rounded man."

Rise up as Nick steps out the front door and heads to his car. He climbs in, throttles the engine to life not once but twice. Grinds it into reverse and starts back down the driveway. A seagull passes overhead.

It was a matter of chance that I should have rented a house in one of the strangest communities in North America. It was on that slender riotous island which extends itself due east of New York and where there are two unusual formations of land. Twenty miles from the city a pair of enormous eggs, identical in contour and separated only by a courtesy bay, jut out into the Long Island Sound.

Rise higher to see the bungalow sitting at very tip of the egg, only fifty yards from the Sound, and squeezed between two huge places.

I lived at West Egg, the -- well, the less fashionable of the two. I had a view of the water, a partial view of my neighbor's lawn, and the consoling proximity of millionaires -- all for eighty dollars a month.

Drift right to see Gatsby's mansion factual imitation of some Hôtel de Ville in Normandy, with a tower on one side, spanking new under a thin beard of raw ivy, and a marble swimming pool and more than forty acres of lawn and garden.

Float above Nick's car driving towards East Egg as evening falls. Across the bay the white palaces of fashionable East Egg glitter along the water.

Daisy was my second cousin once removed and I'd known Tom in college. And just after the war I spent two days with them in Chicago. His family were enormously wealthy -- even in college his freedom with money was a matter for reproach -- but now he'd left Chicago and come east.

Why, I don't know. They had spent a year in France, for no particular reason, and then drifted here and there unrestfully wherever people played polo and were rich together. This was a permanent move, said Daisy over the telephone, but I didn't believe it.

And so it happened that on a warm windy evening I drove over to East Egg to see two old friends whom I scarcely knew at all.

Nick parks his car

Their house was even more elaborate than I expected.

Float over an elaborate red and white Georgian Colonial mansion overlooking the bay. The lawn starts at the beach and runs toward the front door for a quarter of a mile, jumping over sun-dials and brick walks and burning gardens -- finally when it reaches the house it drifts up the side in bright vines as though from the momentum of its run. The front is broken by a line of French windows, glowing now with reflected gold, and wide open to the warm wind.

Tom Buchanan in riding clothes stands with his legs apart on the front porch. A sturdy, straw haired man of thirty with a rather hard mouth and a supercilious manner. Two shining, arrogant eyes dominate his face. He seems to fill those glistening boots until he strained the top lacing and you can see a great pack of muscle shifting when his shoulder moves under his thin coat. It's a body capable of enormous leverage -- a cruel body.

His voice, a gruff husky tenor.

"I've got a nice place here."

He turns Nick around by one arm and moves a broad flat hand along the front vista, including in its sweep a sunken Italian garden, a half acre of deep pungent roses and a snub-nosed motor boat that bumped the tide off shore.

"It belonged to Demaine the oil man."

He turns Nick around again, and leads him inside.

They walk through a high hallway into a bright rosy-colored space, fragilely bound into the house by French windows at either end. The windows are ajar and gleaming white against the fresh grass outside that seems to grow a little way into the house. A breeze blows through the room, blows curtains in at one end and out the other like pale flags, twisting them up toward the frosted wedding cake of the ceiling -- and then rippled over the wine-colored rug, making a shadow on it as wind does on the sea.

The only completely stationary object in the room is an enormous couch on which two young women are buoyed up as though upon an anchored balloon. They are both in white and their dresses are rippling and fluttering as if they had just been blown back in after a short flight around the house.

Nick stands for a few moments listening to the whip and snap of the curtains and the groan of a picture on the wall. Then there is a boom as Tom Buchanan shuts the rear windows and the caught wind dies out about the room and the curtains and the rugs and the two young women balloon slowly to the floor.

Daisy makes an attempt to rise -- then she laughs, an absurd, charming little laugh, and Nick laughs too and comes forward into the room.

"I'm p-paralyzed with happiness."

She laughs again, as if she said something very witty, and holds his hand for a moment, looking up into his face. He looks into hers. It's a face sad and lovely with bright things in it, bright eyes and a bright passionate mouth -- but there was an excitement in her voice that men who had cared for her found difficult to forget.

"Do they miss me in Chicago?"

"The whole town is desolate. All the cars have the left rear wheel painted black as a mourning wreath and there's a persistent wail all night along the North Shore."

"How gorgeous! Let's go back, Tom. Tomorrow! You ought to see the baby."

Nick smiles.

"She's asleep. She's two years old. Haven't you ever seen her?"

"Never."

"Well, you ought to see her. She's -- "

Tom Buchanan rests his hand on Nick's shoulder.

"What you doing, Nick?"

"I'm a bond man."

"Who with?"

"Probity Trust."

"Never heard of them."

"You will. You will if you stay in the East."

"I'll stay in the East, don't you worry."

Tom glances at Daisy and then back at Nick, as if alert for something more.

"I'd be a God Damned fool to live anywhere else."

"Absolutely!"

Miss Baker yawns and with a series of rapid, deft movements stands up into the room.

"I'm stiff. I've been lying on that sofa for as long as I can remember."

"Don't look at me. I've been trying to get you to New York all afternoon."

"No, thanks."

Miss Baker looks to the four cocktails just in from the pantry.

"I'm absolutely in training."

"You are!"

Tom takes down his drink as if it's a drop in the bottom of a glass.

"How you ever get anything done is beyond me."

Nick looks at Miss Baker and wonders what it is she "gets done". He enjoys looking at her.

She's a slender, small-breasted girl, with an erect carriage which she accentuates by throwing her body backward at the shoulders like a young cadet. Her grey sun-strained eyes look back at Nick with polite reciprocal curiosity out of a wan, charming discontented face. It occurs to Nick that he had seen her, or a picture of her, somewhere before.

"You live in West Egg. I know somebody there."

"I don't know a single -- "

"You must know Gatsby."

Before Nick can reply that he is his neighbor dinner is announced. Tom wedges his tense arm under Nick's and compels him from the room as though moving a checker to another square.

Slenderly, languidly, their hands set lightly on their hips the two young women precede them out onto a rosy-colored porch open toward the sunset where four candles flicker on the table in the soft wind. Daisy frowns.

"Why candles?"

She snaps them out with her fingers.

"In two weeks it'll be the longest day in the year. Do you always watch for the longest day of the year and then miss it? I always watch for the longest day in the year and then miss it."

"We ought to plan something."

Miss Baker yawns, sitting down at the table as if getting into bed.

"All right, what'll we plan?"

Daisy turns to Nick helplessly.

"What do people plan?"

Before Nick can answer, her eyes fasten with an awed expression on her little finger.

"Look!"

They all look -- the knuckle is black and blue.

"You did it, Tom. I know you didn't mean to but you did do it. That's what I get for marrying a brute of a man, a great big hulking physical specimen of a -- "

"I hate that word hulking, even in kidding."

"Hulking."

Sometimes Daisy and Miss Baker talk at once, unobtrusively and with a bantering inconsequence that was never quite chatter, that was as cool as their white dresses and their impersonal eyes in the absence of all desire. They know that presently dinner will be over and a little later the evening too would be over and casually put away.

Nick sips on his second glass of corky but rather impressive claret

"You make me feel uncivilized, Daisy. Can't you talk about crops or something?"

Daisy lolls her head.

"Civilization's going to pieces. I've gotten to be a terrible pessimist about things. Have you read 'The Rise of the Coloured Empires' by this man Goddard?"

"Why, no, Tom."

"Well, it's a fine book, and everybody ought to read it. The idea is if we don't look out the white race will be -- will be utterly submerged. It's all scientific stuff; it's been proved."

"Tom's getting very profound. He reads deep books with long words in them. What was that word we -- "

Tom glances at daisy impatiently.

"Well, these books are all scientific. This fellow has worked out the whole thing. It's up to us who are the dominant race to watch out or these other races will have control of things."

Daisy winks.

"We've got to beat them down."

"You ought to live in California -- "

Tom interrupts Miss Baker by shifting heavily in his chair.

"This idea is that we're Nordics. I am, and you are and you are

and -- -- "

Daisy winks at Nick again.

" -- and we've produced all the things that go to make civilization -- oh, science and art and all that. Do you see?"

Telephone rings inside and the butler leaves the porch. Daisy leans toward Nick.

"I'll tell you a family secret. It's about the butler's nose. Do you want to hear about the butler's nose?"

"That's why I came over tonight."

"Well, he wasn't always a butler; he used to be the silver polisher for some people in New York that had a silver service for two hundred people. He had to polish it from morning till night until finally it began to affect his nose -- "

Miss Baker offers a suggestion.

"Things went from bad to worse?"

"Yes. Things went from bad to worse until finally he had to give up his position."

For a moment the last sunshine falls with romantic affection upon her glowing face, her voice compels Nick forward breathlessly as he listened. Then the glow faded, each light deserting her with lingering regret.

The butler comes back and murmurs something close to Tom's ear whereupon Tom frowns, pushes back his chair and without a word goes inside. Daisy leans forward again, her voice quickening and glowing and singing.

"I love to see you at my table, Nick. You remind me of a -- of a rose, an absolute rose. Doesn't he?"

She turns to Miss Baker for confirmation.

"An absolute rose?"

She suddenly throws her napkin on the table and excuses herself and goes into the house.

Miss Baker and Nick exchange a short glance consciously devoid of meaning. Nick is about to speak when she sits up alertly.

"Sh!"

A subdued impassioned murmur is audible in the room beyond and Miss Baker leaned forward, unashamed, trying to hear. The murmur trembles on the verge of coherence, sinks down, mounts excitedly, and then ceased altogether.

"This Mr. Gatsby you spoke of is my -- "

"Don't talk. I want to hear what happens."

"Is something happening?"

"You mean to say you don't know? I thought everybody knew."

"I don't."

"Why -- Tom's got some woman in New York."

"Got some woman?"

Miss Baker nods.

"She might have the decency not to telephone him at dinner-time. Don't you think?"

The flutter of a dress and the crunch of leather boots and Tom and Daisy are back at the table.

"It couldn't be helped!"

Daisy sits down, glance searchingly at Miss Baker and then at Nick and continues with forced gayety.

"I looked outdoors for a minute and it's very romantic outdoors. There's a bird on the lawn that I think must be a nightingale come over on the Cunard or White Star Line. He's singing away. It's romantic, isn't it, Tom?"

"Very romantic."

Tom turns to Nick.

"If it's light enough after dinner I want to take you down to the stables."

Telephone rings inside, and as Daisy shakes her head decisively at Tom the subject of the stables, in fact all subjects, vanish into air. The candles are lit again, pointlessly.

Tom and Miss Baker, with several feet of twilight between them stroll back into the library. Nick tries to look pleasantly interested as he follows Daisy around a chain of connecting verandas to the porch in front. In its deep gloom they sit down side by side on a wicker settee.

Daisy takes her face in her hands, as if feeling its lovely shape, and her eyes move gradually out into the velvet dusk.

"We don't know each other very well, Nick. Even if we are cousins. You didn't come to my wedding."

"I wasn't back from the war."

"Well, I've had a very bad time, Nick, and I'm pretty cynical about everything."

Nick waits but she doesn't say any more.

"I suppose your daughter talks, and -- eats, and everything."

"Oh, yes. Listen, Nick, let me tell you what I said when she was born. Would you like to hear?"

"Very much."

"She was less than an hour old and Tom was God knows where. I woke up out of the ether with an utterly abandoned feeling and asked the nurse right away if it was a boy or a girl. She told me it was a girl, and so I turned my head away and wept. 'All right,' I said, 'I'm glad it's a girl. And I hope she'll be a fool -- that's the best thing a girl can be in this world, a beautiful little fool.'"

Daisy continues to convince herself.

"I think everything's terrible anyhow. Everybody thinks so -- the most advanced people. And I know. I've been everywhere and seen everything and done everything."

Daisy laughs with thrilling scorn.

"Sophisticated -- God, I'm sophisticated!"

The instant her voice broke off, ceasing to compel my attention, my belief, I felt the basic insincerity of what she had said. It made me uneasy, as though the whole evening had been a trick of some sort to exact a contributory emotion from me. I waited, and sure enough, in a moment she looked at me with an absolute smirk on her lovely face.

Inside, the crimson room blooms with light. Tom and Miss Baker sit at either end of the long couch and she reads aloud to him from the "Saturday Evening Post" -- the words, murmurous and uninflected, running together in a soothing tune. The lamp-light, bright on his boots and dull on the autumn-leaf yellow of her hair, glints along the paper as she turns a page with a flutter of slender muscles in her arms.

When Daisy and Nick come in, she holds them silent for a moment with a lifted hand.

"To be continued -- in our very next issue"

She tosses the magazine on the table, and stands up.

"Ten o'clock. Time for this good girl to go to bed."

Daisy turns to Nick.

"Jordan's going to play in the tournament tomorrow, over at Westchester."

"Oh -- you're Jordan Baker."

"Good night. Wake me at eight, won't you."

"If you'll get up."

"I will. Good night, Mr. Carraway. See you anon."

"Of course you will. In fact I think I'll arrange a marriage. Come over often, Nick, and I'll sort of -- oh -- fling you together. You know -- lock you up accidentally in linen closets and push you out to sea in a boat, and all that sort of thing -- "

Miss Baker calls from the stairs.

"Good night. I haven't heard a word."

After a moment Tom speaks.

"She's a nice girl. They oughtn't to let her run around the country this way."

"Who oughtn't to?"

"Her family."

"Her family is one aunt about a thousand years old. Besides, Nick's going to look after her, aren't you, Nick? She's going to spend lots of week-ends out here this summer."

Daisy and Tom look at each other in silence.

"Is she from New York?"

"From Louisville. Our white girlhood was passed together there. Our beautiful white -- "

"Did you give Nick a little heart to heart talk on the veranda?"

"Did I?"

Daisy looks at Nick.

"I can't seem to remember, but I think we talked about the Nordic race. Yes, I'm sure we did. It sort of crept up on us and first thing you know -- "

"Don't believe everything you hear, Nick."

"I heard nothing at all."

Nick leaves to go home. Tom and Daisy come to the door with him and stand side by side in a square of light.

Nick starts his motor and Daisy calls out.

"Wait! I forgot to ask you something, and it's important. We heard you were engaged to a girl out West."

"That's right. We heard that you were engaged."

"It's libel. I'm too poor."

Nick drives off into the night.

Their interest rather touched me and made them less remotely rich -- nevertheless, I was confused and a little disgusted. It seemed to me that the thing for Daisy to do was to rush out of the house, child in arms -- but apparently there were no such intentions in her head. As for Tom, the fact that he "had some woman in New York" was really less surprising than that he had been depressed by a book of stale ideas.

Nick drives past roadhouses and wayside garages, where new red gas-pumps sit out in pools of light. He reaches his home in West Egg and runs the car under its shed. He sits on an abandoned grass roller in the yard.

The wind has blown off, leaving a loud bright night. The silhouette of a moving cat wavers across the moonlight and turning his head to watch it he sees that he is not alone -- fifty feet away a figure had emerged from the shadow of his neighbor's mansion, standing on the lawn with his hands in his pockets regarding the silver pepper of the stars.

He stretches out his arms toward the dark water in a curious way, trembling.

Nick glances seaward -- and distinguishes nothing except a single green light, minute and far away, that might be the end of a dock.

Nick turns back but the man has vanished, and he is alone again in the unquiet darkness.

## Chapter 2

Hiss of train wheels slowing down. Gray dust sifts to reveal a valley of ashes -- ridges and hills and grotesque gardens where ashes take the forms of houses and chimneys and rising smoke and finally, with a transcendent effort, of men moving dimly and already crumbling through the powdery air.

The afternoon sun is gray.

A line of gray rail cars crawls along an invisible track, gives out a ghastly creak and comes to rest, and immediately the ash-grey men swarm up with leaden spades and stir up an impenetrable cloud which screens their obscure operations from sight.

Above the grey land and the spasms of bleak dust which drift endlessly over it lies the eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg. The eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg are blue and gigantic -- their retinas are one yard high. Looking out from a pair of enormous yellow spectacles which pass over a nonexistent nose. Dimmed a

little by many paintless days under sun and rain, the eyes brood over the solemn dumping ground.

Clank of train wheels coming to rest.

Nick stares out the train window at the desolate land bounded on one side by a small foul river. The drawbridge is up to let barges through. Tom leaps to his feet, takes hold of Nick's elbow and literally forces him from the car.

"We're getting off! I want you to meet my girl."

The supercilious assumption was that on Sunday afternoon I had nothing better to do.

Nick follows him over a low white-washed railroad fence and they walk back a hundred yards along the road under Doctor Eckleburg's persistent stare. The only building in sight was a small block of yellow brick sitting on the edge of the waste land, a sort of compact Main Street ministering to it and contiguous to absolutely nothing. One of the three shops it contained is for rent and another is an all-night restaurant approached by a trail of ashes.

The third is a garage -- Repairs. George B. Wilson. Cars Bought and Sold -- and Nick follows Tom inside.

The interior is unprosperous and bare. The only car visible was the dust-covered wreck of a Ford which crouched in a dim corner. George Wilson appears in the door of an office, wiping his hands on a piece of waste. He is a blonde, spiritless man, anaemic, and faintly handsome. When he sees Tom and Nick a damp gleam of hope springs into his light blue eyes.

"Hello, Wilson, old man."

Tom slaps him jovially on the shoulder.

"How's business?"

"Can't complain. When are you going to sell me that car?"

"Next week -- I've got my man working on it now."

"Works pretty slow, don't he?"

"No, he doesn't. And if you feel that way about it, maybe I'd better sell it somewhere else after all."

"I don't mean that. I just meant -- "

His voice fades off and Tom glances impatiently around the garage. Footsteps on a stairs and in a moment the thickish figure of a woman blocks out the light from the office door. She is in the middle thirties, and faintly stout, but she carries her surplus flesh sensuously as some women can. Her face, above a spotted dress of dark blue crepe-de-chine, contains no facet or gleam of beauty but there is an immediately perceptible vitality about her as if the nerves of her body are continually smouldering. She

smiles slowly and walking through her husband as if he were a ghost shakes hands with Tom, looking him flush in the eye. Then she wet her lips and without turning around spoke to her husband in a soft, coarse voice.

"Get some chairs, why don't you, so somebody can sit down."

"Oh, sure."

Wilson agrees Wilson hurriedly and goes toward the little office, mingling immediately with the cement color of the walls. A white ashen dust veiled his dark suit and his pale hair as it veiled everything in the vicinity -- except his wife, who moves close to Tom.

"I want to see you. Get on the next train."

"All right."

"I'll meet you by the news-stand on the lower level."

She nods and moves away from him just as George Wilson emerges with two chairs from his office door.

Tom and Nick wait for her down the road and out of sight. It's a few days before the Fourth of July, and a gray, scrawny Italian child is setting torpedoes in a row along the railroad track.

Tom exchanges a frown with Doctor Eckleburg.

"Terrible place, isn't it."

"Awful."

"It does her good to get away."

"Doesn't her husband object?"

"Wilson? He thinks she goes to see her sister in New York. He's so dumb he doesn't know he's alive."

Tom and Nick climb back on board. Mrs. Wilson steps discreetly up into another car. She has changed her dress to a brown figured muslin which stretches tight over her rather wide hips. The train rolls forward.

In New York Tom helps her to the platform. At the news-stand she buys a copy of "Town Tattle" and a moving-picture magazine and, in the station drug store, some cold cream and a small flask of perfume. Upstairs, in the solemn echoing drive she lets four taxi cabs drive away before she selects a new one, lavender-colored with grey upholstery, and in this they slide out from the mass of the station into the glowing sunshine. But immediately she turned sharply from the window and leaning forward taps on the front glass.

"I want to get one of those dogs. I want to get one for the apartment. They're nice to have -- a dog."

Taxi cab backs up to a gray old man on the sidewalk who bears an absurd resemblance to John D. Rockefeller. In a basket, swinging from his neck, cower a dozen very recent puppies of an indeterminate breed. He come to the taxi-window.

"What kind are they?"

"All kinds. What kind do you want, lady?"

"I'd like to get one of those police dogs. I don't suppose you got that kind?"

The old man peers doubtfully into the basket, plunges in his hand and draws one up, wriggling, by the back of the neck. Tom shakes his head.

"That's no police dog."

"No, it's not exactly a police dog. It's more of an airedale."

He passes his hand over the brown wash-rag of a back.

"Look at that coat. Some coat. That's a dog that'll never bother you with catching cold."

"I think it's cute. How much is it?"

"That dog?" That dog will cost you ten dollars."

The airedale -- undoubtedly there's an airedale concerned in it somewhere though its feet are startlingly white -- changes hands and settles down into Mrs. Wilson's lap, where she fondles the weather-proof coat with rapture.

"Is it a boy or a girl?" she asks delicately.

"That dog? That dog's a boy."

Tom almost spits.

"It's a bitch. Here's your money. Go and buy ten more dogs with it."

They drive over to Fifth Avenue, so warm and soft, almost pastoral.

"Hold on, I have to leave you here."

"No, you don't. Myrtle'll be hurt if you don't come up to the apartment. Won't you, Myrtle?"

"Come on. I'll telephone my sister Catherine. She's said to be very beautiful by people who ought to know."

"Well, I'd like to, but -- "

They drove on, cutting back again over the Park toward the West

Hundreds. At 158th Street the taxi cab stops at one slice in a long white cake of apartment houses. Throwing a regal homecoming glance around the neighborhood, Mrs. Wilson gathers up her dog and her other purchases and goes haughtily in.

As the elevator rises she makes an announcement.

"I'm going to have the McKees come up. And of course I got to call up my sister, too."

The apartment is on the top floor -- a small living room, a small dining room, a small bedroom and a bath. The living room is crowded with a set of tapestried furniture entirely too large for it so that to move about is to stumble continually over scenes of ladies swinging in the gardens of Versailles. Several old copies of "Town Tattle" lie on the table together with a copy of "Simon Called Peter" and some of the small scandal magazines of Broadway. Mrs. Wilson is first concerned with the dog. A reluctant elevator boy leaves for a box full of straw and some milk. Meanwhile Tom brings out a bottle of whiskey from a locked bureau door.

I have been drunk just twice in my life and the second time was that afternoon so everything that happened has a dim hazy cast over it although until after eight o'clock the apartment was full of cheerful sun. Sitting on Tom's lap Mrs. Wilson called up several people on the telephone; then there were no cigarettes and I went out to buy some at the drug store on the corner. When I came back they had disappeared so I sat down discreetly in the living room and read a chapter of "Simon Called Peter" -- either it was terrible stuff or the whiskey distorted things because it didn't make any sense to me.

Just as Tom and Myrtle reappear, company commences to arrive at the apartment door.

The sister, Catherine, is a slender, worldly girl of about thirty with a solid sticky bob of red hair and a complexion powdered milky white. Her eyebrows had been plucked and then drawn on again at a more rakish angle but the efforts of nature toward the restoration of the old alignment gave a blurred air to her face. When she moves about there was an incessant clicking as innumerable pottery bracelets jingling up and down upon her arms.

Mr. McKee is a pale feminine man from the flat below. He must have just shaved for there is a white spot of lather on his cheekbone and he is most respectful in his greeting to everyone in the room. He informs Nick that he is in the "artistic game". His wife is shrill, languid, handsome and horrible. She tells Nick with pride that her husband has photographed her a hundred and twenty-seven times since they have been married.

Mrs. Wilson has changed into in an elaborate afternoon dress of cream colored chiffon, which gives out a continual rustle as she sweep about the room. With the influence of the dress her personality has also undergone a change. The intense vitality that had been so remarkable in the garage is converted into impressive hauteur. Her laughter, her gestures, her assertions become more violently affected moment by moment and as she expands the room

grows smaller around her until she seems to be revolving on a noisy, creaking pivot through the smoky air.

"My dear, they'll cheat you every time. All they think of is money. I had a woman up here last week to look at my feet and when she gave me the bill you'd of thought she had my appendicitus out."

Mrs. McKee admires Mrs. Wilson's dress.

"I like your dress. I think it's adorable."

"It's just a crazy old thing. I just slip it on sometimes when I don't care what I look like."

"If Chester could only get you in that pose I think he could make something of it."

Mr. McKee regards her intently with his head on one side and then moves his hand back and forth slowly in front of his face.

"I should change the light. I'd like to bring out the modelling of the features. And I'd try to get hold of all the back hair."

"I wouldn't think of changing the light. "I think it's -- "

"Sh!"

Everyone looks at the subject again whereupon Tom Buchanan yawns audibly and gets to his feet.

"You McKees have something to drink. Get some more ice and mineral water, Myrtle, before everybody goes to sleep."

"I told that elevator boy about the ice."

Myrtle raises her eyebrows in despair.

"These people! You have to keep after them all the time."

She looks at Nick and laughs pointlessly. Then flounces over to the dog, kisses it with ecstasy and sweeps into the kitchen.

Mr. McKee looks to Tom.

"I've done some nice things out on Long Island."

Tom looks at him blankly.

"Two of them we have framed downstairs."

"Two what?"

"Two studies. One of them I call 'Montauk Point -- the Gulls,' and the other I call 'Montauk Point -- the Sea.' "

Catherine sits down beside Nick on the couch.

"Do you live down on Long Island, too?"

"I live at West Egg."

"Really? I was down there at a party about a month ago. At a man named Gatsby. Do you know him?"

"I live next door to him."

"They say he's a nephew or a cousin of Kaiser Wilhelm's. That's where all his money comes from."

"Really?"

She nods.

"I'm scared of him. I'd hate to have him get anything on me."

Mrs. McKee points suddenly at Catherine:

"Chester, I think you could do something with her."

Mr. McKee nods in a bored way and turns his attention to Tom.

"I'd like to do more work on Long Island if I could get the entry. All I ask is that they should give me a start."

"Ask Myrtle."

Tom breaks into a short shout of laughter as Mrs. Wilson enters with a tray.

"She'll give you a letter of introduction, won't you, Myrtle?"

"Do what?"

"You'll give McKee a letter of introduction to your husband, so he can do some studies of him."

His lips move silently for a moment as he invents.

" 'George B. Wilson at the Gasoline Pump,' or something like that."

Catherine leans close to Nick and whispers in his ear:

"Neither of them can stand the person they're married to."

"Can't they?"

"Can't stand them."

She looks at Myrtle and then at Tom.

"What I say is, why go on living with them if they can't stand them? If I was them I'd get a divorce and get married to each other right away."

"Doesn't she like Wilson either?"

The answer to this is unexpected. It comes from Myrtle who had overheard the question and it is violent and obscene.

Catherine lowers her voice.

"It's really his wife that's keeping them apart. She's a Catholic and they don't believe in divorce."

Daisy was not a Catholic and I was a little shocked at the elaborateness of the lie.

"When they do get married, they're going west to live for a while until it blows over."

"It'd be more discreet to go to Europe."

"Oh, do you like Europe? I just got back from Monte Carlo."

"Really."

"Just last year. I went over there with another girl."

"Stay long?"

"No, we just went to Monte Carlo and back. We went by way of Marseilles. We had over twelve hundred dollars when we started but we got gypped out of it all in two days in the private rooms."

The late afternoon sky blooms in the window for a moment like the blue honey of the Mediterranean.

Mrs. McKee's shrill voice cuts through.

"I almost made a mistake, too. I almost married a little kyke who'd been after me for years. I knew he was below me. Everybody kept saying to me: 'Lucille, that man's way below you!' But if I hadn't met Chester, he'd of got me sure."

Myrtle Wilson nods her head up and down.

"Yes, but listen, at least you didn't marry him."

"I know I didn't."

"Well, I married him. "And that's the difference between your case and mine."

"Why did you, Myrtle? Nobody forced you to."

"I married him because I thought he was a gentleman. I thought he knew something about breeding, but he wasn't fit to lick my shoe."

"You were crazy about him for a while."

"Crazy about him! Who said I was crazy about him? I never was any more crazy about him than I was about that man there."

She points suddenly at Nick.

"The only crazy I was was when I married him. I knew right away I made a mistake. He borrowed somebody's best suit to get married in and never even told me about it, and the man came after it one day when he was out."

Catherine turns to Nick.

"She really ought to get away from him. They've been living over that garage for eleven years. And Tom's the first sweetie she ever had."

The bottle of whiskey -- a second one -- is now in constant demand by all present, except Catherine who "felt just as good on nothing at all."

Tom rings for the janitor and sends him for some celebrated sandwiches, which are a complete supper in themselves.

Nick wants to get out and walk eastward toward the park through the soft twilight but each time he tries to go he becomes entangled in some wild strident argument which pulls him back, as if with ropes, into his chair.

High over the city our line of yellow windows must have contributed their share of human secrecy to the casual watcher in the darkening streets, and I was him too, looking up and wondering. I was within and without, simultaneously enchanted and repelled by the inexhaustible variety of life.

Myrtle pulls her chair close to Nick, and suddenly her warm breath pours over him the story of her first meeting with Tom.

"It was on the two little seats facing each other that are always the last ones left on the train. I was going up to New York to see my sister and spend the night. He had on a dress suit and patent leather shoes and I couldn't keep my eyes off him but every time he looked at me I had to pretend to be looking at the advertisement over his head. When we came into the station he was next to me and his white shirt-front pressed against my arm -- and so I told him I'd have to call a policeman, but he knew I lied. I was so excited. All I kept thinking about, over and over, was 'You can't live forever, you can't live forever.' "

She turns to Mrs. McKee and the room rings full of her artificial laughter.

"My dear, I'm going to give you this dress as soon as I'm through with it. I've got to get another one tomorrow. I'm going to make a list of all the things I've got to get. A massage and a wave and a collar for the dog and one of those cute little ash-trays where you touch a spring, and a wreath with a black silk bow for mother's grave that'll last all summer. I got to write down a list so I won't forget all the things I got to do."

Mr. McKee is asleep on a chair with his fists clenched in his lap.

Taking out his handkerchief Nick wipes from his cheek the remains of the spot of dried lather that had worried him all afternoon.

The little dog sits on the table looking with blind eyes through the smoke and from time to time groaning faintly. People disappear, reappear, make plans to go somewhere, and then loose each other, search for each other, find each other a few feet away.

Some time toward midnight Tom Buchanan and Mrs. Wilson stand face to face discussing in impassioned voices whether Mrs. Wilson has any right to mention Daisy's name.

"Daisy! Daisy! Daisy! I'll say it whenever I want to! Daisy! Dai --"

Making a short deft movement Tom Buchanan breaks her nose with his open hand.

Bloody towels upon the bathroom floor, and women's voices scolding, and high over the confusion a long broken wail of pain. Mr. McKee awakes from his doze and starts in a daze toward the door. He stares at the scene -- his wife and Catherine scolding and consoling as they stumble here and there among the crowded furniture with articles of aid, and the despairing figure on the couch bleeding fluently and trying to spread a copy of "Town Tattle" over the tapestry scenes of Versailles.

Mr. McKee turns and continues on out the door. Taking his hat from the chandelier Nick follows.

Black and white still of Nick following Mr. McKee down the hallway. Mr. McKee's hand is blurred loosening his tie.

Black and white still of Mr. McKee and Nick going down the elevator. Mr. McKee's hand is blurred on the lever.

Black and white still of Nick standing beside Mr. McKee's bed. Mr. McKee sits up between the sheets, clad in his underwear, with a great portfolio. His hand is blurred turning a page.

### Chapter 3

A handwritten invitation on formal note paper: 'The honor would be entirely mine if you would attend my little party tonight - Jay Gatsby.'

Nick stands on the porch of his bungalow in the afternoon light, looking at Gatsby's majestic signature and then through the hedge towards the mansion.

I believe that on the first night I went to Gatsby's house I was one of the few guests who had actually been invited.

Corps of caterers lay several hundred feet of canvas and enough

colored lights to make a Christmas tree of Gatsby's enormous garden. On buffet tables, garnished with glistening hors-d'oeuvre, spiced baked hams crowd against salads of harlequin designs and pastry pigs and turkeys bewitch to a dark gold.

In the main hall a bar with a real brass rail is set up, and stocked with gins and liquors and cordials long forgotten.

The orchestra arrives -- no thin five-piece affair but a whole pitful of oboes and trombones and saxophones and viols and cornets and piccolos and low and high drums.

People were not invited -- they went there. They got into automobiles which bore them out to Long Island and somehow they ended up at Gatsby's door. Once there they were introduced by somebody who knew Gatsby and after that they conducted themselves according to the rules of behavior associated with amusement parks.

Cars from New York are parked five deep in the drive, and already the halls and salons and verandas are gaudy with primary colors and hair shorn in strange new ways and shawls beyond the dreams of Castile.

The bar is in full swing and floating rounds of cocktails permeate the garden outside until the air is alive with chatter and laughter and casual innuendo and introductions forgotten on the spot and enthusiastic meetings between women who never know each other's names.

The colored lights grow brighter as the earth lurches away from the sun and now the orchestra is playing yellow cocktail music and the opera of voices pitches a key higher. Laughter is easier, minute by minute, spilled with prodigality, tipped out at a cheerful word. The groups change more swiftly, swell with new arrivals, dissolve and form in the same breath -- already there are wanderers, confident girls who weave here and there among the stouter and more stable, become for a sharp, joyous moment the center of a group and then excited with triumph glide on through the sea-change of faces and voices and color under the constantly changing light.

Suddenly one of these gypsies in trembling opal, seizes a cocktail out of the air, dumps it down for courage and moving her hands like Frisco dances out alone on the canvas platform. A momentary hush; the orchestra leader varies his rhythm obligingly for her and there is a burst of chatter as the erroneous news goes around that she is Gilda Gray's understudy from the "Follies." The party has begun.

Nick arrives in white flannels and wanders around rather ill-at-ease among swirls and eddies of people he doesn't know. Young Englishmen are dotted about everywhere. All well dressed, all looking a little hungry and all talking in low earnest voices to solid and prosperous Americans.

Nick heads off in the direction of the cocktail table and sees Jordan Baker come out of the house. She stands at the head of the

marble steps, leaning a little backward and looking with contemptuous interest down into the garden. He advances towards her.

"Hello!"

"I thought you might be here. I remembered you lived next door to -  
- "

She holds my hand impersonally, and gives ear to two girls in twin yellow dresses who have stopped at the foot of the steps.

"Hello! Sorry you didn't win."

One of the girls speaks for herself.

"You don't know who we are, but we met you here about a month ago."

"You've dyed your hair since then."

The girls move casually on and with Jordan's slender golden arm resting in Nick's, they descend the steps and saunter about the garden. A tray of cocktails float at them through the twilight. They sit down at a table with the two girls in yellow and three men, each one introduces themselves as Mr. Mumble. Jordan turns to the girls.

"Do you come to these parties often?"

"The last one was the one I met you at. Wasn't it for you, Lucille?"

"I like to come. I never care what I do, so I always have a good time. When I was here last I tore my gown on a chair, and he asked me my name and address -- inside of a week I got a package from Croirier's with a new evening gown in it."

"Did you keep it?"

"Sure I did. I was going to wear it tonight, but it was too big in the bust and had to be altered. It was gas blue with lavender beads. Two hundred and sixty-five dollars."

"There's something funny about a fellow that'll do a thing like that. He doesn't want any trouble with anybody."

Nick smiles.

"Who doesn't?"

"Gatsby. Somebody told me -- "

The two girls and Jordan lean together confidentially.

"Somebody told me they thought he killed a man once."

A thrill passes over everyone. The three Mr. Mumbles bend forward

and listen eagerly.

"I don't think it's so much that, it's more that he was a German spy during the war."

One of the men nods in confirmation.

"I heard that from a man who knew all about him, grew up with him in Germany."

"Oh, no, it couldn't be that, because he was in the American army during the war."

As their credulity switches back to the first girl she leans forward with enthusiasm and whispers.

"You look at him sometimes when he thinks nobody's looking at him. I'll bet he killed a man."

She narrows her eyes and shivers. Lucille shivers. They all turn and look around for Gatsby.

The first supper is being served, and Jordan invites Nick to join her own party spread around a table on the other side of the garden. There are three married couples and Jordan's escort, a persistent undergraduate given to violent innuendo and obviously under the impression that sooner or later Jordan is going to yield him up her person to a greater or lesser degree. Instead of rambling this party has preserved a dignified homogeneity, and assumed to itself the function of representing the staid nobility of the countryside -- East Egg condescending to West Egg.

Jordan turns to look over the spectroscopic gayety. She whispers to Nick.

"Let's get out. This is much too polite for me."

They get up, and she explains they are going to find the host.

"He's never met him."

The undergraduate nods in a cynical, melancholy way.

The bar is crowded but Gatsby is not there. She can't find him from the top of the steps, and he isn't on the veranda. On a chance they try an important-looking door, and walk into a high Gothic library, panelled with carved English oak, and probably transported complete from some ruin overseas.

A stout, middle-aged man with enormous owl-eyed spectacles sits somewhat drunk on the edge of a great table, staring with unsteady concentration at the shelves of books. As we enter he wheels excitedly around and examines Jordan from head to foot.

"What do you think?"

"About what?"

He waves his hand toward the book-shelves.

"About that. As a matter of fact you needn't bother to ascertain. I ascertained. They're real."

"The books?"

He nods.

"Absolutely real -- have pages and everything. I thought they'd be a nice durable cardboard. Matter of fact, they're absolutely real. Pages and -- Here! Lemme show you."

He rushes to the bookcases and returns with Volume One of the "Stoddard Lectures."

"See! It's a bona fide piece of printed matter. It fooled me. This fella's a regular Belasco. It's a triumph. What thoroughness! What realism! Knew when to stop too -- didn't cut the pages. But what do you want? What do you expect?"

He snatches the book from me and replaces it hastily on its shelf muttering that if one brick is removed the whole library is liable to collapse.

"Who brought you? Or did you just come? I was brought. Most people were brought."

Jordan looks at him alertly, cheerfully without answering.

"I was brought by a woman named Roosevelt. Mrs. Claud Roosevelt. Do you know her? I met her somewhere last night. I've been drunk for about a week now, and I thought it might sober me up to sit in a library."

"Has it?"

"A little bit, I think. I can't tell yet. I've only been here an hour. Did I tell you about the books? They're real. They're -- --"

"You told us."

They shake hands with him gravely and go back outdoors.

There is dancing now on the canvas in the garden, old men pushing young girls backward in eternal graceless circles, superior couples holding each other tortuously, fashionably and keeping in the corners -- and a great number of single girls dancing individualistically. By midnight the hilarity had increased.

People are doing "stunts" all over the garden, while happy vacuous bursts of laughter rise toward the summer sky. The moon had risen higher.

Nick and Jordan sit at a table with a man of about his age and a rowdy little girl who gives way upon the slightest provocation to uncontrollable laughter.

I was enjoying myself now. I had taken two finger bowls of champagne and the scene had changed before my eyes into something significant, elemental and profound.

At a lull in the entertainment the man looks at Nick and smiles politely.

"Your face is familiar. Weren't you in the Third Division during the war?"

"Why, yes. I was in the Ninth Machine-Gun Battalion."

"I was in the Seventh Infantry until June nineteen-eighteen. I knew I'd seen you somewhere before."

They talk for a moment about some wet, grey little villages in France. Evidently he lives in the vicinity for he tells Nick that he had just bought a hydroplane and was going to try it out in the morning.

"Want to go with me, old sport? Just near the shore along the Sound."

"What time?"

"Any time that suits you best."

Jordan looks around and smiled.

"Having a gay time now?"

"Much better."

Nick turns again to his new acquaintance.

"This is an unusual party for me. I haven't even seen the host. I live over there -- and this man Gatsby sent over his chauffeur with an invitation."

For a moment he looks at Nick as if he fails to understand.

"I'm Gatsby."

"What! Oh, I beg your pardon."

"I thought you knew, old sport. I'm afraid I'm not a very good host."

He smiles understandingly.

It was one of those rare smiles with a quality of eternal reassurance, that you may come across four or five times in life. It faced -- or seemed to face -- the whole external world for an instant, and then concentrated on you with an irresistible prejudice in your favor. It understood you just so far as you wanted to be understood, believed in you as you would like to believe in yourself and assured you that it had precisely the

impression of you that, at your best, you hoped to convey. Precisely at that point it vanished.

A butler hurries towards Mr. Gatsby with the information that Chicago is calling him on the wire. He excuses himself with a small bow that included each of us in turn.

"If you want anything just ask for it, old sport. Excuse me. I will rejoin you later."

When he is gone Nick turns immediately to Jordan.

"Who is he? Do you know?"

"He's just a man named Gatsby."

"Where is he from, I mean? And what does he do?"

Jordan answers with a wan smile.

"Well, -- he told me once he was an Oxford man. However, I don't believe it."

"Why not?"

"I don't know. I just don't think he went there."

I would have accepted without question that Gatsby sprang from the swamps of Louisiana or from the lower East Side of New York. That was comprehensible. But young men didn't -- at least in my provincial inexperience I believed they didn't -- drift coolly out of nowhere and buy a palace on Long Island Sound.

"Anyhow he gives large parties. And I like large parties. They're so intimate. At small parties there isn't any privacy."

Boom of a bass drum, and the voice of the orchestra leader rings out suddenly above the echolalia of the garden.

"Ladies and gentlemen, at the request of Mr. Gatsby we are going to play for you Mr. Vladimir Tostoff's latest work which attracted so much attention at Carnegie Hall last May. If you read the papers you know there was a big sensation. Some sensation!"

He smiles with jovial condescension and adds "Some sensation!" whereupon everybody laughs.

"The piece is known as 'Vladimir Tostoff's Jazz History of the World.' "

As the music starts Nick's eyes fall on Gatsby, standing alone on the marble steps and looking from one group to another with approving eyes. His tanned skin is drawn attractively tight on his face and his short hair looks as though it is trimmed every day.

I could see nothing sinister about him. I wondered if the fact that he was not drinking helped to set him off from his guests, for it seemed to me that he grew more correct as the fraternal

hilarity increased.

Girls are putting their heads on men's shoulders in a puppyish, convivial way, girls are swooning backward playfully into men's arms, even into groups knowing that some one will arrest their falls.

"I beg your pardon."

Gatsby's butler is suddenly standing beside Nick and Jordan.

"Miss Baker? I beg your pardon but Mr. Gatsby would like to speak to you alone."

"With me?"

"Yes, madame."

She gets up slowly, raising her eyebrows at Nick in astonishment, and follows the butler toward the house. There is jauntiness about her movements as if she had first learned to walk upon golf courses on clean, crisp mornings.

Nick is alone and it was almost two. Confused and intriguing sounds issued from a long many-windowed room which overhang the terrace. Eluding Jordan's undergraduate who is now engaged in an obstetrical conversation with two chorus girls, Nick goes inside.

The large room is full of people. One of the girls in yellow is playing the piano and beside her stands a tall, red haired young lady from a famous chorus, engaged in song. She has drunk a quantity of champagne and during the course of her song she decides ineptly that everything is very very sad -- she is not only singing, she is weeping too.

Whenever there is a pause in the song she fills it with gasping broken sobs and then takes up the lyric again in a quavering soprano. Tears course down her cheeks -- not freely, however, for when they came into contact with her heavily beaded eyelashes they assumed an inky color, and pursue the rest of their way in slow black rivulets. A humorous suggestion is made that she sing the notes on her face whereupon she throws up her hands, sinks into a chair and closes her eyes.

A girl at Nick's elbow explains.

"She had a fight with a man who says he's her husband."

Nick looks around. Most of the remaining women are now having fights with men said to be their husbands. Even Jordan's party, the quartet from East Egg, are rent asunder by dissension. One of the men is talking with curious intensity to a young actress, and his wife after attempting to laugh at the situation in a dignified and indifferent way breaks down entirely and resorts to flank attacks -- at intervals she appears suddenly at his side like an angry diamond, and hisses into his ear.

"You promised!"

The reluctance to go home is not confined to wayward men. The hall is occupied by two deplorably sober men and their highly indignant wives. The wives are sympathizing with each other in slightly raised voices.

"Whenever he sees I'm having a good time he wants to go home."

"Never heard anything so selfish in my life."

"We're always the first ones to leave."

"So are we."

One of the men turns sheepishly.

"Well, we're almost the last tonight. "The orchestra left half an hour ago."

As Nick waits for his hat in the hall the door of the library opens and Jordan Baker and Gatsby come out together. He is saying some last word to her but the eagerness in his manner tightens abruptly into formality as several people approached him to say goodbye.

Jordan's party call impatiently to her from the porch but she lingers for a moment to shake hands with Nick, and whispers.

"I've just heard the most amazing thing. How long were we in there?"

"Why, -- about an hour."

"It was -- simply amazing. But I swore I wouldn't tell it and here I am tantalizing you."

She yawns gracefully in his face.

"Please come and see me. . . . Phone book. . . . Under the name of Mrs. Sigourney Howard. . . . My aunt. . . ."

She was hurries off as she talks -- her brown hand waving a jaunty salute as she melts into her party at the door.

Nick joins the last of Gatsby's guests who are clustered around him. Gatsby brushes his shoulder.

"Don't mention it. Don't give it another thought, old sport. And don't forget we're going up in the hydroplane tomorrow morning at nine o'clock."

The butler moves behind Gatsby's shoulder.

"Philadelphia wants you on the phone, sir."

"All right, in a minute. Tell them I'll be right there. . . . good night."

"Good night."

Gatsby smiles.

"Good night, old sport. . . . Good night."

Nick walks down the steps and sees the evening is not quite over.

Fifty feet from the door a dozen headlights illuminate a bizarre and tumultuous scene. In the ditch beside the road, right side up but violently shorn of one wheel, rests a new coupé which had left Gatsby's drive not two minutes before. The sharp jut of a wall accounts for the detachment of the wheel which is getting considerable attention from half a dozen curious chauffeurs. However, as they had left their cars blocking the road a harsh discordant din spills out from those in the rear.

A man in a long duster stands in the middle of the road, looking from the car to the tire and from the tire to the observers in a pleasant, puzzled way.

"See! It went in the ditch."

Nick recognized it's the late patron of Gatsby's library.

"How'd it happen?"

He shrugs his shoulders.

"I know nothing whatever about mechanics."

"But how did it happen? Did you run into the wall?"

"Don't ask me. I know very little about driving -- next to nothing. It happened, and that's all I know."

"Well, if you're a poor driver you oughtn't to try driving at night."

"But I wasn't even trying. I wasn't even trying."

An awed hush falls upon the bystanders.

"Do you want to commit suicide?"

"You're lucky it was just a wheel! A bad driver and not even trying!"

"You don't understand. I wasn't driving. There's another man in the car."

The crowd gasps as the door of the coupé swings slowly open. They step back involuntarily and when the door opens wide there is a ghostly pause. Then, very gradually, part by part, a pale dangling individual steps out of the wreck, pawing tentatively at the ground with a large uncertain dancing shoe.

Blinded by the glare of the headlights and confused by the

incessant groaning of the horns the apparition stands swaying for a moment before he perceived the man in the duster.

"Wha's matter? Did we run outa gas?"

"Look!"

Half a dozen fingers point at the amputated wheel. He stares at it for a moment and then looks upward as though he suspects it has dropped from the sky.

"It came off."

He nods.

"At first I din' notice we'd stopped."

Taking a long breath and straightening his shoulders he remarks in a determined voice.

"Wonder'ff tell me where there's a gas'line station?"

At least a dozen men, some of them little better off than he is, explain to him that wheel and car are no longer joined by any physical bond.

"Back out. Put her in reverse."

"But the wheel's off!"

He hesitates.

"No harm in trying."

Caterwauling horns reach a crescendo and Nick turns away and cut across the lawn toward home. He glances back once.

A wafer of a moon shines over Gatsby's house and still glowing garden. A sudden emptiness seems to flow now from the windows and the great doors, endowing with complete isolation the figure of the host who stands on the porch, his hand up in a formal gesture of farewell.

Eight servants including an extra gardener toil all Monday with mops and scrubbing-brushes and hammers and garden-shears, repairing the ravages of the night before.

I see I have given the impression that these parties were all that absorbed me. On the contrary, they absorbed me infinitely less than my personal affairs.

Most of the time I worked. I knew the other clerks and young bond-salesmen by their first names and lunched with them in dark crowded restaurants on little pig sausages and mashed potatoes and coffee. I even had a short affair with a girl who lived in Jersey City and worked in the accounting department, but her brother began throwing mean looks in my direction so when she went on her vacation in July I let it blow quietly away.

I took dinner usually at the Yale Club -- for some reason it was the gloomiest event of my day -- and then I went upstairs to the library and studied investments and securities for a conscientious hour.

After that, if the night was mellow I strolled down Madison Avenue past the old Murray Hill Hotel and over Thirty-third Street to the Pennsylvania Station. I felt a haunting loneliness sometimes, and felt it in others -- poor young clerks who loitered in front of windows waiting until it was time for a solitary restaurant dinner -- young clerks in the dusk, wasting the most poignant moments of night and life.

Again at eight o'clock, when the dark lanes of the Forties were five deep with throbbing taxi cabs, bound for the theatre district, I felt a sinking in my heart.

Driving car fast somewhere? Where?

For a while I lost sight of Jordan Baker, and then in midsummer I found her again. At first I was flattered to go places with her because she was a golf champion and every one knew her name. Then it was something more. I wasn't actually in love, but I felt a sort of tender curiosity. The bored haughty face that she turned to the world concealed something -- most affectations conceal something eventually, even though they don't in the beginning -- and one day I found what it was.

When we were at party together up in Warwick, she left a borrowed car out in the rain with the top down, and then lied about it.

Jordan Baker instinctively avoided clever shrewd men. She was incurably dishonest.

She wasn't able to endure being at a disadvantage, and given this unwillingness I suppose she had begun dealing in subterfuges when she was very young in order to keep that cool, insolent smile turned to the world and yet satisfy the demands of her hard jaunty body.

It made no difference to me. Dishonesty in a woman is a thing you never blame deeply -- I was casually sorry, and then I forgot. It was on that same house party that we had a curious conversation about driving a car. It started because she passed so close to some workmen that our fender flicked a button on one man's coat.

"You're a rotten driver. Either you ought to be more careful or you oughtn't to drive at all."

"I am careful."

"No, you're not."

"Well, other people are."

"What's that got to do with it?"

"They'll keep out of my way. It takes two to make an accident."

"Suppose you met somebody just as careless as yourself."

"I hope I never will. I hate careless people. That's why I like you."

Her grey, sun-strained eyes stare straight ahead.

Every one suspects himself of at least one of the cardinal virtues, and this is mine: I am one of the few honest people that I have ever known.

#### Chapter 4

Clouds? Weather. Light?

Church bells ring in the villages and along the shore.

Nick is writing in the empty spaces of a time-table headed 'This schedule in effect July 5th, 1922' with a dull, gray pencil. He corrects his spelling as he writes.

Once I wrote down the names of those who came to Gatsby's house that summer.

From East Egg, came the Chester Beckers and the Leeches and a man named Bunsen whom I knew at Yale and Doctor Webster Civet who was drowned last summer up in Maine. And the Hornbeams and the Willie Voltaires and a whole clan named Blackbuck who always gathered in a corner and flipped up their noses like goats at whosoever came near. And the Ismays and the Chrysties (or rather Hubert Auerbach and Mr. Chrystie's wife) and Edgar Beaver, whose hair they say turned cotton-white one winter afternoon for no good reason at all.

Clarence Endive was from East Egg, as I remember. He came only once, in white knickerbockers, and had a fight with a bum named Etty in the garden. From farther out on the Island came the Cheadles and the O. R. P. Schraeders and the Stonewall Jackson Abrams of Georgia and the Fishguards and the Ripley Snells. Snell was there three days before he went to the penitentiary, so drunk out on the gravel drive that Mrs. Ulysses Swett's automobile ran over his right hand. The Dancies came too and S. B. Whitebait, who was well over sixty, and Maurice A. Flink and the Hammerheads and Beluga the tobacco importer and Beluga's girls.

From West Egg came the Poles and the Mulreadys and Cecil Roebuck and Cecil Schoen and Gulick the state senator and Newton Orchid who controlled Films Par Excellence and Eckhaust and Clyde Cohen and Don S. Schwartz (the son) and Arthur McCarty, all connected with the movies in one way or another. And the Catlips and the Bembergs and G. Earl Muldoon, brother to that Muldoon who afterward strangled his wife. Da Fontano the promoter came there, and Ed Legros and James B. ("Rot-Gut") Ferret and the De Jongs and

Ernest Lilly -- they came to gamble and when Ferret wandered into the garden it meant he was cleaned out and Associated Traction would have to fluctuate profitably next day.

A man named Klipspringer was there so often and so long that he became known as "the boarder" -- I doubt if he had any other home. Of theatrical people there were Gus Waize and Horace O'Donovan and Lester Meyer and George Duckweed and Francis Bull. Also from New York were the Chromes and the Backhyssons and the Dennickers and Russel Betty and the Corrigans and the Kellehers and the Dewars and the Scullys and S. W. Belcher and the Smirkes and the young Quinns, divorced now, and Henry L. Palmetto who killed himself by jumping in front of a subway train in Times Square.

Benny McClenahan arrived always with four girls. They were never quite the same ones in physical person but they were so identical one with another that it inevitably seemed they had been there before. I have forgotten their names -- Jaqueline, I think, or else Consuela or Gloria or Judy or June, and their last names were either the melodious names of flowers and months or the sterner ones of the great American capitalists whose cousins, if pressed, they would confess themselves to be.

In addition to all these I can remember that Faustina O'Brien came there at least once and the Baedeker girls and young Brewer who had his nose shot off in the war and Mr. Albrucksburger and Miss Haag, his fiancée, and Ardita Fitz-Peters, and Mr. P. Jewett, once head of the American Legion, and Miss Claudia Hip with a man reputed to be her chauffeur, and a prince of something whom we called Duke and whose name, if I ever knew it, I have forgotten.

All these people came to Gatsby's house in the summer.

Burst of melody from a motor car's three noted horn. Gatsby's gorgeous Rolls-Royce lurches up the rocky drive to Nick's door. Nick steps out.

"Good morning, old sport. You're having lunch with me today and I thought we'd ride up together."

Gatsby balances on the dashboard of his car with that resourcefulness of movement that is so peculiarly American. He wears caramel-colored suit. He is never quite still, there is always a tapping foot somewhere or the impatient opening and closing of a hand.

He sees Nick looking with admiration at his car.

"It's pretty, isn't it, old sport."

He jumps off to give Nick a better view.

"Haven't you ever seen it before?"

Nick has seen it. Everybody has seen it. It is a rich cream color, bright with nickel, swollen here and there in its monstrous length with triumphant hatboxes and supper-boxes and tool-boxes, and terraced with a labyrinth of windshields that mirror a dozen suns.

Nick climbs into a a sort of green leather conservatory and sits down behind many layers of glass. They start off down the drive to West Egg village.

Clouds, sun drifting, sparkling, air, wind.

"Look here, old sport, what's your opinion of me, anyhow?"

Nick looks to evade the question.

"Well, I'm going to tell you something about my life. I don't want you to get a wrong idea of me from all these stories you hear."

Nick smiles.

"I'll tell you God's truth."

Gatsby right hand suddenly orders divine retribution to stand by.

"I am the son of some wealthy people in the middle-west -- all dead now. I was brought up in America but educated at Oxford because all my ancestors have been educated there for many years. It is a family tradition."

Gatsby looks at Nick sideways.

"What part of the middle-west?"

"San Francisco."

"I see."

"My family all died and I came into a good deal of money. After that I lived like a young rajah in all the capitals of Europe -- Paris, Venice, Rome -- collecting jewels, chiefly rubies, hunting big game, painting a little, things for myself only, and trying to forget something very sad that had happened to me long ago."

Nick manages to restrain his incredulous laughter.

"Then came the war, old sport. It was a great relief and I tried very hard to die but I seemed to bear an enchanted life. I accepted a commission as first lieutenant when it began. In the Argonne Forest I took two machine-gun detachments so far forward that there was a half mile gap on either side of us where the infantry couldn't advance. We stayed there two days and two nights, a hundred and thirty men with sixteen Lewis guns, and when the infantry came up at last they found the insignia of three German divisions among the piles of dead. I was promoted to be a major and every Allied government gave me a decoration -- even Montenegro, little Montenegro down on the Adriatic Sea!"

Nick's incredulity submerged into fascination.

Gatsby reaches in his pocket and a round piece of metal, slung on a ribbon, falls into Nick's palm.

"That's the one from Montenegro."

To Nick's astonishment, the medal has an authentic look.

Orderi di Danilo, runs the circular legend, Montenegro, Nicolas Rex.

"Turn it."

Major Jay Gatsby, For Valour Extraordinary.

"Here's another thing I always carry. A souvenir of Oxford days. It was taken in Trinity Quad -- the man on my left is now the Earl of Dorchester."

It's a photograph of half a dozen young men in blazers loafing in an archway through which were visible a host of spires. There is Gatsby, looking a little, not much, younger -- with a cricket bat in his hand.

Gatsby pockets the souvenirs with satisfaction.

"I'm going to make a big request of you today, so I thought you ought to know something about me. I didn't want you to think I was just some nobody. You see, I usually find myself among strangers because I drift here and there trying to forget the sad thing that happened to me."

He hesitates.

"You'll hear about it this afternoon."

"At lunch?"

"No, this afternoon. I happened to find out that you're taking Miss Baker to tea."

"Do you mean you're in love with Miss Baker?"

"No, old sport, I'm not. But Miss Baker has kindly consented to speak to you about this matter."

I hadn't the faintest idea what "this matter" was, but I was more annoyed than interested. I hadn't asked Jordan to tea in order to discuss Mr. Jay Gatsby. I was sure the request would be something utterly fantastic and for a moment I was sorry I'd ever set foot upon his overpopulated lawn.

They pass Port Roosevelt, glimpse red-belted ocean-going ships, and speed along a cobbled slum lined with the dark, undeserted saloons of the faded gilt nineteen-hundreds. Then the valley of ashes opens out on both sides of them, and Nick spots Mrs. Wilson straining at the garage pump with panting vitality as they drive by.

With fenders spread like wings they scattered light through half Astoria for as they twist among the pillars of the elevated they hear the familiar jug -- jug -- SPAT! of a motor cycle. A frantic

policeman rides alongside.

"All right, old sport."

Gatsby slows down. He takes a white card from his wallet and waves it before the man's eyes.

The policeman nods and tips his cap.

"Right you are. Know you next time, Mr. Gatsby. Excuse me!"

"What was that? The picture of Oxford?"

"I was able to do the commissioner a favor once, and he sends me a Christmas card every year."

Over the great bridge, the sunlight through the girders flickers upon the moving cars. The city rises up across the river in white heaps and sugar lumps. The city seen from the Queensboro Bridge is always the city seen for the first time, in its first wild promise of all the mystery and the beauty in the world.

A dead man passes them in a hearse heaped with blooms, followed by two carriages with drawn blinds and by more cheerful carriages for friends. They look out at Gatsby and Nick with the tragic eyes and short upper lips of south-eastern Europe.

As they cross Blackwell's Island a limousine passes them, driven by a white chauffeur, in which sit three modish Negroes, two bucks and a girl. Nick laughs aloud as the yolks of their eyeballs rolled towards them in haughty rivalry.

Anything can happen now that they've slid over this bridge.

Gatsby and Nick sit at a table for lunch in a darkened, well-fanned Forty-second Street cellar with Mr. Wolfshiem. The small, flat-nosed Jew raised his large head and regards Nick with two fine growths of hair which luxuriated in either nostril. He shakes his head earnestly.

" -- so I took one look at him -- and what do you think I did?"

"What?"

Mr. Wolfshiem turns his expressive nose to Gatsby.

"I handed the money to Katspaugh and I sid, 'All right, Katspaugh, don't pay him a penny till he shuts his mouth.' He shut it then and there."

The head waiter looks down.

"Highballs?"

Mr. Wolfshiem looks at the Presbyterian nymphs on the ceiling

"This is a nice restaurant here. But I like across the street better!"

Gatsby turns to the waiter.

"Yes, highballs.

Then turns Mr. Wolfshiem.

"It's too hot over there."

"Hot and small -- yes. But full of memories."

"What place is that?"

"The old Metropole.

Mr. Wolfshiem broods gloomily.

"The old Metropole. Filled with faces dead and gone. Filled with friends gone now forever. I can't forget so long as I live the night they shot Rosy Rosenthal there. It was six of us at the table and Rosy had eat and drunk a lot all evening. When it was almost morning the waiter came up to him with a funny look and says somebody wants to speak to him outside. 'All right,' says Rosy and begins to get up and I pulled him down in his chair.

Nick blinks.

" 'Let the bastards come in here if they want you, Rosy, but don't you, so help me, move outside this room.'

Nick blinks again.

"It was four o'clock in the morning then, and if we'd of raised the blinds we'd of seen daylight."

"Did he go?"

"Sure he went -- he turned around in the door and says, 'Don't let that waiter take away my coffee!' Then he went out on the sidewalk and they shot him three times in his full belly and drove away."

"Four of them were electrocuted."

"Five with Becker."

Mr. Wolfshiem's nostrils turn to Nick in an interested way.

"I understand you're looking for a business gonnegtion."

Gatsby answers for Nick.

"Oh, no, this isn't the man!"

"No?"

"This is just a friend. I told you we'd talk about that some other time."

"I beg your pardon. I had a wrong man."

A succulent hash arrives and Mr. Wolfshiem begins to eat with ferocious delicacy. His eyes, meanwhile, roved very slowly all around the room -- he completed the arc by turning to inspect the people directly behind.

Gatsby leans towards Nick with that smile.

"Look here, old sport, I'm afraid I made you a little angry this morning in the car."

"I don't like mysteries. And I don't understand why you won't come out frankly and tell me what you want. Why has it all got to come through Miss Baker?"

"Oh, it's nothing underhand. Miss Baker's a great sportswoman, you know, and she'd never do anything that wasn't all right."

Suddenly he looks at his watch, jumps up and hurries from the room. Mr. Wolfshiem follows him with his eyes.

"He has to telephone. Fine fellow, isn't he? Handsome to look at and a perfect gentleman."

"Yes."

"He's an Oggsford man."

"Oh!"

"He went to Oggsford College in England. You know Oggsford College?"

"I've heard of it."

"It's one of the most famous colleges in the world."

"Have you known Gatsby for a long time?"

"Several years. I made the pleasure of his acquaintance just after the war. But I knew I had discovered a man of fine breeding after I talked with him an hour. I said to myself: 'There's the kind of man you'd like to take home and introduce to your mother and sister.'"

Mr. Wolfshiem pauses.

"I see you're looking at my cuff buttons."

Nick looks at them. They are composed of oddly familiar pieces of ivory.

"Finest specimens of human molars."

"Well! That's a very interesting idea."

Mr. Wolfshiem flips his sleeves under his coat.

"Yeah. Yeah, Gatsby's very careful about women. He would never so much as look at a friend's wife."

As Gatsby returns to the table and sits down, Mr. Wolfshiem drinks his coffee with a jerk and gets to his feet.

"I have enjoyed my lunch and I'm going to run off from you two young men before I outstay my welcome."

"Don't hurry, Meyer."

Mr. Wolfshiem raises his hand to Gatsby in a sort of solemn benediction.

"You're very polite but I belong to another generation. You sit here and discuss your sports and your young ladies and your -- as for me, I am fifty years old, and I won't impose myself on you any longer."

As he shakes hands and turns away his tragic nose is trembling.

"He becomes very sentimental sometimes. This is one of his sentimental days. He's quite a character around New York -- a denizen of Broadway."

"Who is he anyhow -- an actor?"

"No."

"A dentist?"

"Meyer Wolfshiem? No, he's a gambler."

Gatsby hesitates, then adds coolly.

"He's the man who fixed the World's Series back in 1919."

"Fixed the World's Series?"

The idea staggers Nick.

"How did he happen to do that?"

"He just saw the opportunity."

"Why isn't he in jail?"

"They can't get him, old sport. He's a smart man."

Nick insists on paying the check. As the waiter brings his change he catches sight of Tom Buchanan across the crowded room.

"Come along with me for a minute. I've got to say hello to someone."

When he sees them Tom jumps up and takes half a dozen steps in their direction.

"Where've you been?. Daisy's furious because you haven't called up."

"This is Mr. Gatsby, Mr. Buchanan."

They shake hands briefly and a strained, unfamiliar look of embarrassment comes over Gatsby's face.

Tom looks at Nick.

"How've you been, anyhow? How'd you happen to come up this far to eat?"

"I've been having lunch with Mr. Gatsby."

Nick turns toward Mr. Gatsby, but he is no longer there.

"One October day in nineteen-seventeen -- "

In the tea-garden at the Plaza Hotel that afternoon, Jordan Baker sits up very straight on a straight chair and continues her story.

" -- I was walking along from one place to another half on the sidewalks and half on the lawns. I was happier on the lawns because I had on shoes from England with rubber nobs on the soles that bit into the soft ground. I had on a new plaid skirt also that blew a little in the wind and whenever this happened the red, white and blue banners in front of all the houses stretched out stiff and said tut-tut-tut-tut in a disapproving way."

Nick nods for her to continue.

"The largest of the banners and the largest of the lawns belonged to Daisy Fay's house. She was just eighteen, two years older than me, and by far the most popular of all the young girls in Louisville. She dressed in white, and had a little white roadster and all day long the telephone rang in her house and excited young officers from Camp Taylor demanded the privilege of monopolizing her that night, 'anyways, for an hour!'"

Push in to frame her face.

"When I came opposite her house that morning her white roadster was beside the curb, and she was sitting in it with a lieutenant I had never seen before. They were so engrossed in each other that she didn't see me until I was five feet away.

Push in to frame her face.

"'Hello Jordan,'" she called unexpectedly. " 'Please come here.'"

"I was flattered that she wanted to speak to me, because of all the older girls I admired her most. She asked me if I was going to the Red Cross and make bandages. I was. Well, then, would I tell them that she couldn't come that day? The officer looked at Daisy while she was speaking, in a way that every young girl wants to be looked at sometime, and because it seemed romantic to me I have

remembered the incident ever since. His name was Jay Gatsby and I didn't lay eyes on him again for over four years -- even after I'd met him on Long Island I didn't realize it was the same man.

"That was nineteen-seventeen. By the next year I had a few beaux myself, and I began to play in tournaments, so I didn't see Daisy very often. She went with a slightly older crowd -- when she went with anyone at all. Wild rumors were circulating about her -- how her mother had found her packing her bag one winter night to go to New York and say goodbye to a soldier who was going overseas. She was effectually prevented, but she wasn't on speaking terms with her family for several weeks. After that she didn't play around with the soldiers any more but only with a few flat-footed, short-sighted young men in town who couldn't get into the army at all.

"By the next autumn she was gay again, gay as ever. She had a debut after the Armistice, and in February she was presumably engaged to a man from New Orleans. In June she married Tom Buchanan of Chicago with more pomp and circumstance than Louisville ever knew before. He came down with a hundred people in four private cars and hired a whole floor of the Seelbach Hotel, and the day before the wedding he gave her a string of pearls valued at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars.

"I was bridesmaid. I came into her room half an hour before the bridal dinner, and found her lying on her bed as lovely as the June night in her flowered dress -- and as drunk as a monkey. She had a bottle of sauterne in one hand and a letter in the other.

"'Gratulate me,'" she muttered. "'Never had a drink before but oh, how I do enjoy it.'"

"'What's the matter, Daisy?'"

"I was scared, I can tell you; I'd never seen a girl like that before."

"'Here, dearis.'" She groped around in a waste-basket she had with her on the bed and pulled out the string of pearls. "Take 'em downstairs and give 'em back to whoever they belong to. Tell 'em all Daisy's change' her mine. Say 'Daisy's change' her mine!'"

"She began to cry -- she cried and cried. I rushed out and found her mother's maid and we locked the door and got her into a cold bath. She wouldn't let go of the letter. She took it into the tub with her and squeezed it up into a wet ball, and only let me leave it in the soap dish when she saw that it was coming to pieces like snow."

"But she didn't say another word. We gave her spirits of ammonia and put ice on her forehead and hooked her back into her dress and half an hour later when we walked out of the room the pearls were around her neck and the incident was over. Next day at five o'clock she married Tom Buchanan without so much as a shiver and started off on a three months' trip to the South Seas."

"I saw them in Santa Barbara when they came back and I thought I'd never seen a girl so mad about her husband. If he left the room

for a minute she'd look around uneasily and say " 'Where's Tom gone?'" and wear the most abstracted expression until she saw him coming in the door. She used to sit on the sand with his head in her lap by the hour rubbing her fingers over his eyes and looking at him with unfathomable delight. It was touching to see them together -- it made you laugh in a hushed, fascinated way. That was in August. A week after I left Santa Barbara Tom ran into a wagon on the Ventura road one night and ripped a front wheel off his car. The girl who was with him got into the papers too because her arm was broken -- she was one of the chambermaids in the Santa Barbara Hotel.

"The next April Daisy had her little girl and they went to France for a year. I saw them one spring in Cannes and later in Deauville and then they came back to Chicago to settle down. Daisy was popular in Chicago, as you know. They moved with a fast crowd, all of them young and rich and wild, but she came out with an absolutely perfect reputation. Perhaps because she doesn't drink. It's a great advantage not to drink among hard-drinking people. You can hold your tongue and, moreover, you can time any little irregularity of your own so that everybody else is so blind that they don't see or care. Perhaps Daisy never went in for amour at all -- and yet there's something in that voice of hers. . .

Wind wisps a lick of Jordan's hair.

"Well, about six weeks ago, she heard the name Gatsby for the first time in years. It was when I asked you -- do you remember? -- if you knew Gatsby in West Egg. After you had gone home she came into my room and woke me up, and said " 'What Gatsby?'" and when I described him -- I was half asleep -- she said in the strangest voice that it must be the man she used to know. It wasn't until then that I connected this Gatsby with the officer in her white car.

Jordan and Nick are driving in a Victoria through Central Park. The sun has gone down behind the tall apartments of the movie stars in the West Fifties and the clear voices of girls, already gathered like crickets on the grass, rises through the hot twilight.

"I'm the Sheik of Araby,  
Your love belongs to me.  
At night when you're are asleep,  
Into your tent I'll creep -- "

Nick turns to Jordan.

"It was a strange coincidence."

"But it wasn't a coincidence at all."

"Why not?"

"Gatsby bought that house so that Daisy would be just across the bay."

Jordan continues.

"He wants to know -- if you'll invite Daisy to your house some afternoon and then let him come over."

"Did I have to know all this before he could ask such a little thing?"

"He's afraid. He's waited so long. He thought you might be offended. You see he's a regular tough underneath it all."

Something worries Nick.

"Why didn't he ask you to arrange a meeting?"

"He wants her to see his house, and your house is right next door."

"Oh!"

"I think he half expected her to wander into one of his parties, some night. But she never did. Then he began asking people casually if they knew her, and I was the first one he found. It was that night he sent for me at his dance, and you should have heard the elaborate way he worked up to it. Of course, I immediately suggested a luncheon in New York -- and I thought he'd go mad:

"'I don't want to do anything out of the way! I want to see her right next door.'"

"When I said you were a particular friend of Tom's he started to abandon the whole idea. He doesn't know very much about Tom, though he says he's read a Chicago paper for years just on the chance of catching a glimpse of Daisy's name."

It's dark now, and as they dip under a little bridge he puts his arm around Jordan's golden shoulder and draws her towards him and asks her to dinner. Suddenly I wasn't thinking of Daisy and Gatsby any more but of this clean, hard, limited person who dealt in universal skepticism and who leaned back jauntily just within the circle of my arm.

"And Daisy ought to have something in her life."

"Does she want to see Gatsby?"

"She's not to know about it. Gatsby doesn't want her to know. You're just supposed to invite her to tea."

They pass a barrier of dark trees, and then the facade of Fifty-ninth Street, a block of delicate pale light, beams down into the park.

Nick draws up the girl beside him, tightening his arms. Her wan, scornful mouth smiles and so he draws her up again, closer, this time to his face.

## Chapter 5

Nick looks out at the peninsula at night from the back of taxi.  
Light flames on the glass.

When I came home to West Egg that night I was afraid for a moment that my house was on fire. Two o'clock and the whole corner of the peninsula was blazing.

Light falls unreal on the shrubbery and makes thin elongating glints upon the roadside wires. Turning a corner he sees that it's Gatsby's house, lit from tower to cellar.

There isn't a sound. Only wind in the trees which blows the wires and makes the lights go off and on again as if the house winks into the darkness.

As the taxi groans away Nick sees Gatsby walking towards him across his lawn.

"Your place looks like the world's fair."

Gatsby turns his eyes towards it absently.

"Does it? I have been glancing into some of the rooms. Let's go to Coney Island, old sport. In my car."

"It's too late."

"Well, suppose we take a plunge in the swimming pool? I haven't made use of it all summer."

"I've got to go to bed."

"All right."

Gatsby waits, looking at Nick with suppressed eagerness.

"I talked with Miss Baker."

Gatsby swallows softly.

"I'm going to call up Daisy tomorrow and invite her over here to tea."

"Oh, that's all right. I don't want to put you to any trouble."

"What day would suit you?"

"What day would suit you? I don't want to put you to any trouble, you see."

"How about the day after tomorrow?"

Gatsby considers for a moment, reluctantly.

"I want to get the grass cut."

They both look at the grass -- there was a sharp line where Nick's ragged lawn ends and the darker, well-kept expanse of Gatsby's begin.

"There's another little thing."

"Would you rather put it off for a few days?"

"Oh, it isn't about that. At least -- Why, I thought -- why, look here, old sport, you don't make much money, do you?"

"Not very much."

Gatsby seems reassured him and he continues more confidently.

"I thought you didn't, if you'll pardon my -- you see, I carry on a little business on the side, a sort of sideline, you understand. And I thought that if you don't make very much -- You're selling bonds, aren't you, old sport?"

"Trying to."

"Well, this would interest you. It wouldn't take up much of your time and you might pick up a nice bit of money. It happens to be a rather confidential sort of thing --"

"I've got my hands full. I'm much obliged but I couldn't take on any more work."

"You wouldn't have to do any business with Wolfshiem."

He waits a moment longer, hoping Nick begins a conversation. But Nick is too absorbed to be responsive, so he goes unwillingly home.

At the Probity trust offices the next morning, Nick calls up Daisy and invites her to come to tea.

"Don't bring Tom."

Her voice skips/ ripples/ falters / smiles down the line.

"What?"

"Don't bring Tom."

"Who is 'Tom'?"

It's pouring rain on Nick's bungalow. At eleven o'clock a man in a raincoat dragging a lawn-mower taps at his front door and says that Mr. Gatsby had sent him over to cut his grass.

At two o'clock a greenhouse arrives from Gatsby's, with innumerable receptacles to contain it.

An hour later the front door opens nervously, and Gatsby in a

white flannel suit, silver shirt and gold-colored tie hurries in. He is pale and there are dark signs of sleeplessness beneath his eyes.

"Is everything all right?"

"The grass looks fine, if that's what you mean."

"What grass?" Oh, the grass in the yard."

He looks out the window but doesn't see a thing.

"Looks very good. One of the papers said they thought the rain would stop about four. I think it was 'The Journal.' Have you got everything you need in the shape of -- of tea?"

Nick takes him into the pantry where he looks a little reproachfully at the Finn. Together they scrutinize the twelve lemon cakes from the delicatessen shop.

"Will they do?"

"Of course, of course! They're fine ... old sport."

At about half-past three the rain cools to a damp mist through which occasional thin drops swim like dew. Gatsby looks with vacant eyes through a copy of Clay's "Economics," starts at the Finnish tread that shook the kitchen floor and peers toward the bleared windows from time to time as if a series of invisible but alarming happenings are taking place outside. Finally he gets up and informs Nick in an uncertain voice that he is going home.

"Why's that?"

"Nobody's coming to tea. It's too late!"

He looks at his watch as if there is some pressing demand on his time elsewhere.

"I can't wait all day."

"Don't be silly, it's just two minutes to four."

He sits down, miserably, as if Nick has pushed him, and simultaneously there is the sound of a motor turning into his lane. They both jump up and go out into the yard.

Under the dripping bare lilac trees a large open car is coming up the drive. It stops. Daisy's face, tipped sideways beneath a three-cornered lavender hat, looks out at me with a bright ecstatic smile.

"Is this absolutely where you live, my dearest one?"

A damp streak of hair lies like a dash of blue paint across her cheek and her hand is wet with glistening drops as Nick takes it to help her from the car.

"Are you in love with me. Or why did I have to come alone?"

"That's the secret of Castle Rackrent. Tell your chauffeur to go far away and spend an hour."

"Come back in an hour, Ferdie."

She turns to Nick in a grave murmur.

"His name is Ferdie."

"Does the gasoline affect his nose?"

"I don't think so. Why?"

They go in. To Nick's overwhelming surprise the living room is deserted.

"Well, that's funny!"

"What's funny?"

Daisy turns her head to a light, dignified knocking at the front door. Nick goes to open it. Gatsby, pale as death, with his hands plunged like weights in his coat pockets, is standing in a puddle of water glaring tragically into his eyes.

With his hands still in his coat pockets he stalks by Nick into the hall, turns sharply as if he is on a wire and disappears into the living room. It isn't a bit funny. Nick pulls the door closed against the increasing rain.

For half a minute there isn't a sound. Then from the living room Nick hears a sort of choking murmur and part of a laugh followed by Daisy's voice on a clear artificial note.

"I certainly am awfully glad to see you again."

A horrible pause. Nick has nothing to do in the hall so he goes into the room.

Gatsby, his hands still in his pockets, is reclining against the mantelpiece in a strained counterfeit of perfect ease, even of boredom. His head leans back so far that it rests against the face of a defunct mantelpiece clock and from this position his distraught eyes stare down at Daisy who is sitting frightened but graceful on the edge of a stiff chair.

"We've met before."

Gatsby's eyes glanced momentarily at Nick and his lips part with an abortive attempt at a laugh. Luckily the clock takes this moment to tilt dangerously at the pressure of his head, whereupon he turns and catches it with trembling fingers and sets it back in place. Then he sits down, rigidly, his elbow on the arm of the sofa and his chin in his hand.

"I'm sorry about the clock."

Nick blushes.

"It's an old clock."

Daisy's voice is matter-of-fact.

"We haven't met for many years."

"Five years next November."

The automatic quality of Gatsby's answer set them all back at least another minute. Nick has them both on their feet with the desperate suggestion that they help him make tea in the kitchen when the demoniac Finn brings it in on a tray.

Nick moves to the kitchen.

"Where are you going?"

"I'll be back."

"I've got to speak to you about something before you go."

Gatsby follows Nick wildly into the kitchen, closes the door and whispers miserably.

"Oh, God!"

"What's the matter?"

He is shaking his head from side to side.

"This is a terrible mistake. A terrible, terrible mistake."

"You're just embarrassed, that's all. Daisy's embarrassed too."

"She's embarrassed?"

"Just as much as you are."

"Don't talk so loud."

"You're acting like a little boy. Not only that but you're rude. Daisy's sitting in there all alone."

Gatsby raises his hand to stop his words, looks at him with unforgettable reproach and opening the door cautiously goes back into the other room.

Nick walks out the back way and runs for a huge black knotted tree whose massed leaves make a fabric against the rain. Once more it is pouring and his irregular lawn, well-shaved by Gatsby's gardener, abounds in small muddy swamps and prehistoric marshes.

Nick stares at Gatsby's enormous house, like Kant at his church steeple

A brewer had built it early in the 'period' craze, a decade before, and there was a story that he'd agreed to pay five years' taxes on all the neighboring cottages if the owners would have their roofs thatched with straw. Perhaps their refusal took the heart out of his plan to Found a Family -- he went into an immediate decline. His children sold his house with the black wreath still on the door. Americans, while occasionally willing to be serfs, have always been obstinate about being peasantry.

After half an hour the sun shines again and the grocer's automobile rounds Gatsby's drive with the raw material for his servants' dinner. A maid begins opening the upper windows of the house, appearing momentarily in each, and, leaning from a large central bay, spits meditatively into the garden.

Nick goes back in to his bungalow. He makes every possible noise in the kitchen short of pushing over the stove before he steps into the living room.

Gatsby and Daisy are sitting at either end of the couch looking at each other as if some question has been asked or is in the air, and every vestige of embarrassment is gone. Daisy's face is smeared with tears and when Nick comes in she jumps up and begins wiping at it with her handkerchief before a mirror. But there is a change in Gatsby that is simply confounding. He literally glows. Without a word or a gesture of exultation a new well-being radiates from him and fills the little room.

"Oh, hello, old sport."

For a moment Nick thinks he is going to shake hands.

"It's stopped raining."

"Has it?"

Gatsby smiles like a weather man, like an ecstatic patron of recurrent light, and repeats the news to Daisy.

"What do you think of that? It's stopped raining."

"I'm glad, Jay."

"I want you and Daisy to come over to my house. I'd like to show her around."

"You're sure you want me to come?"

"Absolutely, old sport."

Daisy goes upstairs to wash her face while Nick and Gatsby wait on the lawn.

"My house looks well, doesn't it? See how the whole front of it catches the light."

"It is splendid."

Gatsby's eyes go over it, every arched door and square tower.

"Yes. It took me just three years to earn the money that bought it."

"I thought you inherited your money."

"I did, old sport but I lost most of it in the big panic -- the panic of the war."

"What business are you in?"

"That's my affair."

Gatsby realizes it isn't the appropriate reply.

"Oh, I've been in several things. I was in the drug business and then I was in the oil business. But I'm not in either one now."

He looks at Nick with more attention.

"Do you mean you've been thinking over what I proposed the other night?"

Before he can answer, Daisy comes out of the house and two rows of brass buttons on her dress gleam in the sunlight.

"That huge place there?"

"Do you like it?"

"I love it, but I don't see how you live there all alone."

"I keep it always full of interesting people, night and day. People who do interesting things. Celebrated people."

Instead of taking the short cut along the Sound they go down the road and enter by the big postern.

With enchanting murmurs Daisy admires this aspect or that of the feudal silhouette against the sky, admires the gardens, the sparkling odor of jonquils and the frothy odor of hawthorn and plum blossoms and the pale gold odor of kiss-me-at-the-gate.

As they reach the marble steps and they find no stir of bright dresses in and out the door, and hear no sound but bird voices in the trees. They step inside.

And inside as we wandered through Marie Antoinette music rooms and Restoration salons I felt that there were guests concealed behind every couch and table, under orders to be breathlessly silent until we had passed through. As Gatsby closed the door of 'the Merton College Library' I could have sworn I heard the owl-eyed man break into ghostly laughter.

They go upstairs, through period bedrooms swathed in rose and lavender silk and vivid with new flowers, through dressing rooms and poolrooms, and bathrooms with sunken baths -- intruding into

one chamber where a disheveled man in pajamas was doing liver exercises on the floor. It was Mr. Klipspringer, the "boarder." Finally they come to Gatsby's own apartment, a bedroom and a bath and an Adam study, where we sat down and drank a glass of some Chartreuse he took from a cupboard in the wall.

He hadn't once ceased looking at Daisy and I think he revalued everything in his house according to the measure of response it drew from her well-loved eyes. Sometimes, too, he stared around at his possessions in a dazed way as though in her actual and astounding presence none of it was any longer real.

His bedroom is the simplest room of all -- except where the dresser is garnished with a toilet set of pure dull gold. Daisy takes the brush with delight and smooths her hair, whereupon Gatsby sits down and shades his eyes and begins to laugh.

"It's the funniest thing, old sport. I can't -- when I try to -- "

He had passed visibly through two states and was entering upon a third. After his embarrassment and his unreasoning joy he was consumed with wonder at her presence. He had been full of the idea so long, dreamed it right through to the end, waited with his teeth set, so to speak, at an inconceivable pitch of intensity. Now, in the reaction, he was running down like an overwound clock.

Recovering himself he opens two hulking patent cabinets which held his massed suits and dressing-gowns and ties, and his shirts, piled like bricks in stacks a dozen high.

"I've got a man in England who buys me clothes. He sends over a selection of things at the beginning of each season, spring and fall."

He takes out a pile of shirts and begins throwing them, one by one before us, shirts of sheer linen and thick silk and fine flannel which lost their folds as they fell and covered the table in many-colored disarray. While they admire he brings more and the soft rich heap mounted higher -- shirts with stripes and scrolls and plaids in coral and apple-green and lavender and faint orange with monograms of Indian blue. Suddenly Daisy bends her head into the shirts and begins to sob.

"They're such beautiful shirts. It makes me sad because I've never seen such -- such beautiful shirts before."

Outside Gatsby's window it begins to rain again and they stand in a row looking out beyond the grounds and the swimming pool, and the hydroplane and the midsummer flowers to the corrugated surface of the Sound.

"If it wasn't for the mist we could see your home across the bay. You always have a green light that burns all night at the end of your dock."

Daisy puts her arm through his. Gatsby seems absorbed in what he had just said.

Nick begins to walk about the room, examining various indefinite objects in the half darkness. He points to a large photograph of an elderly man in yachting costume, hung on the wall over his desk.

"Who's this?"

"That? That's Mr. Dan Cody, old sport."

Gatsby smiles softly.

"He's dead now. He used to be my best friend years ago."

There is a small picture of Gatsby, also in yachting costume, on the bureau -- Gatsby with his head thrown back defiantly -- taken apparently when he was about eighteen.

Daisy smacks her hands together.

"I adore it! The pompadour! You never told me you had a pompadour -- or a yacht."

"Look at this. Here's a lot of clippings -- about you."

They stand side by side examining them when the phone rings and Gatsby takes up the receiver.

"Yes... Well, I can't talk now... I can't talk now, old sport... I said a SMALL town... He must know what a small town is... Well, he's no use to us if Detroit is his idea of a small town... "

He rings off.

Daisy is at the window.

"Come here quick!"

The rain is still falling, but the darkness has parted in the west, and there is a pink and golden billow of foamy clouds above the sea.

Daisy whispers.

"Look at that."

She looks out at the clouds.

"I'd like to just get one of those pink clouds and put you in it and push you around."

Nick moves to leave, but they won't hear of it. Perhaps his presence makes them feel more satisfactorily alone.

Gatsby nods.

"I know what we'll do, we'll have Klipspringer play the piano."

He goes out of the room calling "Ewing!" and returns in a few

minutes accompanied by an embarrassed, slightly worn young man with shell-rimmed glasses and scanty blonde hair. He is now decently clothed in a sport shirt open at the neck, sneakers and duck trousers of a nebulous hue.

Daisy smiles.

"Did we interrupt your exercises?"

"I was asleep. That is, I'd been asleep. Then I got up -- "

"Klipspringer plays the piano. Don't you, Ewing, old sport?"

"I don't play well. I don't -- I hardly play at all. I'm all out of prac -- "

"We'll go downstairs."

Gatsby flips a switch. The grey windows disappear as the house glows full of light.

In the music room Gatsby turns on a solitary lamp beside the piano. He lights Daisy's cigarette from a trembling match, and sits down with her on a couch far across the room where there is no light save what the gleaming floor bounces in from the hall.

Klipspringer tinkles 'The Love Nest' and turns around on the bench and searches unhappily for Gatsby in the gloom.

"I'm all out of practice, you see. I told you I couldn't play. I'm all out of prac -- -- "

"Don't talk so much, old sport. Play!"

IN THE MORNING,  
IN THE EVENING,  
AIN'T WE GOT FUN -- --

Outside the wind is loud and there was a faint flow of thunder along the Sound.

ONE THING'S SURE AND NOTHING'S SURER  
THE RICH GET RICHER AND THE POOR GET -- CHILDREN.  
IN THE MEANTIME,  
IN BETWEEN TIME -- --

As Nick goes over to say goodbye he sees that the expression of bewilderment has come back into Gatsby's face, as though a faint doubt has occurred to him as to the quality of his present happiness.

As Nick watches him he adjusts himself a little, visibly. His hand takes hold of hers and as she says something low in his ear he turns towards her with a rush of emotion. They look back at Nick, remotely, possessed by intense life.

Nick out of the room and down the marble steps into the rain,

leaving them there together.

## Chapter 6

"Do you have anything to say?"

An ambitious young reporter from New York is at Gatsby's door in the morning light. Gatsby looks at him politely.

"Anything to say about what?"

"Why -- any statement to give out."

Gatsby shakes his head and smiles and goes back inside. He slowly closes the door.

It was a random shot, and yet the reporter's instinct was right. Gatsby's notoriety, spread about by the hundreds who had accepted his hospitality and so become authorities on his past, had increased all summer until he fell just short of being news. Contemporary legends such as the "underground pipe-line to Canada" attached themselves to him, and there was one persistent story that he didn't live in a house at all, but in a boat that looked like a house and was moved secretly up and down the Long Island shore. Just why these inventions were a source of satisfaction to James Gatz of North Dakota, isn't easy to say.

Move past the house towards the Sounds.

James Gatz -- that was really, or at least legally, his name. He had changed it at the age of seventeen and at the specific moment that witnessed the beginning of his career -- when he saw Dan Cody's yacht drop anchor over the most insidious flat on Lake Superior. It was James Gatz who had been loafing along the beach that afternoon in a torn green jersey and a pair of canvas pants, but it was already Jay Gatsby who borrowed a row-boat, pulled out to the 'Tuolomee' and informed Cody that a wind might catch him and break him up in half an hour.

I suppose he'd had the name ready for a long time, even then. His parents were shiftless and unsuccessful farm people -- his imagination had never really accepted them as his parents at all. The truth was that Jay Gatsby, of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself. He was a son of God -- a phrase which, if it means anything, means just that -- and he must be about His Father's Business, the service of a vast, vulgar and meretricious beauty. So he invented just the sort of Jay Gatsby that a seventeen-year-old boy would be likely to invent, and to this conception he was faithful to the end.

For over a year he had been beating his way along the south shore of Lake Superior as a clam digger and a salmon fisher or in any other capacity that brought him food and bed. His brown, hardening body lived naturally through the half fierce, half lazy work of the bracing days. He knew women early and since they spoiled him

he became contemptuous of them, of young virgins because they were ignorant, of the others because they were hysterical about things which in his overwhelming self-absorption he took for granted.

But his heart was in a constant, turbulent riot. The most grotesque and fantastic conceits haunted him in his bed at night. A universe of ineffable gaudiness spun itself out in his brain while the clock ticked on the wash-stand and the moon soaked with wet light his tangled clothes upon the floor. Each night he added to the pattern of his fancies until drowsiness closed down upon some vivid scene with an oblivious embrace. For a while these reveries provided an outlet for his imagination; they were a satisfactory hint of the unreality of reality, a promise that the rock of the world was founded securely on a fairy's wing.

An instinct toward his future glory had led him, some months before, to the small Lutheran college of St. Olaf in southern Minnesota. He stayed there two weeks, dismayed at its ferocious indifference to the drums of his destiny, to destiny itself, and despising the janitor's work with which he was to pay his way through. Then he drifted back to Lake Superior, and he was still searching for something to do on the day that Dan Cody's yacht dropped anchor in the shallows along shore.

Cody was fifty years old then, a product of the Nevada silver fields, of the Yukon, of every rush for metal since Seventy-five. The transactions in Montana copper that made him many times a millionaire found him physically robust but on the verge of soft-mindedness, and, suspecting this an infinite number of women tried to separate him from his money. The none too savory ramifications by which Ella Kaye, the newspaper woman, played Madame de Maintenon to his weakness and sent him to sea in a yacht, were common knowledge to the turgid journalism of 1902. He had been coasting along all too hospitable shores for five years when he turned up as James Gatz's destiny at Little Girl Bay.

To the young Gatz, resting on his oars and looking up at the railed deck, the yacht represented all the beauty and glamor in the world. I suppose he smiled at Cody -- he had probably discovered that people liked him when he smiled. At any rate Cody asked him a few questions (one of them elicited the brand new name) and found that he was quick, and extravagantly ambitious. A few days later he took him to Duluth and bought him a blue coat, six pair of white duck trousers and a yachting cap. And when the 'Tuolomee' left for the West Indies and the Barbary Coast Gatsby left too.

He was employed in a vague personal capacity -- while he remained with Cody he was in turn steward, mate, skipper, secretary, and even jailor, for Dan Cody sober knew what lavish doings Dan Cody drunk might soon be about and he provided for such contingencies by reposing more and more trust in Gatsby. The arrangement lasted five years during which the boat went three times around the continent. It might have lasted indefinitely except for the fact that Ella Kaye came on board one night in Boston and a week later Dan Cody inhospitably died.

I remember the portrait of him up in Gatsby's bedroom, a grey,

florid man with a hard empty face -- the pioneer debauchee who during one phase of American life brought back to the eastern seaboard the savage violence of the frontier brothel and saloon. It was indirectly due to Cody that Gatsby drank so little. Sometimes in the course of gay parties women used to rub champagne into his hair; for himself he formed the habit of letting liquor alone.

And it was from Cody that he inherited money -- a legacy of twenty-five thousand dollars. He didn't get it. He never understood the legal device that was used against him but what remained of the millions went intact to Ella Kaye. He was left with his singularly appropriate education; the vague contour of Jay Gatsby had filled out to the substantiality of a man.

He told me all this very much later, but I've put it down here with the idea of exploding those first wild rumors about his antecedents, which weren't even faintly true. Moreover he told it to me at a time of confusion, when I had reached the point of believing everything and nothing about him. So I take advantage of this short halt, while Gatsby, so to speak, caught his breath, to clear this set of misconceptions away.

It was a halt, too, in my association with his affairs. For several weeks I didn't see him or hear his voice on the phone -- mostly I was in New York, trotting around with Jordan and trying to ingratiate myself with her senile aunt -- but finally I went over to his house one Sunday afternoon.

Nick walks across Gatsby's lawn to see Tom Buchanan arrive on horseback with a man named Sloane and a pretty woman in a brown riding habit who had been there previously.

Nick looks a little startled, naturally. Gatsby is standing on his porch.

"I'm delighted to see you. I'm delighted that you dropped in."

The three dismount and saunter in. Gatsby follows them in. He walks around the room quickly, ringing bells.

"Sit right down. Have a cigarette or a cigar. I'll have something to drink for you in just a minute."

Mr. Sloane wants nothing.

"A lemonade"

"No, thanks."

"A little champagne? Nothing at all, thanks..."

"I'm sorry -- -- "

"Did you have a nice ride?"

"Very good roads around here."

"I suppose the automobiles -- -- "

"Yeah."

Gatsby turns to Tom.

"I believe we've met somewhere before, Mr. Buchanan."

Tom obviously cannot remember.

"Oh, yes. So we did. I remember very well."

"About two weeks ago."

"That's right. You were with Nick here."

"I know your wife."

"That so?"

Tom turns to Nick.

"You live near here, Nick?"

"Next door."

"That so?"

Highballs arrive on a tray.

Mr. Sloane doesn't enter into the conversation but lounges back haughtily in his chair. The woman says nothing either until her second highball.

"We'll all come over to your next party, Mr. Gatsby. What do you say?"

"Certainly. I'd be delighted to have you."

Mr. Sloane answers without gratitude.

"Be ver' nice. Well -- think ought to be starting home."

"Please don't hurry. Why don't you -- why don't you stay for supper? I wouldn't be surprised if some other people dropped in from New York."

The lady looks enthusiastically at Gatsby and Nick.

"You come to supper with me. Both of you."

Mr. Sloane gets to his feet and looks only at her.

"Come along."

"I mean it. I'd love to have you. Lots of room."

Gatsby looks at Nick questioningly. He wants to go and doesn't see

that Mr. Sloane has determined he shouldn't. Nick looks at her.

"I'm afraid I won't be able to."

She concentrates on Gatsby

"Well, you come."

Mr. Sloane murmurs something close to her ear.

"We won't be late if we start now."

"I haven't got a horse. I used to ride in the army but I've never bought a horse. I'll have to follow you in my car. Excuse me for just a minute."

The rest of them walk out on the porch, where Sloane and the lady aside an impassioned conversation. Tom shakes his head.

"My God, I believe the man's coming. Doesn't he know she doesn't want him?"

"She says she does want him."

"She has a big dinner party and he won't know a soul there. I wonder where in the devil he met Daisy. By God, I may be old-fashioned in my ideas, but women run around too much these days to suit me. They meet all kinds of crazy fish."

Suddenly Mr. Sloane and the lady walk down the steps and mount their horses.

Mr. Sloane calls to Tom.

"Come on, we're late. We've got to go."

Then turns to Nick.

"Tell him we couldn't wait, will you?"

Tom and Nick shake hands, the others exchange a cool nod and trot quickly down the drive, disappearing under the August foliage just as Gatsby with hat and light overcoat in hand comes out the front door.

The following Saturday night there is another Gatsby's party. There are the same people, or at least the same sort of people, the same profusion of champagne, the same many-colored, many-keyed commotion.

Daisy and Tom arrive and stroll out in the twilight among the sparkling hundreds to Gatsby and Nick. Daisy's voice plays murmurous tricks in her throat.

"These things excite me so. If you want to kiss me any time during the evening, Nick, just let me know and I'll be glad to arrange it for you. Just mention my name. Or present a green card. I'm giving out green -- "

Gatsby makes a suggestion.

"Look around."

"I'm looking around. I'm having a marvelous -- "

"You must see the faces of many people you've heard about."

Tom's arrogant eyes roams the crowd.

"We don't go around very much. In fact I was just thinking I don't know a soul here."

Gatsby indicates a gorgeous, scarcely human orchid of a woman who sits in state under a white plum tree.

"Perhaps you know that lady."

Tom and Daisy stare, with that peculiarly unreal feeling that accompanies the recognition of a hitherto ghostly celebrity of the movies. Daisy smiles.

"She's lovely."

"The man bending over her is her director."

Gatsby takes them ceremoniously from group to group.

"Mrs. Buchanan... and Mr. Buchanan -- "

Gatsby hesitates for an instant.

" -- the polo player."

Tom quickly raises his open palms.

"Oh no, not me."

"I've never met so many celebrities! I liked that man -- what was his name? -- with the sort of blue nose."

Gatsby identifies him, adding that he's a small producer.

"Well, I liked him anyhow."

"I'd rather not be the polo player. I'd rather look at all these famous people in -- in oblivion."

Daisy and Gatsby dance. The stars shine and shine.

I remember being surprised by his graceful, conservative fox-trot -  
- I had never seen him dance before. Then they sauntered over to my house and sat on the steps for half an hour while at her request I remained watchfully in the garden: "In case there's a fire or a flood," she explained, "or any act of God."

Tom appears from his oblivion as they are sitting down to supper

together. He points to another table.

"Do you mind if I eat with some people over here? A fellow's getting off some funny stuff."

"Go ahead. And if you want to take down any addresses here's my little gold pencil... "

Daisy looks around for a moment, then turns to Nick.

"The girl is common but pretty."

Gatsby is called to the phone. Everyone left at the table is particularly tipsy.

"How do you feel, Miss Baedeker?"

Miss Baedeker is trying, unsuccessfully, to slump against Nick's shoulder. She sits up and opens her eyes.

"Wha?"

A massive and lethargic woman, who has been urging Daisy to play golf with her at the local club tomorrow, speaks in Miss Baedeker's defence.

"Oh, she's all right now. When she's had five or six cocktails she always starts screaming like that. I tell her she ought to leave it alone."

"I do leave it alone."

"We heard you yelling, so I said to Doc Civet here: 'There's somebody that needs your help, Doc.' "

Another friend answers without gratitude.

"She's much obliged, I'm sure. But you got her dress all wet when you stuck her head in the pool."

"Anything I hate is to get my head stuck in a pool. They almost drowned me once over in New Jersey."

"Then you ought to leave it alone."

"Speak for yourself! Your hand shakes. I wouldn't let you operate on me!"

Daisy and Nick watch the moving picture director and his Star. They are still under the white plum tree and their faces are touching except for a pale thin ray of moonlight between. He stoop one ultimate degree and kiss at her cheek. Daisy smiles.

"I like her. I think she's lovely."

Nick sits on the front steps with Daisy and Tom while they wait for their car. It is dark in the front of the house, only the bright door sends ten square feet of light volleying out into the

soft black morning. Sometimes a shadow moves against a dressing-room blind above, gives way to another shadow, an indefinite procession of shadows, who rouge and powder in an invisible glass.

"Who is this Gatsby anyhow? Some big bootlegger?"

Nick looks at Tom.

"Where'd you hear that?"

"I didn't hear it. I imagined it. A lot of these newly rich people are just big bootleggers, you know."

"Not Gatsby."

The pebbles of the drive crunch under Tom's feet.

"Well, he certainly must have strained himself to get this menagerie together."

A breeze stirs the grey haze of Daisy's fur collar.

"At least they're more interesting than the people we know."

"You didn't look so interested."

"Well, I was."

Tom laughs and turns to me.

"Did you notice Daisy's face when that girl asked her to put her under a cold shower?"

Daisy begins to sing with the music in a husky, rhythmic whisper, bringing out a meaning in each word that it had never had before and would never have again. When the melody rises, her voice breaks up sweetly, following it, each change tipping out a little of her warm human magic upon the air. She stops abruptly

"Lots of people come who haven't been invited. That girl hadn't been invited. They simply force their way in and he's too polite to object."

"I'd like to know who he is and what he does. And I think I'll make a point of finding out."

"I can tell you right now. He owned some drug stores, a lot of drug stores. He built them up himself."

The dilatory limousine came rolls up the drive.

Daisy turns to Nick.

"Good night, Nick."

Her glance leaves him and seeks the lighted top of the steps where 'Three O'Clock in the Morning', a neat, sad little waltz of that year, drifts out the open door.

I stayed late that night. Gatsby asked me to wait until he was free and I lingered in the garden until the inevitable swimming party had run up, chilled and exalted, from the black beach, until the lights were extinguished in the guest rooms overhead.

When Gatsby comes down the steps at last the tanned skin is drawn unusually tight on his face, and his eyes are bright and tired.

"She didn't like it."

"Of course she did."

"She didn't like it, she didn't have a good time."

Nick brushes the tip of his shoe on the lawn.

"I feel far away from her. It's hard to make her understand."

"You mean about the dance?"

Gatsby snaps his fingers.

"The dance? Old sport, the dance is unimportant."

He wanted nothing less of Daisy than that she should go to Tom and say: "I never loved you." After she had obliterated three years with that sentence they could decide upon the more practical measures to be taken. One of them was that, after she was free, they were to go back to Louisville and be married from her house -- just as if it were five years ago.

"And she doesn't understand, she used to be able to understand. We'd sit for hours -- "

He begins to walk up and down a desolate path of fruit rinds and discarded favors and crushed flowers.

Nick ventures a thought.

"I wouldn't ask too much of her. You can't repeat the past."

"Can't repeat the past? Why of course you can!"

He looks around wildly, as if the past is lurking here in the shadow of his house, just out of reach of his hand.

"I'm going to fix everything just the way it was before. She'll see."

Tops of trees, blowing dustily in the night.

One autumn night, five years before, they had been walking down the street when the leaves were falling, and they came to a place where there were no trees and the sidewalk was white with moonlight. They stopped here and turned toward each other. The quiet lights in the houses were humming out into the darkness and there was a stir and bustle among the stars. Out of the corner of

his eye Gatsby saw that the blocks of the sidewalk really formed a ladder and mounted to a secret place above the trees -- he could climb to it, if he climbed alone, and once there he could suck on the pap of life, gulp down the incomparable milk of wonder.

His heart beat faster and faster as Daisy's white face came up to his own. He knew that when he kissed this girl, and forever wed his unutterable visions to her perishable breath, his mind would never romp again like the mind of God. So he waited, listening for a moment longer to the tuning fork that had been struck upon a star. Then he kissed her. At his lips' touch she blossomed for him like a flower and the incarnation was complete.

## Chapter 7

Headlights pass through the scattered hedge fencing the Gatsby's estate.

Automobiles turn expectantly into his drive and stay for just a minute and then drive sulkily away. It's Saturday night and the lights are not on

Nick wonders over to the front door where an unfamiliar butler with a villainous face squints at him suspiciously.

"Is Mr. Gatsby sick?"

"Nope -- sir."

"I hadn't seen him around, and I was rather worried. Tell him Mr. Carraway came over."

"Who?"

"Carraway."

"Carraway. All right, I'll tell him."

The butler abruptly slams the door.

Next day Gatsby calls Nick on the phone.

"Going away?"

Gatsby's voice seems far away.

"No, old sport."

"I hear you fired all your servants."

"I wanted somebody who wouldn't gossip. Daisy comes over quite often -- in the afternoons."

Nick looks out the window towards the Gatsby house.

"They're some people Wolfshiem wanted to do something for. They're all brothers and sisters. They used to run a small hotel."

"I see."

He was calling up at Daisy's request -- would I come to lunch at her house tomorrow? Miss Baker would be there. Half an hour later Daisy herself telephoned and seemed relieved to find that I was coming. Something was up. And yet I couldn't believe that they would choose this occasion for a scene -- especially for the rather harrowing scene that Gatsby had outlined in the garden.

Through the hall of the Buchanans' house blows a faint hot wind, carrying the sound of the telephone bell out to Gatsby and Nick as they wait at the door.

"Yes... yes... I'll see."

He sits down the receiver and comes toward them, glistening slightly in the broiling heat, to take their stiff straw hats.

"Madame expects you in the salon!"

He needlessly indicates the direction. In this heat every extra gesture is an affront to the common store of life.

The room, shadowed well with awnings, is dark and cool. Daisy and Jordan lie upon an enormous couch, like silver idols, weighing down their own white dresses against the singing breeze of the fans. They sigh together.

"We can't move."

Jordan's fingers, powdered white over their tan, rests for a moment in Nick's.

"And Mr. Thomas Buchanan, the athlete?"

Nick hears his voice, gruff, muffled, husky, at the hall telephone.

Gatsby stands in the center of the crimson carpet and gazes around with fascinated eyes. Daisy watches him and laughs, her sweet, exciting laugh. A tiny gust of powder rises from her bosom into the air.

Jordan whispers.

"The rumor is that that's Tom's girl on the telephone."

They are silent. The voice in the hall rises high with annoyance.

"Very well, then, I won't sell you the car at all... I'm under no obligations to you at all... And as for your bothering me about it at lunch time I won't stand that at all!"

Daisy looks at Nick cynically.

"Holding down the receiver."

"No, he's not. It's a bona fide deal. I happen to know about it."

Tom flings open the door, blocks out its space for a moment with his thick body, and hurries into the room.

"Mr. Gatsby!"

He puts out his broad, flat hand with well-concealed dislike.

"I'm glad to see you, sir... Nick... "

Daisy cries out.

"Make us a cold drink."

As he leaves the room again she gets up and goes over to Gatsby and pulls his face down kissing him on the mouth.

"You know I love you."

"You forget there's a lady present."

Daisy looks around at Jordan doubtfully.

"You kiss Nick too."

"What a low, vulgar girl!"

"I don't care!"

Then Daisy remembers the heat and sits down guiltily on the couch just as a freshly laundered nurse leading a little girl comes into the room.

Daisy croons, holding out her arms.

"Bles-sed pre-cious. Come to your own mother that loves you."

The child, relinquished by the nurse, rushes across the room and roots shyly into her mother's dress.

"The Bles-sed pre-cious! Did mother get powder on your old yellowy hair? Stand up now, and say How-de-do."

Gatsby and Nick in turn lean down and take the small reluctant hand. Gatsby has never really believed the child existed.

"I got dressed before luncheon."

"That's because your mother wanted to show you off. You dream, you. You absolute little dream."

"Yes. Aunt Jordan's got on a white dress too."

"How do you like mother's friends?"

Daisy turns her around so that she faces Gatsby.

"Do you think they're pretty?"

"Where's Daddy?"

"She doesn't look like her father. She looks like me. She's got my hair and shape of the face."

Daisy sits back upon the couch. The nurse takes a step forward and holds out her hand.

"Come, Pammy."

"Goodbye, sweetheart!"

With a reluctant backward glance the well-disciplined child holds to her nurse's hand and is pulled out the door, just as Tom came back, preceding four gin rickeys that click full of ice.

Gatsby watches them takes up their drinks.

"They certainly look cool."

They drank in long greedy swallows. Tom finishes first.

"I read somewhere that the sun's getting hotter every year. It seems that pretty soon the earth's going to fall into the sun -- or wait a minute -- it's just the opposite -- the sun's getting colder every year.

Tom looks at Gatsby.

"Come outside. I'd like you to have a look at the place."

Nick goes with them out to the veranda. On the green Sound, stagnant in the heat, one small sail crawls slowly toward the fresher sea. Gatsby's eyes follow it momentarily. He raises his hand and points past the dock and across the bay.

"I'm right across from you."

"So you are."

Their eyes lift over the rosebeds and the hot lawn and the weedy refuse of the dog days along shore. Slowly the white wings of the boat move against the blue cool limit of the sky. Ahead lies the scalloped ocean and the abounding blessed isles.

Tom nods.

"There's sport for you. I'd like to be out there with him for about an hour."

They have luncheon in the dining-room, darkened, too, against the heat, and drink down nervous gayety with the cold ale.

Daisy cries out.

"What'll we do with ourselves this afternoon, and the day after that, and the next thirty years?"

Jordan rolls her eyes.

"Don't be morbid. Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall."

"But it's so hot. And everything's so confused. Let's all go to town!"

Tom is talking to Gatsby.

"I've heard of making a garage out of a stable, but I'm the first man who ever made a stable out of a garage."

"Who wants to go to town?"

Gatsby's eyes float towards Daisy. She cries out softly.

"Ah, you look so cool."

Their eyes meet, and they stare together at each other, alone in space. With an effort she glances down at the table.

"You always look so cool."

She had told him that she loved him, and Tom Buchanan saw. He was astounded. His mouth opened a little and he looked at Gatsby and then back at Daisy as if he had just recognized her as some one he knew a long time ago.

"You resemble the advertisement of the man, you know the advertisement of the man -- "

Tom breaks in quickly.

"All right, I'm perfectly willing to go to town. Come on -- we're all going to town."

He gets up, his eyes still flashing between Gatsby and his wife. No one moves.

"Come on!"

His temper cracks a little.

"What's the matter, anyhow? If we're going to town let's start."

His hand, trembling with his effort at self control, bears to his lips the last of his glass of ale. Daisy's voice gets them to their feet and out on to the blazing gravel drive.

"Are we just going to go? Like this? Aren't we going to let any one smoke a cigarette first?"

"Everybody smoked all through lunch."

"Oh, let's have fun. It's too hot to fuss."

Tom doesn't answer.

"Have it your own way. Come on, Jordan."

They go upstairs to get ready while the three men stand there shuffling the hot pebbles with their feet. A silver curve of the moon hovers already in the western sky. Gatsby starts to speak, and Tom wheels and faces him expectantly.

"Have you got your stables here?"

"About a quarter of a mile down the road."

"Oh."

A pause.

"I don't see the idea of going to town. Women get these notions in their heads -- "

Daisy calls out from an upper window.

"Shall we take anything to drink?"

"I'll get some whiskey."

Tom goes inside. Gatsby turns to Nick.

"I can't say anything in his house, old sport."

"She's got an indiscreet voice. It's full of -- "

Nick hesitates and Gatsby answers.

"Her voice is full of money."

Tom comes out of the house wrapping a quart bottle in a towel, followed by Daisy and Jordan wearing small tight hats of metallic cloth and carrying light capes over their arms.

Gatsby offers a suggestion.

"Shall we all go in my car?"

He feels the hot, green leather of the seat.

"I ought to have left it in the shade."

"Is it standard shift?"

"Yes."

"Well, you take my coupé and let me drive your car to town."

Tom's suggestion is distasteful to Gatsby.

"I don't think there's much gas."

Tom looks at the gauge.

"Plenty of gas. And if it runs out I can stop at a drug store. You can buy anything at a drug store nowadays."

Daisy frowns at Tom. An indefinable expression passes over Gatsby's face.

"Come on, Daisy."

Tom presses her with his hand toward Gatsby's car.

"I'll take you in this circus wagon."

He opens the door but she moves out from the circle of his arm.

"You take Nick and Jordan. We'll follow you in the coupé."

She walks close to Gatsby, touching his coat with her hand. Jordan and Tom and Nick get into the front seat of Gatsby's car, Tom pushes the unfamiliar gears tentatively and they shoot off into the oppressive heat leaving them out of sight behind.

Tom looks in the rear vision mirror

"Did you see that?"

"See what?"

He looks at Nick keenly, realizing that Jordan and he must have known all along.

"You think I'm pretty dumb, don't you? Perhaps I am, but I have a - almost a second sight, sometimes, that tells me what to do. Maybe you don't believe that, but science -- "

He catches his breath.

"I've made a small investigation of this fellow. I could have gone deeper if I'd known -- "

"Do you mean you've been to a medium?"

"What?" Confused, he stares at Jordan and Nick as they laugh.

"A medium?"

"About Gatsby."

"About Gatsby! No, I haven't. I said I'd been making a small investigation of his past."

Jordan tries to help.

"And you found he was an Oxford man."

"An Oxford man! Like hell he is! He wears a pink suit."

"Nevertheless he's an Oxford man."

"Oxford, New Mexico, or something like that."

"Listen, Tom. If you're such a snob, why did you invite him to lunch?"

"Daisy invited him, she knew him before we were married -- God knows where!"

They drive for a while in silence. Then as Doctor T. J. Eckleburg's faded eyes come into sight down the road, Nick remembers Gatsby's caution about gasoline.

"We've got enough to get us to town."

Jordan objects.

"But there's a garage right here. I don't want to get stalled in this baking heat."

Tom throws on both brakes impatiently and they slide to an abrupt dusty stop under Wilson's sign. After a moment the proprietor emerged from the interior of his establishment and gazed hollow-eyed at the car.

"Let's have some gas! What do you think we stopped for -- to admire the view?"

Wilson doesn't move.

"I'm sick. I been sick all day."

"What's the matter?"

"I'm all run down."

"Well, shall I help myself? You sounded well enough on the phone."

With an effort Wilson leaves the shade and support of the doorway and, breathing hard, unscrews the cap of the tank. In the sunlight his face is green.

"I didn't mean to interrupt your lunch. But I need money pretty bad and I was wondering what you were going to do with your old car."

"How do you like this one? I bought it last week."

"It's a nice yellow one."

"Like to buy it?"

"Big chance. No, but I could make some money on the other."

"What do you want money for, all of a sudden?"

"I've been here too long. I want to get away. My wife and I want to go west."

"Your wife does!"

"She's been talking about it for ten years. And now she's going whether she wants to or not. I'm going to get her away."

The coupé flashes by with a flurry of dust and the flash of a waving hand.

"What do I owe you?"

"I just got wised up to something funny the last two days. That's why I want to get away. That's why I been bothering you about the car."

"What do I owe you?"

"Dollar twenty."

The relentless beating heat was beginning to confuse me and I had a bad moment there before I realized that so far his suspicions hadn't alighted on Tom. He had discovered that Myrtle had some sort of life apart from him in another world and the shock had made him physically sick. I stared at him and then at Tom, who had made a parallel discovery less than an hour before -- and it occurred to me that there was no difference between men, in intelligence or race, so profound as the difference between the sick and the well.

"I'll let you have that car," says Tom. "I'll send it over tomorrow afternoon."

Nick looks over the ashheaps to the giant eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg keeping their vigil. Then turns and sees in one of the windows over the garage that the curtains have been moved aside a little and Myrtle Wilson is peering down at the car.

So engrossed was she that she had no consciousness of being observed and one emotion after another crept into her face like objects into a slowly developing picture. Her expression was curiously familiar -- it was an expression I had often seen on women's faces but on Myrtle Wilson's face it seemed purposeless and inexplicable until I realized that her eyes, wide with jealous terror, were fixed not on Tom, but on Jordan Baker, whom she took to be his wife.

They drive off.

Tom is feeling the hot whips of panic. His wife and his mistress, until an hour ago secure and inviolate, were slipping precipitately from his control. Instinct makes him step on the accelerator with the double purpose of overtaking Daisy and leaving Wilson behind.

They speed along toward Astoria at fifty miles an hour, until, among the spidery girders of the elevated, they come in sight of the easygoing blue coupé.

"Those big movies around Fiftieth Street are cool."

Perspiration appears on Jordan's upper lip.

"I love New York on summer afternoons when every one's away. There's something very sensuous about it -- overripe, as if all sorts of funny fruits were going to fall into your hands."

The coupé comes to a stop and Daisy signals them to draw up alongside.

"Where are we going?"

"How about the movies?"

"It's so hot. You go. We'll ride around and meet you after."

Daisy smiles to herself.

"We'll meet you on some corner. I'll be the man smoking two cigarettes."

A truck gives out a cursing whistle to Tom.

"We can't argue about it here. You follow me to the south side of Central Park, in front of the Plaza."

Several times he turns his head and looks back for their car, and if the traffic delays them he slows up until they come into sight. He is afraid they will dart down a side street and out of his life forever.

But they don't.

And we all took the less explicable step of engaging the parlor of a suite in the Plaza Hotel.

The prolonged and tumultuous argument that ended by herding us into that room eludes me. The notion originated with Daisy's suggestion that we hire five bathrooms and take cold baths, and then assumed more tangible form as "a place to have a mint julep." Each of us said over and over that it was a "crazy idea" -- we all talked at once to a baffled clerk and thought, or pretended to think, that we were being very funny.

The room is large and stifling, and, though it is already four o'clock, opening the windows admits only a gust of hot shrubbery from the Park. Daisy goes to the mirror and stands with her back to us, fixing her hair.

"Open another window."

"Well, we'd better telephone for an axe -- "

Tom looks around impatiently.

"The thing to do is to forget about the heat. You make it ten times worse by crabbing about it."

He unrolls the bottle of whiskey from the towel and puts it on the table.

Gatsby looks at the whiskey.

"Why not let her alone, old sport? You're the one that wanted to come to town."

There is a moment of silence. The telephone book slips from its nail and splashed to the floor.

Nick moves to pick it up.

"I've got it."

Gatsby examines the parted string in an interested way, and tosses the book on a chair.

"That's a great expression of yours, isn't it?"

"What is?"

"All this 'old sport' business. Where'd you pick that up?"

Daisy turns from the mirror.

"Now see here, Tom, if you're going to make personal remarks I won't stay here a minute. Call up and order some ice for the mint julep."

As Tom takes up the receiver the compressed heat explodes into sound and they are listening to the portentous chords of Mendelssohn's Wedding March from the ballroom below.

Jordan shakes her head.

"Imagine marrying anybody in this heat!"

"Still -- I was married in the middle of June. Louisville in June! Somebody fainted. Who was it fainted, Tom?"

"Biloxi."

"A man named Biloxi. 'Blocks' Biloxi, and he made boxes -- that's a fact -- and he was from Biloxi, Tennessee."

Jordan remembers.

"They carried him into my house because we lived just two doors from the church. And he stayed three weeks, until Daddy told him he had to get out. The day after he left Daddy died."

After she tries to sound irreverent.

"There wasn't any connection."

Nick thinks.

"I used to know a Bill Biloxi from Memphis."

"That was his cousin. I knew his whole family history before he left. He gave me an aluminum putter that I use today."

The music has died down as the ceremony begins and now a long cheer floats in at the window, followed by intermittent cries of "Yea -- ea -- ea!" and finally by a burst of jazz as the dancing begins.

Daisy sighs.

"We're getting old. If we were young we'd rise and dance."

Jordan warns her.

"Remember Biloxi. Where'd you know him, Tom?"

"Biloxi? I didn't know him. He was a friend of Daisy's."

"He was not. I'd never seen him before. He came down in the private car."

"Well, he said he knew you. He said he was raised in Louisville. Asa Bird brought him around at the last minute and asked if we had room for him."

Jordan smiles.

"He was probably bumming his way home. He told me he was president of your class at Yale."

Tom and Nick look at each other blankly.

"Biloxi?"

"First place, we didn't have any president -- "

Gatsby's foot beats a short, restless tattoo and Tom eyes him suddenly.

"By the way, Mr. Gatsby, I understand you're an Oxford man."

"Not exactly."

"Oh, yes, I understand you went to Oxford."

"Yes -- I went there."

A pause. Then Tom's voice, incredulous and insulting.

"You must have gone there about the time Biloxi went to New Haven."

Another pause. A waiter knocks and comes in with crushed mint and ice but the silence is unbroken by his "Thank you" and the soft closing of the door.

"It was in nineteen-nineteen, I only stayed five months. That's why I can't really call myself an Oxford man."

Tom glances around to see if the others mirror his unbelief. But they are all looking at Gatsby.

"It was an opportunity they gave to some of the officers after the Armistice. We could go to any of the universities in England or France."

Daisy rises, smiling faintly, and goes to the table.

"Open the whiskey, Tom, and I'll make you a mint julep. Then you won't seem so stupid to yourself... Look at the mint!"

"Wait a minute, I want to ask Mr. Gatsby one more question."

"Go on."

"What kind of a row are you trying to cause in my house anyhow?"

Daisy looks desperately from one to the other.

"He isn't causing a row. You're causing a row. Please have a little self control."

"Self control! I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr. Nobody from Nowhere make love to your wife. Well, if that's the idea you can count me out... Nowadays people begin by sneering at family life and family institutions and next they'll throw everything overboard and have intermarriage between black and white."

Jordan murmurs.

"We're all white here."

"I know I'm not very popular. I don't give big parties. I suppose you've got to make your house into a pigsty in order to have any friends -- in the modern world."

"I've got something to tell you, old sport, -- "

Daisy guesses at his intention.

"Please don't! Please let's all go home. Why don't we all go home?"

Nick stands up.

"That's a good idea. Come on, Tom. Nobody wants a drink."

"I want to know what Mr. Gatsby has to tell me."

"Your wife doesn't love you. She's never loved you. She loves me."

"You must be crazy!"

Gatsby springs to his feet, vivid with excitement.

"She never loved you, do you hear? She only married you because I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me. It was a terrible mistake, but in her heart she never loved any one except me!"

Daisy stands.

"Sit down Daisy. What's been going on? I want to hear all about it."

Gatsby answers.

"I told you what's been going on. Going on for five years -- and you didn't know."

Tom turns to Daisy sharply.

"You've been seeing this fellow for five years?"

"Not seeing. No, we couldn't meet. But both of us loved each other all that time, old sport, and you didn't know. I used to laugh sometimes -- to think that you didn't know."

There is no laughter in Gatsby's eyes. Tom taps his thick fingers together like a clergyman and leans back in his chair.

"I'll be damned if I see how you got within a mile of her unless you brought the groceries to the back door. But all the rest of that's a God Damned lie. Daisy loved me when she married me and she loves me now."

Gatsby shakes his head.

"No."

Tom nods sagely.

"She does, though. The trouble is that sometimes she gets foolish ideas in her head and doesn't know what she's doing. And what's more, I love Daisy too. Once in a while I go off on a spree and make a fool of myself, but I always come back, and in my heart I love her all the time."

"You're revolting."

Daisy turns to Nick, her voice dropping an octave lower, filling the room with thrilling scorn.

"Do you know why we left Chicago? I'm surprised that they didn't treat you to the story of that little spree."

Gatsby walks over and stands beside her.

"Daisy, that's all over now. It doesn't matter any more. Just tell him the truth -- that you never loved him -- and it's all wiped out forever."

"Why, -- how could I love him -- possibly?"

"You never loved him."

Her eyes fall on Jordan and Nick with a sort of appeal, as though she realizes at last what she is doing.

"I never loved him."

Tom looks at her.

"Not at Kapiolani?"

"No."

From the ballroom beneath, muffled and suffocating chords are drifting up on hot waves of air.

"Not that day I carried you down from the Punch Bowl to keep your shoes dry?"

"Please don't."

She looks at Gatsby. Her hand trembles as she tries to light a cigarette. Suddenly she throws the cigarette and the burning match on the carpet.

"Oh, you want too much! I love you now -- isn't that enough? I can't help what's past."

She begins to sob helplessly.

"I did love him once -- but I loved you too."

Gatsby's eyes open and close.

"You loved me too?"

Tom looks at Gatsby savagely.

"Even that's a lie. She didn't know you were alive. Why, -- there're things between Daisy and me that you'll never know, things that neither of us can ever forget."

"I want to speak to Daisy alone. She's all excited now -- "

"Even alone I can't say I never loved Tom. It wouldn't be true."

Tom agrees.

"Of course it wouldn't."

She turns to her husband.

"As if it mattered to you."

"Of course it matters. I'm going to take better care of you from now on."

Panic touches Gatsby.

"You don't understand. You're not going to take care of her any more."

Tom opens his eyes wide and laughs.

"Why's that?"

"Daisy's leaving you."

"Nonsense."

"I am, though."

"She's not leaving me! Certainly not for a common swindler who'd have to steal the ring he put on her finger."

"I won't stand this! Oh, please let's get out."

"Who are you, anyhow? You're one of that bunch that hangs around with Meyer Wolfshiem -- that much I happen to know. I've made a little investigation into your affairs -- and I'll carry it further tomorrow."

"You can suit yourself about that, old sport."

"I found out what your 'drug stores' were."

Tom turns to the others.

"He and this Wolfshiem bought up a lot of side-street drug stores here and in Chicago and sold grain alcohol over the counter. That's one of his little stunts. I picked him for a bootlegger the first time I saw him and I wasn't far wrong."

Gatsby keeps his manners.

"What about it? I guess your friend Walter Chase wasn't too proud to come in on it."

"And you left him in the lurch, didn't you? You let him go to jail for a month over in New Jersey. God! You ought to hear Walter on the subject of you."

"He came to us dead broke. He was very glad to pick up some money, old sport."

"Don't you call me 'old sport'! Walter could have you up on the betting laws too, but Wolfshiem scared him into shutting his mouth."

That unfamiliar yet recognizable look is back again in Gatsby's face.

"That drug store business was just small change, but you've got something on now that Walter's afraid to tell me about."

Nick glances at Daisy staring terrified between Gatsby and her husband and at Jordan. Then turns back to Gatsby. He looks as if he has just killed a man.

He begins to talk excitedly to Daisy, denying everything, defending his name against accusations that had not been made. But with every word she draws further and further into herself. Her eyes are frightened, her courage gone.

"Please, Tom! I can't stand this any more."

"You two start on home, Daisy. In Mr. Gatsby's car."

She looks at Tom, alarmed.

"Go on. He won't annoy you. I think he realizes that his presumptuous little flirtation is over."

They disappear without a word.

After a moment Tom gets up and begins wrapping the unopened bottle of whiskey in the towel.

"Want any of this stuff? Jordan? Nick?"

Nick doesn't answer.

"Nick?"

"What?"

"Want any?"

"No... I just remembered that today's my birthday."

I was thirty.

It's just after five when the young Greek, Michaelis, who runs the coffee joint beside the ashheaps, strolls over to the garage and finds George Wilson sick in his office -- really sick, pale as his own pale hair and shaking all over. Michaelis advises him to go to bed but Wilson refuses, saying that he'd miss a lot of business if he did.

While his neighbor is trying to persuade him a violent racket breaks out overhead.

"I've got my wife locked in up there. She's going to stay there till the day after tomorrow and then we're going to move away."

Naturally Michaelis tries to find out what has happened, but Wilson won't say a word -- instead he begins to throw curious,

suspicious glances at his visitor. Just as the latter was getting uneasy some workmen came past the door bound for his restaurant and Michaelis takes the opportunity to get away, intending to come back later. But he doesn't.

A little after seven in the cooling twilight Mrs. Wilson's voice, loud and scolding, downstairs in the garage.

"Beat me! Throw me down and beat me, you dirty little coward!"

A moment later she rushes out into the dusk, stumbling, waving her hands and shouting.

A car comes out of the gathering darkness and rips through her. A blur of green. It doesn't stop, it wavers tragically for a moment and then disappears around the next bend.

Another car going toward New York, comes to rest a hundred yards beyond, and its driver hurries back to where Myrtle Wilson, her life violently extinguished, kneels in the road and mingles her thick, dark blood with the dust.

Michaelis, the young Greek who runs the coffee joint and this man reach her but when they tear open her shirtwaist still damp with perspiration, they see that her left breast was swinging loose like a flap and there is no need to listen for the heart beneath. The mouth is wide open and ripped at the corners as though she has choked a little in giving up the tremendous vitality she has stored so long.

Tom, Jordan and Nick see the three or four automobiles and the crowd when they are still some distance away.

"Wreck! That's good. Wilson'll have a little business at last."

Tom slows down, but without any intention of stopping until, as they come nearer, the hushed intent faces of the people at the garage door makes him automatically put on the brakes.

"We'll take a look, just a look."

A hollow, wailing sound issues incessantly from the garage, a sound which as they got out of the coupé and walk towards the door resolves itself into the words "Oh, my God!" uttered over and over in a gasping moan.

"There's some bad trouble here!"

Tom reaches up on tiptoes and peers over a circle of heads into the garage which is lit only by a yellow light in a swinging wire basket overhead. Then he makes a harsh sound in his throat and with a violent thrusting movement of his powerful arms pushes his way through.

The circle closes up again with a running murmur as new arrivals disarrange the line and Jordan and Nick are pushed suddenly inside.

Myrtle Wilson's body is wrapped in a blanket and then in another blanket lies on a work table by the wall and Tom, with his back to us, bends over it, motionless. Next to him stands a motorcycle policeman taking down names with much sweat and correction in a little book. Wilson stands on the raised threshold of his office, swaying back and forth and holding to the doorposts with both hands. Some man is talking to him in a low voice and attempting from time to time to lay a hand on his shoulder, but Wilson neither hears nor sees. His eyes drop slowly from the swinging light to the laden table by the wall and then jerk back to the light again.

"O, my Ga-od! O, my Ga-od! Oh, Ga-od! Oh, my Ga-od!"

Tom lifts his head with a jerk and after staring around the garage with glazed eyes looks to the policeman.

"M-a-v -- o -- "

"No, -- r -- M-a-v-r-o -- "

"r -- o -- "

"g -- "

"g -- "

Tom's broad hand falls sharply on his shoulder.

"What you want, fella?"

"What happened -- that's what I want to know!"

"Auto hit her. Ins'antly killed."

"Instantly killed."

"She ran out ina road. Son-of-a-bitch didn't even stopus car."

Michaelis motions the air with both hands.

"There was two cars, one comin', one goin', see?"

"Going where?"

"One goin' each way. Well, she -- she ran out there an' the one comin' from N'York knock right into her goin' thirty or forty miles an hour."

"What's the name of this place here?"

"Hasn't got any name."

A pale, well-dressed Negro steps near.

"It was a yellow car, big yellow car. New."

"See the accident?"

"No, but the car passed me down the road, going faster'n forty. Going fifty, sixty."

"Come here and let's have your name. Look out now. I want to get his name."

Wilson is still swaying, gasping.

"You don't have to tell me what kind of car it was! I know what kind of car it was!"

Nick watches Tom and sees the wad of muscle back of his shoulder tighten under his coat. He walks quickly over to Wilson and standing in front of him seizes him firmly by the upper arms.

"You've got to pull yourself together."

Wilson's eyes fall upon Tom. He starts up on his tiptoes and would have collapsed to his knees if Tom had not held him upright.

"Listen. I just got here a minute ago, from New York. That yellow car I was driving this afternoon wasn't mine, do you hear? I haven't seen it all afternoon."

Only the Negro and Nick are near enough to hear what he says but the policeman catches something in the tone and looks over.

"What's all that?"

"I'm a friend of his."

Tom turns his head but keep his hands firm on Wilson's body.

"He says he knows the car that did it... It was a yellow car."

"And what color's your car?"

"It's a blue car, a coupé."

Nick steps forward.

"We've come straight from New York."

Some one who has been driving a little behind them confirms this and the policeman turns away.

"Now, if you'll let me have that name again correct -- "

Picking up Wilson like a doll Tom carries him into the office, sets him down in a chair and comes back.

"If somebody'll come here and sit with him!"

Tom watches while the two men standing closest glance at each other and go unwillingly into the room. Then Tom shuts the door on them and comes down the single step, his eyes avoiding the table. As he passed close to Nick he whispers.

"Let's get out."

Self consciously, with Tom's authoritative arms breaking the way, they push through the still gathering crowd, passing a hurried doctor, case in hand.

Tom drives slowly until they are beyond the bend -- then his foot comes down hard and the coupé races along through the night. In a little Nick hears low husky sob and sees the tears were overflowing down his face.

"The God Damn coward! He didn't even stop his car."

The Buchanans' house floats suddenly towards them through the dark rustling trees. Tom stops beside the porch and looks up at the second floor where two windows bloom with light among the vines.

As they get out of the car he glances at Nick.

"I'll telephone for a taxi to take you home, and while you're waiting you and Jordan better go in the kitchen and have them get you some supper -- if you want any."

He opens the front door.

"No thanks. But I'd be glad if you'd order me the taxi. I'll wait outside."

Jordan put her hand on his arm.

"Won't you come in, Nick?"

"No thanks."

Jordan lingers for a moment.

"It's only half past nine."

She sees something in Nick's face and turns abruptly away and runs up the porch steps into the house. He hears the phone taken up inside and the butler's voice calling a taxi. The front door closes.

Nick starts walking slowly down the drive away from the house intending to wait by the gate. He sees the night.

"Nick!"

Gatsby steps from between two bushes into the path, his pink suit luminous under the moon.

"What are you doing?"

"Just standing here, old sport."

Gatsby looks back.

"Did you see any trouble on the road?"

"Yes."

He hesitates.

"Was she killed?"

"Yes."

"I thought so. I told Daisy I thought so. It's better that the shock should all come at once. She stood it pretty well."

He speaks as if Daisy's reaction is the only thing that mattered.

"I got to West Egg by a side road, and left the car in my garage. I don't think anybody saw us but of course I can't be sure."

"Her name was Wilson. Her husband owns the garage. How the devil did it happen?"

"Well, I tried to swing the wheel -- "

Nick suddenly guesses the truth.

"Was Daisy driving?"

It's a moment before Gatsby answers.

"Yes, but of course I'll say I was. You see, when we left New York she was very nervous and she thought it would steady her to drive -- and this woman rushed out at us just as we were passing a car coming the other way. It all happened in a --

"It ripped her open -- "

Gatsby winces.

"Daisy stepped on it. I tried to make her stop, but she couldn't so I pulled on the emergency brake. She fell over into my lap and I drove on."

He takes a deep breath.

"She'll be all right tomorrow. I'm just going to wait here and see if he tries to bother her about that unpleasantness this afternoon. She's locked herself into her room and if he tries any brutality she's going to turn the light out and on again."

"He won't touch her. He's not thinking about her."

"I don't trust him, old sport."

"How long are you going to wait?"

"All night if necessary.."

Nick looks at the house. There are two or three bright windows

downstairs and the pink glow from Daisy's room on the second floor.

"You wait here. I'll see if there's any sign of a commotion."

Nick walks back along the border of the lawn, traverses the gravel softly and tiptoes up the veranda steps. The drawing-room curtains are open, and he sees the room is empty. Crossing the porch he comes to the small rectangle of light of the pantry window. The blind is drawn but he finds a rift at the sill.

Daisy and Tom sit opposite each other at the kitchen table with a plate of cold fried chicken between them and two bottles of ale. He is talking intently across the table at her and in his earnestness his hand has fallen upon and covered her own. Once in a while she looks up at him and nods in agreement.

They aren't happy, and neither of them have touched the chicken or the ale -- and yet they aren't unhappy either. There is an unmistakable air of natural intimacy about the picture and anybody would say they are conspiring together.

As he tiptoes from the porch he hears his taxi feeling its way along the dark road toward the house. Gatsby is waiting where he had left him in the drive.

"Is it all quiet up there?"

"Yes, it's all quiet. You'd better come home and get some sleep."

He shakes his head.

"I want to wait here till Daisy goes to bed. Good night, old sport."

He puts his hands in his coat pockets and turns back eagerly to his scrutiny of the house. Nick walks away and leaves him standing there in the moonlight -- watching over nothing.

## Chapter 8

A fog-horn groans incessantly on the Sound. Nick tosses in bed, half-sick between grotesque reality and savage frightening dreams. Toward dawn he hears a taxi go up Gatsby's drive and immediately jumps out of bed and begins to dress..

Crossing his lawn Nick sees his front door is still open. He is leaning against a table in the hall, heavy with dejection or sleep.

"Nothing happened. I waited, and about four o'clock she came to the window and stood there for a minute and then turned out the light."

They hunt through the great darkened, musty rooms for cigarettes.

They push aside curtains that are like pavilions and fall over innumerable feet of dark wall for electric light switches. Nick tumbles with a sort of splash upon the keys of a ghostly piano. There was an inexplicable amount of dust everywhere. Nick finds the humidor on an unfamiliar table with two stale dry cigarettes inside. Throwing open the French windows of the drawing-room they sit smoking out into the darkness.

"You ought to go away. It's pretty certain they'll trace your car."

"Go away now, old sport?"

"Go to Atlantic City for a week, or up to Montreal."

He shakes his head, clutching at some last hope.

She was the first 'nice' girl he had ever known. In various unrevealed capacities he had come in contact with such people but always with indiscernible barbed wire between. He found her excitingly desirable. He went to her house, at first with other officers from Camp Taylor, then alone. It amazed him -- he had never been in such a beautiful house before. But what gave it an air of breathless intensity was that she lived there -- it was as casual a thing to her as his tent out at camp was to him. There was a ripe mystery about it, a hint of bedrooms upstairs more beautiful and cool than other bedrooms, of gay and radiant activities taking place through its corridors and of romances that were not musty and laid away already in lavender but fresh and breathing.

He might have despised himself, for he had certainly taken her under false pretenses. I don't mean that he had traded on his phantom millions, but he had deliberately given her a sense of security; he let her believe that he was a person from much the same stratum as herself -- that he was fully able to take care of her. As a matter of fact he had no such facilities -- he had no comfortable family standing behind him and he was liable at the whim of an impersonal government to be blown anywhere about the world.

"I can't describe to you how surprised I was to find out I loved her, old sport. I even hoped for a while that she'd throw me over, but she didn't, because she was in love with me too. She thought I knew a lot because I knew different things from her... "

He did extraordinarily well in the war. He was a captain before he went to the front and following the Argonne battles he got his majority and the command of the divisional machine guns. After the Armistice he tried frantically to get home but some complication or misunderstanding sent him to Oxford instead. He was worried now -- there was a quality of nervous despair in Daisy's letters. She didn't see why he couldn't come. She was feeling the pressure of the world outside and she wanted to see him and feel his presence beside her and be reassured that she was doing the right thing after all.

For she was young and her artificial world was redolent of orchids

and pleasant, cheerful snobbery and orchestras which set the rhythm of the year, summing up the sadness and suggestiveness of life in new tunes. The letter reached Gatsby while he was still at Oxford.

It's dawn now on Long Island and Gatsby and Nick go about opening the rest of the windows downstairs, filling the house with grey turning, gold turning light. The shadow of a tree falls abruptly across the dew and ghostly birds begin to sing among the blue leaves. There is a slow pleasant movement in the air, scarcely a wind, promising a cool lovely day.

"I don't think she ever loved him."

Gatsby turns around from a window and looks Nick challengingly.

"She was very excited this afternoon, old sport. He told her those things in a way that frightened her -- that made it look as if I was some kind of cheap sharper. And the result was she hardly knew what she was saying."

He sits down.

"Of course she might have loved him, just for a minute, when they were first married -- and loved me more even then, do you see?"

He looks at Nick.

"In any case, it was just personal."

He came back from France when Tom and Daisy were still on their wedding trip, and made a miserable but irresistible journey to Louisville on the last of his army pay. He stayed there a week, walking the streets where their footsteps had clicked together and revisiting the out-of-the-way places to which they had driven in her white car.

He left on the day-coach sitting away from the sun which, as it sank lower, seemed to spread itself in benediction over the vanishing city where she had drawn her breath. He stretched out his hand desperately as if to snatch only a wisp of air, to save a fragment. But it was all going by too fast and he knew that he had lost that part of it, the freshest and the best, forever.

It's nine o'clock when they finish breakfast and go out on the porch. The night had made a sharp difference in the weather and there's an autumn flavor in the air. The gardener, the last of Gatsby's former servants, comes to the foot of the steps.

"I'm going to drain the pool today, Mr. Gatsby. Leaves'll start falling pretty soon and then there's always trouble with the pipes."

"Don't do it today,"

Gatsby apologizes to Nick.

"You know, old sport, I've never used that pool all summer?"

Nick looks at his watch and stands up.

"Twelve minutes to my train."

I didn't want to go to the city. I didn't want to leave Gatsby. I missed that train, and then another, before I could get myself away.

"I'll call you up."

"Do, old sport."

"I'll call you about noon."

They walk slowly down the steps. Gatsby looks at Nick anxiously.

"I suppose Daisy'll call too."

"I suppose so."

"Well -- goodbye."

They shook hands and Nick leaves. Just before the hedge he turns around and shouts across the lawn.

"They're a rotten crowd. "You're worth the whole damn bunch put together."

First Gatsby nods politely, and then his face breaks into that radiant and understanding smile. His gorgeous pink rag of a suit makes a bright spot of color against the white steps.

"Goodbye. I enjoyed breakfast, Gatsby."

Just before noon the phone wakes Nick who has fallen asleep in his swivel-chair at Probity Trust. It is Jordan Baker and her voice seems harsh and dry.

"I've left Daisy's house. I'm at Hempstead and I'm going down to Southampton this afternoon."

Jordan pauses.

"You weren't so nice to me last night."

"How could it have mattered?"

Silence for a moment.

"However -- I want to see you."

"I want to see you too."

"Suppose I don't go to Southampton, and come into town this afternoon?"

"No -- I don't think this afternoon."

"Very well."

"It's impossible this afternoon. Various -- "

A sharp click ends the conversation.

Nick calls Gatsby's house a few minutes later, but the line is busy. He tries four times, and finally an exasperated central tells him the wire is being kept open for long distance from Detroit.

Taking out his time-table he draws a small circle around the three-fifty train. Then leans back in his chair and tries to think. It is just noon.

Until long after midnight a changing crowd lapped up against the front of the garage while George Wilson rocked himself back and forth on the couch inside. For a while the door of the office was open and everyone who came into the garage glanced irresistibly through it. Finally someone said it was a shame and closed the door. Michaelis stayed there alone with Wilson until dawn.

About three o'clock Wilson grew quieter and began to talk about the yellow car. He announced that he had a way of finding out whom the yellow car belonged to, and then he blurted out that a couple of months ago his wife had come from the city with her face bruised and her nose swollen.

Michaelis didn't like to go into the garage because the work bench was stained where the body had been lying so he moved uncomfortably around the office -- he knew every object in it before morning -- and from time to time sat down beside Wilson trying to keep him more quiet.

Wilson told him to look in the drawer. Michaelis opened the drawer nearest his hand. There was nothing in it but a small expensive dog leash made of leather and braided silver. It was apparently new.

Michaelis didn't see anything odd in that and he gave Wilson a dozen reasons why his wife might have bought the dog leash. But conceivably Wilson had heard some of these same explanations before, from Myrtle, because he began saying "Oh, my God!" again in a whisper -- his comforter left several explanations in the air.

"Then he killed her," says Wilson. "He murdered her."

Michaelis told him it was an accident. Wilson shook his head. His eyes narrowed and his mouth widened slightly and he said it was the man in that car she had ran out to speak to and that he wouldn't stop.

Michaelis had seen this too but it hadn't occurred to him that there was any special significance in it. He believed that Mrs. Wilson had been running away from her husband, rather than trying to stop any particular car.

With an effort Wilson got up and walked to the rear window and leaned with his face pressed against it, " -- and I said 'God knows what you've been doing, everything you've been doing. You may fool me but you can't fool God!' "

Standing behind him Michaelis saw with a shock that he was looking at the eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg which had just emerged pale and enormous from the dissolving night.

"God sees everything," repeated Wilson nodding into the twilight.

Michaelis assured him it's just an advertisement. Something made him turn away from the window and look back into the room. And when he looked back, Wilson was gone.

At two o'clock Gatsby puts on his bathing suit and leaves word with the butler that if any one phones word is to be brought to him at the pool.

He stops at the garage for a green pneumatic mattress that had amused his guests during the summer, and the chauffeur helps him pump it up. Then he gives instructions that the open car isn't to be taken out under any circumstances -- strange because the front right fender needs repair.

Gatsby shoulders the mattress and starts for the pool. He stops and shifts it a little, and the chauffeur asks him if he needs help, but he shakes his head and in a moment disappears among the yellowing trees.

No one hears the shots.

I drove from the station directly to Gatsby's house and my rushing anxiously up the front steps was the first thing that alarmed any one.

Nick, the chauffeur, butler, gardener hurry down to the pool.

There is a faint, barely perceptible movement of the water as the fresh flow from one end urges its way toward the drain at the other. With little ripples that are hardly the shadows of waves, the laden mattress moves irregularly down the pool. A small gust of wind revolves it slowly, tracing, like the leg of compass, a thin red circle in the water.

It is after they lift Gatsby towards the house that the gardener sees Wilson's body a little way off in the grass.

## Chapter 9

I called up Daisy half an hour after we found him, called her instinctively and without hesitation. But she and Tom had gone away early that afternoon, and taken baggage with them.

"Left no address?"

"No."

"Say when they'd be back?"

"No."

"Any idea where they are? How I could reach them?"

"I don't know. Can't say."

I wanted to get somebody for him. I wanted to go into the room where he lay and reassure him: "I'll get somebody for you, Gatsby. Don't worry. Just trust me and I'll get somebody for you -- "

The drawing room fills with chance visitors, official people who draw back the sheet and look at Gatsby with unmoved eyes. Police and photographers and newspaper men drill in and out of Gatsby's front door.

Some one starts to ask Nick questions but he breaks away and going upstairs looks hastily through the unlocked parts of his desk. But there is nothing -- only the picture of Dan Cody, a token of forgotten violence staring down from the wall.

Next morning I sent the butler to New York with a letter to Wolfshiem which asked for information and urged him to come out on the next train. That request seemed superfluous when I wrote it. I was sure he'd start when he saw the newspapers, just as I was sure there'd be a wire from Daisy before noon -- but neither a wire nor Mr. Wolfshiem arrived, no one arrived except more police and photographers and newspaper men.

The butler brings back Wolfshiem's answer and hands it to Nick.

'Dear Mr. Carraway. This has been one of the most terrible shocks of my life to me I hardly can believe it that it is true at all. Such a mad act as that man did should make us all think. I cannot come down now as I am tied up in some very important business and cannot get mixed up in this thing now. If there is anything I can do a little later let me know in a letter by Edgar. I hardly know where I am when I hear about a thing like this and am completely knocked down and out.

Yours truly  
Meyer Wolshiem

Let me know about the funeral etc do not know his family at all.'

When the phone rang that afternoon and Long Distance said Chicago was calling I thought it would be Daisy at last.

"This is Slagle speaking... "

"Yes?"

"Hell of a note, isn't it? Get my wire?"

"There haven't been any wires."

"Young Parke's in trouble. They picked him up when he handed the bonds over the counter. They got a circular from New York giving 'em the numbers just five minutes before. What d'you know about that, hey? You never can tell in these hick towns -- "

"Hello! Look here -- this isn't Mr. Gatsby. Mr. Gatsby's dead."

There is a long silence on the other end of the wire, followed by an exclamation and a quick squawk as the connection is broken.

I think it was on the third day that a telegram signed Henry C. Gatz arrived from a town in Minnesota. It said only that the sender was leaving immediately and to postpone the funeral until he came.

Gatsby's father is a solemn old man very helpless and dismayed, bundled up in a long cheap ulster against the warm September day. Nick takes the worn bag and umbrella from his hands. He is on the point of collapse so Nick takes him into the music room and makes him sit down while he sends for something to eat. But he doesn't eat and the glass of milk spills from his trembling hand.

"I saw it in the Chicago newspaper. It was all in the Chicago newspaper. I started right away."

"I didn't know how to reach you."

His eyes, seeing nothing, move ceaselessly about the room.

"It was a mad man. He must have been mad."

"Wouldn't you like some coffee?"

"I don't want anything. I'm all right now, Mr. -- "

"Carraway."

"Well, I'm all right now. Where have they got Jimmy?"

Nick takes him into the drawing-room, where his son lies, and leaves him there. Some little boys have come up on the steps and are looking into the hall.

After a little while Mr. Gatz opens the door and comes out, his mouth ajar, his face flushed slightly, his eyes leaking isolated tears. He has reached an age where death no longer has the quality of ghastly surprise, and when he looks around him now for the first time and saw the height and splendor of the hall and the great rooms opening out from it into other rooms his grief begins to mix with an awed pride.

Nick helps him to a bedroom upstairs. While he takes off his coat and vest Nick tells him that all arrangements have been deferred until he came.

"I didn't know what you'd want, Mr. Gatsby -- "

"Gatz is my name."

" -- Mr. Gatz. I thought you might want to take the body west."

He shakes his head.

"Jimmy always liked it better down East. He rose up to his position in the East. Were you a friend of my boy's, Mr. -- ?"

"We were close friends."

"He had a big future before him, you know. He was only a young man but he had a lot of brain power here."

He touches his head impressively and Nick nods.

"If he'd of lived he'd of been a great man. A man like James J. Hill. He'd of helped build up the country."

Nick looks uncomfortable.

"That's true."

Mr. Gatz fumbles at the embroidered coverlet, trying to take it from the bed, and lies down stiffly -- and closes his eyes.

That night an obviously frightened person called up and demanded to know who I was before he would give his name.

"This is Mr. Carraway" I said.

"Oh -- This is Klipspringer."

"The funeral's tomorrow. Three o'clock, here at the house. I wish you'd tell anybody who'd be interested."

"Oh, I will. Of course I'm not likely to see anybody, but if I do."

"Of course you'll be there yourself."

"Well, I'll certainly try. What I called up about is -- "

"Wait a minute. How about saying you'll come?"

"Well, the fact is -- the truth of the matter is that I'm staying with some people up here in Greenwich and they rather expect me to be with them tomorrow. In fact there's a sort of picnic or something. Of course I'll do my very best to get away."

Nick blinks in disbelief.

"What I called up about was a pair of shoes I left there. I wonder if it'd be too much trouble to have the butler send them on. You see they're tennis shoes and I'm sort of helpless without them. My address is care of B. F. -- "

Nick hangs up the receiver.

The morning of the funeral I went up to New York to see Meyer Wolfshiem. I couldn't seem to reach him any other way.

Nick pushes open a door marked "The Swastika Holding Company" and at first there doesn't seem to be any one inside. But when he shouts "Hello" several times in vain an argument broke out behind a partition and a lovely Jewess appears at an interior door and scrutinized him with black hostile eyes.

"Nobody's in. Mr. Wolfshiem's gone to Chicago."

Someone begins to whistle 'The Rosary', tunelessly, inside.

"Please say that Mr. Carraway wants to see him."

"I can't get him back from Chicago, can I?"

Wolfshiem's voice calls from the other side of the door.

"Stella!"

"Leave your name on the desk. I'll give it to him when he gets back."

"But I know he's there."

She takes a step towards him and begins to slide her hands indignantly up and down her hips.

"You young men think you can force your way in here any time. We're getting sickantired of it. When I say he's in Chicago, he's in Chicago."

Nick mentions Gatsby.

"Oh -- h!"

She looks him over again.

"Will you just -- what was your name?"

She vanishes. In a moment Meyer Wolfshiem stands solemnly in the doorway, holding out both hands. He draws him into his office, remarking in a reverent voice that it is a sad time for all of us, and offers him a cigar.

"My memory goes back to when I first met him. A young major just out of the army and covered over with medals he got in the war. He was so hard up he had to keep on wearing his uniform because he couldn't buy some regular clothes. First time I saw him was when he come into Winebrenner's poolroom at Forty-third Street and asked for a job. He hadn't eat anything for a couple of days. 'Come on have some lunch with me,' I sid. He ate more than four dollars' worth of food in half an hour."

"Did you start him in business?"

"Start him! I made him."

"Oh."

"I raised him up out of nothing, right out of the gutter. I saw right away he was a fine appearing, gentlemanly young man, and when he told me he was an Oggsford I knew I could use him good. I got him to join up in the American Legion and he used to stand high there. Right off he did some work for a client of mine up to Albany. We were so thick like that in everything -- "

Wolfshiem holds up two bulbous fingers.

" -- always together."

Nick wonders if this partnership had included the World's Series transaction in 1919.

"Now he's dead. You were his closest friend, so I know you'll want to come to his funeral this afternoon."

"I'd like to come."

"Well, come then."

The hair in his nostrils quiver slightly and as he shakes his head his eyes fill with tears.

"I can't do it -- I can't get mixed up in it."

"There's nothing to get mixed up in. It's all over now."

"When a man gets killed I never like to get mixed up in it in any way. I keep out. When I was a young man it was different -- if a friend of mine died, no matter how, I stuck with them to the end. You may think that's sentimental but I mean it -- to the bitter end."

Nick sees he is determined not to come, so he stands up.

"Are you a college man?"

Wolfshiem nods and shakes his hand.

"Let us learn to show our friendship for a man when he is alive and not after he is dead. After that my own rule is to let everything alone."

When Nick leaves his office the sky has turned dark.

Nick gets back to West Egg in a drizzle. After changing his clothes he goes next door and finds Mr. Gatz walking up and down excitedly in the hall. His pride in his son and in his son's possessions is continually increasing.

He takes out his wallet with trembling fingers.

"Jimmy sent me this picture. Look there."

It was a black and white photograph of the house, cracked in the corners and dirty with many hands. He points out every detail to Nick eagerly, and then seeks admiration from his eyes. He has shown it so often that it is more real to him now than the house itself.

"Jimmy sent it to me. I think it's a very pretty picture. It shows up well."

"Very well. Had you seen him lately?"

"He come out to see me two years ago and bought me the house I live in now. He knew he had a big future in front of him. And ever since he made a success he was very generous with me."

He seems reluctant to put away the picture, holds it for another minute, lingeringly, before Nick's eyes. Then he returns the wallet and pulls from his pocket a ragged old copy of a book called "Hopalong Cassidy."

"Look here, this is a book he had when he was a boy. It just shows you."

He opens it at the back cover and turns it around for Nick to see. On the last fly-leaf was printed the word 'SCHEDULE', and the date 'September 12th, 1906' and underneath:

Rise from bed . . . . .	6.00	A.M.
Dumbbell exercise and wall-scaling . . . . .	6.15-6.30	"
Study electricity, etc . . . . .	7.15-8.15	"
Work . . . . .	8.30-4.30	P.M.
Baseball and sports . . . . .	4.30-5.00	"
Practice elocution, poise and how to attain it	5.00-6.00	"
Study needed inventions . . . . .	7.00-9.00	"

#### GENERAL RESOLVES

No wasting time at Shafter's or [a name, indecipherable]  
 No more smokeing or chewing  
 Bath every other day  
 Read one improving book or magazine per week  
 Save \$5.00 [crossed out] \$3.00 per week  
 Be better to parents

"I come across this book by accident. It just shows you, don't it?"

"It just shows you."

"Jimmy was bound to get ahead. He always had some resolves like this or something. Do you notice what he's got about improving his mind? He was always great for that. He told me I et like a hog once and I beat him for it."

He is reluctant to close the book, reading each item aloud and

then looking eagerly at Nick.

A little before three the Lutheran minister arrives from Flushing. Nick begins to look involuntarily out the windows for other cars. So does Gatsby's father. And as the time passes and the servants come in and stand waiting in the hall, his eyes begin to blink anxiously and he speaks of the rain in a worried uncertain way. The minister glances several times at his watch so Nick takes him aside and asks him to wait for half an hour. But it's no use. Nobody comes.

About five o'clock a procession of three cars reaches the cemetery and stops in a thick drizzle beside the gate -- first a motor hearse, horribly black and wet, then Mr. Gatz and the minister and Nick in the limousine, and, a little later, four or five servants and the postman from West Egg in Gatsby's station wagon, all wet to the skin.

As they start through the gate into the cemetery Nick hears a car stop and then the sound of someone splashing after them over the soggy ground. Nick looks around. It's the man with owl-eyed glasses whom he had found marveling over Gatsby's books in the library one night three months before.

The rain pours down his thick glasses and he takes them off and wipes them to see the protecting canvas unroll from Gatsby's grave.

Someone murmurs dimly.

"Blessed are the dead that the rain falls on."

Owl-Eyes speaks in a brave voice.

"Amen to that."

They straggle down quickly through the rain to the cars. Owl-Eyes speaks to Nick by the gate.

"I couldn't get to the house."

"Neither could anybody else."

"Go on! Why, my God! they used to go there by the hundreds."

He takes off his glasses and wipes them again outside and in.

"The poor son-of-a-bitch."

One of my most vivid memories is of coming back west from prep school and later from college at Christmas time. Those who went farther than Chicago would gather in the old dim Union Station at six o'clock of a December evening with a few Chicago friends already caught up into their own holiday gayeties to bid them a hasty goodbye. I remember the fur coats of the girls returning from Miss This or That's and the chatter of frozen breath and the hands waving overhead.

When we pulled out into the winter night and the real snow, our snow, began to stretch out beside us and twinkle against the windows, and the dim lights of small Wisconsin stations moved by, a sharp wild brace came suddenly into the air. We drew in deep breaths of it as we walked back from dinner through the cold vestibules, unutterably aware of our identity with this country for one strange hour before we melted indistinguishably into it again.

That's my middle west -- not the wheat or the prairies or the lost Swede towns but the thrilling, returning trains of my youth and the street lamps and sleigh bells in the frosty dark and the shadows of holly wreaths thrown by lighted windows on the snow. I am part of that, a little solemn with the feel of those long winters. I see now that this has been a story of the West, after all -- Tom and Gatsby, Daisy and Jordan and I, were all Westerners, and perhaps we possessed some deficiency in common which made us subtly unadaptable to Eastern life.

After Gatsby's death the East was haunted for me, distorted beyond my eyes' power of correction. So when the blue smoke of brittle leaves was in the air and the wind blew the wet laundry stiff on the line I decided to come back home.

There was one thing to be done before I left, an awkward, unpleasant thing that perhaps had better have been let alone.

Jordan Baker lies perfectly still listening in a big chair. She is dressed to play golf looks like a good illustration, her chin raised a little, jauntily, her hair the color of an autumn leaf, her face the same brown tint as the fingerless glove on her knee.

I talked over and around what had happened to us together and what had happened afterward to me. She told me she was engaged to another man. I pretended to be surprised. For just a minute I wondered if I wasn't making a mistake, then I got up to say goodbye.

"Nevertheless you did throw me over. You threw me over on the telephone. I don't give a damn about you now but it was a new experience for me and I felt a little dizzy for a while."

They shake hands.

"Oh, and do you remember -- a conversation we had once about driving a car?"

"Why -- not exactly."

"You said a bad driver was only safe until she met another bad driver? Well, I met another bad driver, didn't I? I mean it was careless of me to make such a wrong guess. I thought you were rather an honest, straightforward person. I thought it was your secret pride."

"I'm thirty. I'm five years too old to lie to myself and call it honor."

She doesn't answer. Angry, and half in love with her, and tremendously sorry, Nick turns away.

One afternoon late in October Nick sees Tom Buchanan. He is walking ahead of him along Fifth Avenue in his alert, aggressive way, his hands out a little from his body as if to fight off interference, his head moving sharply here and there, adapting itself to his restless eyes.

Just as Nick slows up to avoid overtaking him he stops and begins frowning into the windows of a jewelry store. Suddenly he see Nick and walks back holding out his hand.

"What's the matter, Nick? Do you object to shaking hands with me?"

"Yes. You know what I think of you."

"You're crazy, Nick. Crazy as hell. I don't know what's the matter with you."

"Tom, what did you say to Wilson that afternoon?"

He stares at Nick without a word. Nick starts to turn away but he takes a step after him and grabs his arm.

"I told him the truth. He came to the door while we were getting ready to leave and when I sent down word that we weren't in he tried to force his way upstairs. He was crazy enough to kill me if I hadn't told him who owned the car. His hand was on a revolver in his pocket every minute he was in the house -- "

He stands back, defiant.

"What if I did tell him? That fellow had it coming to him. He threw dust into your eyes just like he did in Daisy's but he was a tough one. He ran over Myrtle like you'd run over a dog and never even stopped his car."

There was nothing I could say, except the one unutterable fact that it wasn't true.

"And if you think I didn't have my share of suffering -- look here, when I went to give up that flat and saw that damn box of dog biscuits sitting there on the sideboard I sat down and cried like a baby. By God it was awful -- "

They were careless people, Tom and Daisy -- they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money or their vast carelessness or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made.

Nick shakes hands with him. Then Tom goes into the jewelry store to buy a pearl necklace -- or perhaps only a pair of cuff buttons -- and is rid of Nick's provincial squeamishness forever.

On the last night, with my trunk packed and my car sold to the grocer, I went over and looked at that huge incoherent failure of a house once more.

It was still empty -- the grass on his lawn had grown as long as mine.

On the white steps an obscene word, scrawled by some boy with a piece of brick, stands out clearly in the moonlight. Nick erases it by drawing his shoe raspily along the stone. Then he wanders down to the beach and sprawls out on the sand.

Most of the big shore places are closed now and there are hardly any lights except the shadowy, moving glow of a ferryboat across the Sound.

And as the moon rose higher the inessential houses begin to melt away until gradually I became aware of the old island here that flowered once for Dutch sailors' eyes. Its vanished trees, the trees that had made way for Gatsby's house, had once pandered in whispers to the last and greatest of all human dreams; for a transitory enchanted moment man must have held his breath in the presence of this continent, face to face for the last time in history with something commensurate to his capacity for wonder.

And as I sat there brooding on the old, unknown world, I thought of Gatsby's wonder when he first picked out the green light at the end of Daisy's dock. He had come a long way to this blue lawn and his dream must have seemed so close that he could hardly fail to grasp it. He did not know that it was already behind him, somewhere back in that vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.

Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter -- tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther...  
And one fine morning --

Fade to black.

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past