

Gatsby The Great

Hunter Williams 2nd Hour

The biggest goal shared between everyone in the world is the different variations of the American Dream. The American Dream is the one big goal we all have in our life that would make life perfect. The Great Gatsby shows that no matter how hard we try to strive and prosper we cannot achieve the American Dream of a perfect life. The relationship between the famed Jay Gatsby and the beautiful golden girl, Daisy Buchanan, portrays the invalidity of the American Dream in the brilliant eyes of The Great Gatsby's author F. Scott Fitzgerald.

Fitzgerald displayed the corruption in the American Dream through the actions of the famed, yet flawed Jay Gatsby. Jay Gatsby is a character that gained a great fortune after he got back from the war due to the work he did for a man named Meyer Wolfsheim. Together they were business partners in a shady business, no one really knew who they were dealing with and what kind of business they were running. The most anyone knew is that Jay and Meyer bought a series of drug stores and ran them together. With this great fortune that he built up, he bought a house in a particular location that helps describe Gatsby. Gatsby bought a very large house on Long Island, on a little peninsula called West Egg. This shows who he is socially, how he doesn't fit in with the love of his life, Daisy.

Daisy lives on East Egg, another peninsula on Long Island identical to West Egg, but there is a major difference between the two. West Egg holds the people associated as New Money, while the opposition, East Egg houses people of Old Money. New Money is described as someone who has very recently gained a large fortune, these people are usually not very cultured. Meanwhile, Old Money is described as people who are very cultured and have had money for a very long time, passed down from generation to generation. Fitzgerald uses this dichotomy to showcase Gatsby's biggest downfall. Gatsby's lack of social prestige and status that Old Money requires for respect, along with his ignorance to these concepts, ends up costing him his successful acquisition of Daisy and the entire American Dream. Gatsby can see East Egg from his house on West Egg, this was planned by Gatsby.

One night Nick, the narrator of The Great Gatsby, came back from the Buchanan's house, he looked towards the water and noticed that there was a dark figure at the end of Gatsby's dock.

He realized the shadowy figure was Gatsby himself, then he goes on to explain what he saw on the eerie night. "I could have sworn he was trembling. Involuntarily I glanced seaward- and distinguished nothing except a single green light, minute and far away, that might have been the end of a dock"(26). This green light is one of the biggest symbols in the novel The Great Gatsby, the ingenuity that Fitzgerald used while thinking of this is absolutely fantastic. This green light means so much more to Gatsby than just being a source of light. The green light is at the end of a dock of the most important person in Gatsby's life. This light is at the end of Daisy's dock, this is why it means so much to him. Gatsby loved Daisy since the day he met her years and years ago. Yet, she was always just out of his reach. When he was younger he was poor and didn't have the right social status or amount of money to marry her. Then she got married before he could attain his wealth and get back to her side. This is why Gatsby is reaching towards the light, he wants to be close to Daisy and the light is what signifies her. As he reaches out in attempt to touch the light it shows how close he truly is. That small, minute, little green light represents all of Gatsby's hopes and dreams to be with Daisy and achieve the American Dream. At this point in time, Nick doesn't know what this light resembles, but it does suggest that the light signifies a strong meaning to Gatsby. This helps depict that the American Dream can be nearly-at-hand but never achieved because there will always be something, one thing that is in your way. At this point in time for Gatsby, it's the distance between himself and the golden girl.

Fitzgerald shows the reader throughout The Great Gatsby that we cannot have everything. This is displayed through many character's actions and language. This was evident in the scene that Jordan Baker is telling Nick about the night before Daisy married Tom. Nick is Daisy's cousin and close friend; meanwhile, Jordan is also one of Daisy's close friends and she is a professional golfer. During Jordan's explanation she portrays the event that took place that night in Daisy's room. Daisy got very drunk, when Jordan found her she was frantic and carried a bottle of liquor in one hand and a letter in the other. Based on her actions the reader is suppose to assume the letter is from none other than Jay Gatsby. Daisy tells Jordan to give a pearl necklace back to Tom, even though she received it earlier that day and it was valued at three hundred and fifty thousand dollars. The next thing Daisy said was absolutely horrendous and stood out a lot. "Tell em' all Daisy's change' her mine. Say 'Daisy's change' her mine!"(81).

This shows that Daisy isn't truly happy with what she has. Even though Daisy was drunk at the time of this statement, it was her true self and feelings being shown. This shift from herself prior to receiving this letter depicts that she isn't ready to commit to anything and that she needs more time. Unfortunately time is of the essence and she does not get what she wants, true love.

Throughout the novel the reader experiences multiple events in which a character cannot get what he or she truly wants. This conjoins with the bitter truth in the futile efforts towards the achievement of the American Dream.

Actions are more powerful than words; this is shown to be true throughout the story told by Fitzgerald. A great example of this being true is the scene at the hotel room in New York with Tom, Daisy, Jay, Nick, and Jordan. The group met at the Buchanan's residence to eat, this was also supposed to be the time where Daisy would tell Tom she never loved him. Instead Daisy got cold feet and froze up so she suggested to go into town, this is why they end up being in the hotel. Once they arrived Tom started to spit out a multitude of accusations about Gatsby, these were aimed to try to deter Daisy from loving Gatsby. These accusations are another way Fitzgerald delineates the dichotomy between Gatsby and Daisy. This also insights the sudden turn to their relationship and the downfall of Gatsby's American Dream. The more Tom said, the farther Daisy drew away from Gatsby, this caused Jay to get frantic as he noticed what was going on. By the time he tried to calm Daisy down it was too late, she fell back into her own mind and couldn't think straight. At that same moment she broke down and finalized her fate with Gatsby. "Please, Tom! I can't stand this anymore"(142). This symbolizes Daisy breaking down and it sets the mood that she no longer wants to hear anything more, showing she doesn't like it at all. The actions Gatsby had taken to get to where he was in life was his downfall in reaching the American Dream. He had everything other than his true love, which was the key element. If Gatsby was to get his massive fortune the legal way, he may have had a chance at achieving the impossible dream. Daisy would have been more than willing to be with him if he got his money this way, but the fact that he got it illegally just made him a shady figure and undesirable to Daisy. After this encounter in the hotel the possibility of Gatsby reaching his dream is crushed and forever put into an untouchable grave.

No matter what we do, the American Dream is an unaccomplishable task. This is shown once again in The Great Gatsby at the Buchanan's house after the extremely long day being in town at the hotel. So much happened so quickly and it had all taken a huge toll on Gatsby and his dream. He feels as if he is so close to achieving his dream, but he is truly never going to be able to grasp it. The light at the end of Daisy's dock no longer resembles anything to Gatsby, it hasn't since the day she came into his home. Even now when he has reached the source of the light, he still has not accomplished his dream. Nick found Gatsby at the residence watching over Daisy in case Tom decided to get rowdy, then Fitzgerald suggests that he never will accomplish this dream through Nick's thought when he leaves the Buchanan's house that night. "So I walked away and left him standing there- watching over nothing"(153). When Nick says watching over nothing, he is referring to Gatsby's dream. Since the events earlier that day, the flame Gatsby ignited between himself and Daisy was smothered by Tom leaving him with nothing. Gatsby's dream was one of the most defiant to ever be made due to how outlandish it truly was. If it was to work out, everything would have had to connect perfectly. Since Gatsby's dream was so big and defiant it was bound to get destroyed, leaving him to pick up the pieces of what he almost had.

The relationship between the devastated Jay Gatsby and the distraught golden girl, Daisy Buchanan, displays the invalidity of the American Dream in the brilliant eyes of The Great Gatsby's author F. Scott Fitzgerald. Fitzgerald was trying to get the readers to realize that life isn't perfect and it really can't be. No matter what we do or what we have, we cannot get everything. In The Great Gatsby's case, Gatsby couldn't get the girl of his dreams, yet he had more than enough money to purchase just about anything. This is portrayed through every character in The Great Gatsby from Tom to even Nick. They all wanted something, it could've been a dream to come true or to get new materialistic things. No matter what happened they always wanted something else after gaining what was missing before, that is just human nature. As wrote by the great F. Scott Fitzgerald, we must always strive to be perfect; we can't reach perfection, but we will prosper on the road to the American Dream.

