

## Nick Carraway

### Quote 1

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. (4.135)

Money might not make you happy, but there's some consolation in a \$350K string of pearls. If you have to be depressed, you might as well be depressed on a yacht, right?

## Daisy Buchanan

### Quote 2

"Here, deares'." She groped around in a waste-basket she had with her on the bed and pulled out the string of pearls. "Take 'em down-stairs and give 'em back to whoever they belong to. Tell 'em all Daisy's change' her mind. Say: 'Daisy's change' her mine!" (4.129)

Talk about cold feet. Daisy knows that the fabulously expensive string of pearls that Tom gave her is about to become a chain. When she's drunk, she wants to change her mind and marry the man she truly loves. In the cold and sober (and probably a little hungover) light of day, however, she does what she was born to do: marry the rich guy.

### Quote 3

"When I said you were a 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." (4.152)

Love? Or stalker-ish obsession? Do you think he has some creepy **stalker wall** in a secret room of his house? We wouldn't be surprised.

## Nick Carraway

### Quote 4

"It was a strange coincidence," I said.

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

"Why not?"

"Gatsby bought that house so that Daisy would be just across the bay." (4.137-140)

This is the rich-people equivalent of getting your contact in the office to rearrange the lockers so you can be near your crush. Not so much coincidence as, yep, creepy and stalker-ish. Or beautifully romantic. Your pick.

## Nick Carraway

### Quote 5

He was balancing himself on the dashboard of his car with that resourcefulness of

movement that is so peculiarly American—that comes, I suppose, with the absence of lifting work or rigid sitting in youth and, even more, with the formless grace of our nervous, sporadic games. This quality was continually breaking through his punctilious manner in the shape of restlessness.

He was never quite still; there was always a tapping foot somewhere or the impatient opening and closing of a hand. (4.12-13)

Gatsby is one version of America—the resourceful, athletic, restless young nation striving to make itself better. The problem is, America as Nick sees it isn't like that anymore. It's beaten down, like George Wilson; or it's rich and careless, like Tom. Does that make Nick the happy (or unhappy) medium?

### Nick Carraway

#### Quote 6

The idea staggered me. I remembered, of course, that the World's Series had been fixed in 1919, but if I had thought of it at all I would have thought of it as a thing that merely happened, the end of some inevitable chain. It never occurred to me that one man could start to play with the faith of fifty million people – with the single-mindedness of a burglar blowing a safe. (4.113)

Meyer Wolfsheim fixed the World Series, an enormous crime that Nick thinks is like "a burglar blowing a safe." But the burglar gets caught; Wolfsheim uses his wealth and underworld connections to stay squeaky clean. Apparently you don't have to be high class to benefit from your wealth.

### Nick Carraway

#### Quote 7

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. (4.145)

This "strangest voice" tips us off that Gatsby is more than some dude Daisy used to flirt with. She had some real feelings for him—and those feelings of the past are about to burst into the present.

### Nick Carraway

#### Quote 8

"It was a strange coincidence," I said.

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

"Why not?"

"Gatsby bought that house so that Daisy would be just across the bay." (4.147-151)

Gatsby's entire present existence—the house, the money, the pink suits—is constructed so Daisy will notice him. It may look like he's living for the moment, with his flashy parties and careless wealth, but he's actually stuck in the past.

### Nick Carraway

#### Quote 9

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. (4.6)

There's being dissatisfied with your clothes or your haircut, and then there's being dissatisfied with your entire existence. James Gatz is dissatisfied with his whole being, and we're pretty sure this isn't going to end well.

### Nick Carraway

#### Quote 10

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. (4.7)

James Gatz isn't just embarrassed of his parents like a normal teen; he seems to have fantasies of having different parents entirely. Like secretly being a prince—or belonging to a family that owns polo horses?

### Nick Carraway

#### Quote 11

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. (4.143)

Girls who go with Tom seem to get in trouble, whether it's Daisy's bruised fingers, this girl's broken arm, or Myrtle's mutilated chest. Yeah, we'll be avoiding this guy.