

## Chapter 4

*On Sunday morning while church bells rang in the villages along shore the world and its mistress returned to Gatsby's house and twinkled hilariously on his lawn.*

### Vocabulary:

Choose the word that most closely defines the underlined word in each sentence below.

1. \_\_\_ This quality was continually breaking through his punctilious manner in the shape of restlessness.  
a. traditional b. conventional c. uneasy
2. \_\_\_ “. . . and when the infantry came up at last they found the insignia of three German divisions among the piles of dead.”  
a. sign b. uniform c. emblem
3. \_\_\_ Over the great bridge, . . . with the city rising up across the river in white heaps and sugar lumps all built with a wish out of non-olfactory money.  
a. dirty b. unscented c. new
4. \_\_\_ Gatsby took an arm of each of us . . . whereupon Mr. Wolfsheim swallowed a new sentence he was starting and lapsed into a somnambulatory abstraction.  
a. hypnotized b. drowsed c. sleep-walking
5. \_\_\_ “This is one of his sentimental days. He’s quite a character around New York—a denizen of Broadway.”

**Questions:**

1. List words and phrases used to describe Gatsby's car. What do you think Gatsby's car expresses about him?
2. Paraphrase Gatsby's story about his life.
3. What parts of Gatsby's story sound false to Nick? What does Gatsby show Nick that causes Nick to believe his story—at least in part?
4. List two things associating Meyer Wolfshiem with crime.
5. Summarize Jordan's story about Gatsby and Daisy.
6. Why, according to Jordan, did Gatsby buy his particular house?
7. After hearing Jordan's story, Nick says that Gatsby "came alive to me, delivered suddenly from the womb of his purposeless splendor." What does Nick recognize as the purpose for Gatsby's fine mansion and all his parties?

**Analysis:**

8. What is suggested or implied when the author writes, "On Sunday morning while church bells rang in the villages along shore the world and its mistress returned to Gatsby's house"?

9. About the names on the timetable, Nick says,  
... I can still read the gray names, and they will give you a better impression than my generalities of those who accepted Gatsby's hospitality and paid him the subtle tribute of knowing nothing whatever about him. What is Nick saying, sarcastically, about those who attended Gatsby's parties?
  
10. Look at the list of names on the timetable from the first few pages of Chapter 4. What impression of these people are you given? What about the list influences your impressions?
  
11. *Juxtaposition* is the placing of two ideas side by side so that their closeness suggests a new meaning. For example, following the end of Chapter 1 (Gatsby reaching hopefully toward the green light) with descriptions of the "valley of ashes" at the beginning of Chapter 2 suggests that Gatsby's dream is somehow connected to or will result in ruin. What might Fitzgerald be suggesting by the juxtaposition of "Gatsby's splendid car" being passed by "a dead man . . . in a hearse heaped with blooms"?
  
12. The dead man in the hearse is followed by "more cheerful carriages for friends," and Nick says he is "glad that the sight of Gatsby's splendid car was included in their somber holiday." Do you see any symbolism or foreshadowing in this scene?
  
13. When Jordan tells Nick the story of Daisy and Gatsby, Nick relates that Jordan was "sitting up very straight on a straight chair." Considering that Jordan is earlier characterized by phrases like "lying on the sofa," "languid," "sauntering" what might this suggest about the validity of her story?

14. Compare Gatsby's story about himself with Jordan's story. How well do they fit together? Describe elements of the stories that do or do not fit well.
15. Given the very romantic stories Gatsby and Jordan tell, and the implied incongruities between them, what does the juxtaposition of the scene with Meyer Wolfsheimer imply about Gatsby? How does this scene make you feel about Wolfsheimer?
16. How does Nick's view of Gatsby change over the course of Chapter 4? How has *your* view of Gatsby been affected or changed by this chapter?
17. Think about your friends and acquaintances. Are they more like those described in the first group of verses above, or the second? Do they try to build each other up, or do they more often lie and cause dissension? Why do you think someone would choose to associate with a group like Gatsby's instead of one that fits the first set of verses?

## **Chapter 5**

*There must have been some moments even that afternoon when Daisy tumbled short of his dreams—not through her own fault but because of the colossal vitality of his illusion. It had gone beyond her, beyond everything. . . . No amount of fire or freshness can challenge what a man will store up in his ghostly heart.*

### **Vocabulary:**

Explain the meaning of the underlined word in each sentence below based on how that word is used in the sentence. You may need to use a dictionary.

1. Two o'clock and the whole corner of the peninsula was blazing with light which fell unreal on the shrubbery and made thin elongating glints upon the roadside wires.
2. At first I thought it was another party, a wild rout that had resolved itself into "hide-and-  
go-seek" or "sardines-in-the-box" with all the house thrown open to the game.
3. . . . the sound of a motor turning into my lane. We both jumped up and, a lit- tle harrowed  
myself, I went into the yard.
4. His head leaned back so far that it rested against the face of a defunct mantel-  
piece clock  
. . .
5. They were sitting at either end of the couch looking at each other as if some question had  
been asked or was in the air, and every vestige of embarrassment was gone.

**Questions:**

1. How and why does Gatsby offer to "help" Nick? Why does Nick say that "under different  
circumstances that conversation might have been one of the crises of my life"?
2. What weaknesses regarding Gatsby's story about his life are suggested in this chapter?
3. How does Daisy act when she meets Gatsby at Nick's house? How does Gatsby act?
4. How does Daisy act at Gatsby's mansion?
5. How, according to Nick, does Gatsby revalue "everything in his house."

6. What three “states” does Gatsby go through while he is with Daisy?

**Analysis:**

7. What is the history behind Gatsby’s mansion and its former owners? What might be symbolic about Gatsby purchasing a house with a black wreath on its door?

8. Read the passages below.

Sometimes, too, he stared around his possessions in a dazed way as though in her actual and astonishing presence none of it was any longer real.

Possibly it had occurred to him that the colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever. Compared to the great distance that had separated him from Daisy it had seemed very near to her, almost touching her. It had seemed close as a star to the moon. Now it was again a green light on a dock. His count of enchanted objects had diminished by one.

How have Gatsby’s possessions—all that he has built in order to attain his dream—been changed by the reentry of Daisy into his life?

9. When Gatsby takes Daisy on a tour of the many rooms of his mansion, why do you think Fitzgerald ended the tour in Gatsby’s personal living quarters?

10. Read the following passage:

He took out a pile of shirts and began throwing them one by one before us, shirts of sheer linen and thick silk and fine flannel . . . 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.

As the final event of the “tour,” what do you think this display of his shirts says about Gatsby?

11. Nick says “there must have been moments even that afternoon when Daisy tumbled short of [Gatsby’s] dreams—not through her own fault but because of the colossal vitality of his illusion.” What is Nick saying about Gatsby’s dreams in this passage?

12. Do you think Nick’s admiration for Gatsby has grown stronger or weaker in this chapter? Explain your answer.

**Dig Deeper:**

13. In this chapter, Fitzgerald implies that one’s dreams are often bigger than can be reasonably, or even possibly fulfilled. Do you agree or disagree? Explain your answer.

14. For what purpose did Gatsby ask Nick to invite Daisy to Nick’s house? Why *did* Nick invite Daisy? How does this act square with Nick’s earlier assertion that he is “one of the few honest people that I have ever known”?