

The Great Gatsby

Chapter 9 Summary, Courtesy of Shmoop.com

- After dealing with police, photographers, and rubberneckers, [Nick](#) tries to get in touch with [Daisy](#). He finds that the Buchanans have gone and left no forwarding address.
- Nick tries to track down friends and family for Gatsby, but no one wants to come and pay their respects.
- There's a mysterious phone call at Gatsby's house that is obviously intended for Gatsby; it confirms that Jay was indeed involved in illegalities.
- Nick is able to delay the funeral, however, until Gatsby's father arrives.
- Mr. Gatz (the father) has typical parental misconceptions; he believes his boy was going to help "build up the country," had he lived.
- A man who knew Gatsby calls. He's too busy to come to the funeral, but he wants a pair of shoes back that he left at the house.
- We feel good about the fact that Nick hangs up on him.
- Nick begins to feel "shame" for Gatsby, who was so generous to so many people but ultimately had [only one friend](#) – Nick.
- Nick can't even get Gatsby's business partner, [Meyer Wolfsheim](#), to show up.
- From Gatsby's father, Nick learns how Gatsby wanted always to improve himself as a child – how he wanted to rise above the life of the poor, [uneducated family](#) into which he was born.
- He even wrote out little schedules and "resolves" for himself like [another young American upstart](#).
- When we finally get to the funeral, it's a terribly rainy day.
- One other person does show up. Three guesses who it is?
- Fine, we'll just tell you. It's the man with [owl-eyed glasses](#).
- He agrees that it's horrible how hundreds of people came to Gatsby's parties but none came to his funeral.
- Nick is reminded of waiting in train stations on holiday vacations during his youth.
- He goes on about the train stations in the Midwest, and concludes that he and the whole crowd – [Daisy, Tom, Jordan, Gatsby](#) – were all westerners who just couldn't cut it in the East.
- He has a vision of something out of an El Greco painting – a drunken woman in white being carried on a stretcher, a woman whose name no one knows or cares about. Those carrying her then bring her into the wrong house.

- After this little vision, Nick decides to go back home. He's had enough of this East business.
- But before he goes, he meets up with Jordan, who accuses him of being "dishonest" after all. She says she trusted him, but it turned out he was as "careless" a driver as she is.
- Nick's cryptic response? "I'm thirty. I'm five years too old to lie to myself and call it honor." He then remarks that he's "half in love with her" and "tremendously sorry" when he leaves.

- Some time later (it seems he's taking it slow with the moving back home bit), Nick runs into Tom Buchanan.
 - Tom reveals that he's the one who told Mr. Wilson that the car belonged to Gatsby.
 - Nick can't bring himself to utter the truth – that Daisy was the one driving. He doesn't even know anymore whom to believe.
 - In the end, Nick realizes that Tom and Daisy were "careless people," people who made messes and then left others to clean them up.
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- Outside of Gatsby's large, empty house, Nick wanders the "blue lawn" and gazes at the "green light" across the bay – the light on Daisy's house.
 - He thinks of what the island must have looked like years ago to the first sailors that came to "the new world."
 - Gatsby was trying to run towards his dream, without realizing it was in the past behind him.
 - We end with one of the most famous passages in American literature: "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 – to-morrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther...And one fine morning--So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past" (9.151).