

NICK

(to audience)

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some advice that I've been turning over in my mind ever since. "Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone," he told me, "just remember that all the people in this world haven't had the advantages that you've had." 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.

(he looks at the MAN)

Gatsby, the man who gives his name to this story, represented everything for which I had an unaffected scorn. But if personality is an unbroken series of successful gestures, then there was something ... gorgeous about him ... some heightened sensitivity to the promises of life. He had an extraordinary gift for hope, a romantic readiness such as I have never found in any other person ... and which it is not likely I shall ever find again.

Daisy monologue

GATSBY

I've even 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 pulls shirts off the racks to show her. She takes them and holds them close.

DAISY

They're such beautiful shirts. It makes me sad because I've never seen such ... such beautiful shirts before ... If only it were possible to reverse time – erase it! – just erase it and begin again – do you think that's possible, Jay? – to just erase time as if it had never happened? – you said you'd come back from no matter where you were – and here you are – here you are, gleaming like silver! – and I said I'd be waiting – I did say that, didn't I, Jay? – I did mean it, didn't I? – “Darling.” That's how you said it, “Darling.” – remember? – my hair was damp that night – yes! – and you! – always so handsome in your uniform – my face nestled deep in the space between your ear and your stiff Army collar, smelling like new goods – the garden smelling of wisteria and pine forests – and I thought you the sweetest person in the whole world – the night soft and gray and the trees feathery in the lamp light – and the music – music everywhere! – filling the pine forests fragrant with our future – can't we get it back some way, even by imagining? – and when I took off my hat that October night and you kissed me, I meant what I said – I did, Jay – we were gold – and happy – weren't we! – gold and happy and — it was so much nicer a long time ago when we had each other and the space about the world was warm and you trusted me with the dearest heart of all and it's so much more than anybody else in all the world has *ever had!*

JORDAN

Well, one night I'm walking by her house, this was nineteen-seventeen, and she's on the porch dancing with a lieutenant I'd never seen before. They were so engrossed in each other that they didn't see me, and he was looking at her in a way that every young girl wants to be looked at. And because it seemed so romantic to me I have remembered the incident ever since. His name was Jay Gatsby —

~~DAISY~~

~~(Overlapping)~~

~~Why Lieutenant Gatsby!~~

JORDAN

and I didn't lay eyes on him again for over four years. Even after I'd met him at one of his parties I didn't realize it was the same man. By the next year, I began to play in tournaments, so I didn't see Daisy very often, but there were all these wild rumors about her —

Gatsby monologue

NICK

~~So it was from him that you inherited your money.~~

GATSBY

Twenty-five thousand. But I never got it. I was young then and I still don't know exactly how they cheated me, but Ella Kaye got it all. Let's just call it my introduction to greed, old sport, and how the rich get richer. That was in the spring of nineteen-thirteen. I didn't have any luck for awhile after that ... I was *glad* when the war came. For one thing I was dead broke. I got into the first officers' camp, and they gave me a commission as first lieutenant. I felt exhilarated, like a kid again. I felt as if I could do anything – as if something absolutely wonderful was going to happen to me. That's when I met Daisy. I can't describe to you how surprised I was to find out I loved her. 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 ... Well, there I was, way off my ambitions, getting deeper in love every minute, and all of a sudden I didn't care. What was the use of doing great things if I could have a better time telling her what I was *going* to do?

He looks out across the bay.

I don't think she ever loved him. You must remember, she was very excited yesterday. 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 ... Of course, she might have loved him, just for a minute, when they were first married – but she loved me more, even then, do you see?