

The Great Gatsby: Ch. VII (first part)

Scene 1 & 2

Scene 3

Scene 4

Nick

Jordan

Gatsby

Tom

Daisy

Wilson

Nurse

Pammy

Narrator

Scene 1: Outside Gatsby's mansion after one of his parties: Gatsby and Nick talk together about whether or not Daisy enjoyed her time at the party.

NARRATOR: When he came down the steps at last the tanned skin was drawn unusually tight on his face, and his eyes were bright and tired.

GATSBY: [sighs] "She didn't like it,"

NICK: "Of course she did."

GATSBY: [frowning] "She didn't like it...She didn't have a good time. [Pause. Sigh] I feel far away from her...It's hard to make her understand."

NARRATOR: He wanted nothing less of Daisy than that she should go to Tom and say: "I never loved you." After she had obliterated four years with that sentence they could ... go back to Louisville and be married from her house—just as if it were five years ago.

GATSBY: [frustrated] "And she doesn't understand," he said. "She used to be able to understand. We'd sit for hours——"

NICK: [cautiously] I wouldn't ask too much of her...You can't repeat the past."

GATSBY: [looks at Nick, stunned, speaks determinedly] "Can't repeat the past?... Why of course you can! I'm going to fix everything just the way it was before...She'll see."

Scene 2: The Buchanan mansion; Gatsby and Nick arrive at the door

NARRATOR: The next day Gatsby called me on the phone, at Daisy's request, he said. He wanted to know if I would come to lunch at her house to-morrow? Miss Baker would be there. Half an hour later Daisy herself telephoned and seemed *relieved* to find that I was coming. Something was up. And yet I couldn't believe that they would choose this occasion for a scene—a showdown between Tom and Gatsby.

The next day was broiling, almost the last, certainly the warmest, of the summer

BUTLER: [stressed, into the phone] "Yes . . . yes . . . I'll see." [sets down the receiver and comes over to greet Nick and Gatsby] "Madame expects you in the salon!"

NARRATOR: The room, shadowed well with awnings, was dark and cool. Daisy and Jordan lay upon an enormous couch, like silver idols weighing down their own white dresses against the singing breeze of the fans.

JORDAN & DAISY: [sigh, lazily] "We can't move,"

NICK: [looks around for Tom] "And where is Mr. Thomas Buchanan, the athlete?"

TOM: [offstage, gruffly into the phone] "I can't..."

JORDAN: [exaggerated whisper] "The rumor is that that's Tom's girl on the telephone."

TOM: [offstage, annoyed]: "Very well, then, I won't sell you the car at all. . . . I'm under no obligations to you at all . . . and as for your bothering me about it at lunch time, I won't stand that at all!"

DAISY [cynically]: "Holding down the receiver,"

NICK: "No, he's not ... It's a bona-fide deal. I happen to know about it."

[Tom flings open the door and hurries into the room.]

TOM: [shakes hands with Gatsby, masking his dislike] "Mr. Gatsby! I'm glad to see you, sir" [shakes hands with Nick] Nick. . . .

DAISY: [to Tom] "Make us a cold drink,"

[Tom exits to go get the drinks]

[Daisy watches him leave, then gets up and goes over to Gatsby, pulls his face down, and kisses him on the mouth.]

DAISY: [murmuring to Gatsby] "You know I love you,"

JORDAN: [uncomfortably, clears her throat] "You forget there's a lady present,"

DAISY: [to Jordan] "You kiss Nick too."

JORDAN: "What a low, vulgar girl!"

DAISY: "I don't care!" [turns back to Gatsby ... then becomes embarrassed and sits down guiltily on the couch just as a nurse brings her daughter Pammy into the room.]

[Pammy enters and goes to Daisy]

DAISY: "Bles-sed pre-cious... Come to your own mother that loves you. The bles-sed pre-cious! Did mother get powder on your old yellowy hair? Stand up now, and say—How-de-do."

[Pammy shakes hands shyly with Gatsby, then Nick. Gatsby gawks at Pammy, not fully believing her existence]

PAMMY: [shows off her white dress] "I got dressed before luncheon,"

DAISY: "That's because your mother wanted to show you off...You dream, you. You absolute little dream."

PAMMY: "Yes, Aunt Jordan's got on a white dress too."

DAISY: "How do you like mother's friends? [gesturing to Gatsby] Do you think they're pretty?"

PAMMY: "Where's Daddy?"

DAISY: [ignores her] "She doesn't look like her father; She looks like me. She's got my hair and shape of the face."

[Enter Nurse]

NURSE: [holds out her hand] "Come, Pammy."

DAISY: "Good-by, sweetheart!"

[Exit NURSE and PAMMY, Enter TOM with four drinks]

GATSBY: [tense, takes a drink] "They certainly look cool" [swallows greedily]

[After lunch]

DAISY: [sighing, fanning herself] "What'll we do with ourselves this afternoon? and the day after that, and the next thirty years?"

JORDAN: "Don't be morbid. Life starts all over again when it gets crisp in the fall."

DAISY: [almost in tears] "But it's so hot, and everything's so confused. Let's all go to town!

[looking at Nick, Tom, insistently] Who wants to go to town?

[Daisy looks towards Gatsby and Gatsby's eyes float toward her]

DAISY: [smiling] "Ah," she cried, "you look so cool."

[Their eyes meet, and they stare at each other, alone in space]

DAISY: "You always look so cool,"

[TOM looks from DAISY to GATSBY and sees that she loves him. He stares at them, openmouthed...]

TOM: [loudly, breaking in] "All right, I'm perfectly willing to go to town. Come on—we're all going to town."

[He gets up, his eyes still flashing between Gatsby and his wife. No one else moves.]

TOM: [angry] "Come on! What's the matter, anyhow? If we're going to town, let's start."

[DAISY and JORDAN leave to get ready, and NICK, GATSBY and TOM stand together]

TOM: [savagely] "I don't see the idea of going to town. Women get these notions in their heads——"

DAISY: [calling from offstage] "Shall we take anything to drink?"

TOM: "I'll get some whiskey," answered Tom. [He exits.]

GATSBY: [nervously turns to NICK]: "I can't say anything in his house, old sport."

NICK: "She's got an indiscreet voice...It's full of——"

GATSBY: "Her voice is full of money"

NARRATOR: That was it. I'd never understood before. It was full of money—that was the inexhaustible charm that rose and fell in it, the jingle of it, the cymbals' song of it. . . . high in a white palace the king's daughter, the golden girl. . . .

[TOM, DAISY, and JORDAN all re-enter and the five of them consider which car to drive into Manhattan]

GATSBY: "Shall we all go in my car?"

TOM: "Is it standard shift?"

GATSBY: "Yes."

TOM: "Well, you take my coupe and let me drive your Rolls to town."

GATSBY: [uncomfortable at the suggestion] "I don't think there's much gas,"

TOM: [looks at the gauge] "Plenty of gas... And if it runs out I can stop at a drug-store. [laughs] You can buy anything at a drug-store nowadays."

[DAISY looks sharply at TOM, angry]

TOM: "Come on, Daisy [takes her arm and leads her to the right] "I'll take you in this circus wagon."

DAISY: [frees herself from his grasp and moves to GATSBY] "You take Nick and Jordan. We'll follow you in the coupe."

NARRATOR: She walked close to Gatsby, touching his coat with her hand. Jordan and Tom and I got into the front seat of Gatsby's car, Tom pushed the unfamiliar gears tentatively, and we shot off into the oppressive heat, leaving them out of sight behind.

Scene 3: Gatsby's car TOM JORDAN NICK

TOM: [angrily] "Did you see that?"

NICK: [innocently] "See what?"

TOM: "You think I'm pretty dumb, don't you? Perhaps I am, but I have a—almost a second sight, sometimes, that tells me what to do. And I've made a small investigation of this fellow...:

JORDAN: [making fun of him] "And you found he was an Oxford man,"

TOM: [outraged] "An Oxford man! Like hell he is! He wears a pink suit."

JORDAN: "Nevertheless he's an Oxford man."

TOM: [contemptuously] "Oxford, New Mexico, or something like that."

JORDAN: [irritated] "Listen, Tom. If you're such a snob, why did you invite him to lunch?"

TOM: "Daisy invited him; she knew him before we were married—God knows where!"

NARRATOR: We were all irritable now with the fading ale, and aware of it we drove for a while in silence. Then as Doctor T. J. Eckleburg's faded eyes came into sight down the road, I remembered Gatsby's caution about gasoline.

NICK: "Tom, do we have enough gas?"

TOM: "We've got enough to get us to town,"

JORDAN: "But there's a garage right here. I don't want to get stalled in this baking heat."

[Tom stops the car at Wilson's garage and waits for Wilson to wait on him]

TOM [yelling]: "Let's have some gas! What do you think we stopped for—to admire the view?"

[WILSON emerges from the garage and begins to fill the tank]

WILSON: "I'm sick. Been sick all day."

TOM: "What's the matter?"

WILSON: "I'm all run down."

TOM: "Well, you sounded well enough on the phone."

WILSON: [sighs] "I didn't mean to interrupt your lunch, but I need money pretty bad, and I was wondering what you were going to do with your old car."

TOM: [lies] "How do you like this one? I bought it last week."

WILSON: [looks at the car] "It's a nice yellow one,"

TOM: "Like to buy it?"

WILSON: "No, but I could make some money on the other."

TOM: "What do you want money for, all of a sudden?"

WILSON: "I've been here too long. I want to get away. My wife and I want to go West."

TOM: [startled, angry] "Your wife does,"

WILSON: "She's been talking about it for ten years, And now she's going whether she wants to or not. I'm going to get her away."

NARRATOR: At that moment the coupe flashed by us with a flurry of dust and the flash of a waving hand.

TOM: [harshly] "What do I owe you?"

WILSON: "I just got wised up to something funny the last two days... That's why I want to get away. That's why I been bothering you about the car."

TOM: "What do I owe you?"

WILSON: "Dollar twenty."

NARRATOR: I realized that so far Wilson's suspicions hadn't alighted on Tom. He had discovered that Myrtle had some sort of life apart from him in another world, and the shock had made him physically sick. I stared at him and then at Tom, who had made a parallel discovery less than an hour before—

TOM: "I'll let you have that car; I'll send it over to-morrow afternoon."

NARRATOR: That locality was always vaguely disquieting, even in the broad glare of afternoon, and now I turned my head as though I had been warned of something behind. Over the ashheaps the giant eyes of Doctor T. J. Eckleburg kept their vigil, but I perceived, after a moment, that other eyes were regarding us with peculiar intensity from less than twenty feet away.

[TOM, NICK, and JORDAN look up and to the right to where MYRTLE is watching them from a window with a jealous look on her face]

NARRATOR: In one of the windows over the garage the curtains had been moved aside a little, and Myrtle Wilson was peering down at the car. Her eyes, wide with jealous terror, were fixed not on Tom, but on Jordan Baker, whom she took to be his wife.

As we drove away Tom was feeling the hot whips of panic. His wife and his mistress, until an hour ago secure and inviolate, were slipping from his control. Instinct made him step on the accelerator with the double purpose of overtaking Daisy and leaving Wilson behind, and we sped along toward Astoria at fifty miles an hour, until we came in sight of the easy-going blue coupe and followed them into the city.

Scene 4

NARRATOR: We arrived in Manhattan and checked into the parlor of a suite in the Plaza Hotel for the afternoon.

The room was large and stifling, and, though it was already four o'clock, opening the windows admitted Only a gust of hot shrubbery from the Park.

[NICK, JORDAN, GATSBY, DAISY and TOM all enter the parlor and sit down]

DAISY TOM

GATSBY NICK

JORDAN

JORDAN: [sarcastically] "It's a swell suite,"

DAISY: "Open another window,"

JORDAN: [angry] "There aren't any more."

DAISY: [irritated] "Well, we'd better telephone for an axe——"

TOM: [speaking sharply to Daisy] "The thing to do is to forget about the heat! You make it ten times worse by crabbing about it!"

GATSBY [stands, approaches Tom]: "Why not let her alone, old sport? You're the one that wanted to come to town."

TOM: [glaring at Gatsby] "That's a great expression of yours, isn't it?"

GATSBY: "What is?"

TOM: "All this 'old sport' business. Where'd you pick that up?"

DAISY: [bossy] "Now see here, Tom, if you're going to make personal remarks I won't stay here a minute. Call up and order some ice for the mint julep."

[Everyone sits back down]

NARRATOR: As Tom took up the phone to order the drinks, we heard the chords of Mendelssohn's Wedding March from the ballroom below.

JORDAN: "Imagine marrying anybody in this heat!" cried Jordan dismally.

DAISY: [smiling, remembering her wedding] "Still—I was married in the middle of June. Louisville in June! Somebody fainted. Who was it fainted, Tom?"

TOM: "Biloxi. A man named Biloxi. 'blocks' Biloxi, and he made boxes—that's a fact—and he was from Biloxi, Tennessee."

JORDAN: [leans towards Tom and Daisy, remembering] "They carried him into my house because we lived just two doors from the church. And he stayed three weeks, until Daddy told him he had to get out. The day after he left Daddy died." [pauses] "There wasn't any connection."

NICK: [leans towards Tom, Daisy, and Jordan] "I used to know a Bill Biloxi from Memphis,"

TOM: [nods] "That was his cousin. I knew his whole family history before he left. He gave me an aluminum putter that I use to-day."

JORDAN: [to Daisy and Tom] "Remember Biloxi...Where'd you know him, Tom?"

TOM: "Biloxi? I didn't know him. He was a friend of Daisy's."

DAISY: [laughing, smiling] "He was not! I'd never seen him before. He came down in the private car."

TOM: "Well, he said he knew you. He said he was raised in Louisville. Asa Bird brought him around at the last minute and asked if we had room for him."

JORDAN: [smiling] "He was probably bumming his way home. He told me he was president of your class at Yale."

[TOM and NICK look at each other, then shake their heads]

TOM & NICK: "Biloxi?"

TOM: "First place, we didn't have any president——"

[GATSBY loudly taps his foot on the floor, annoyed at being left out of the conversation everyone else is engaged in]

TOM: [turning on Gatsby] "By the way, Mr. Gatsby, I understand you're an Oxford man."

GATSBY: [pause] "Not exactly."

TOM: [condescendingly] "Oh, yes, I understand you went to Oxford."

GATSBY: [uncomfortable] "Yes—I went there."

TOM: [laughs, sarcastically] "You must have gone there about the time Biloxi went to New Haven."

GATSBY: [quietly] "I told you I went there,"

TOM: [demanding] "I heard you, but I'd like to know when."

GATSBY: "It was in nineteen-nineteen, I only stayed five months. That's why I can't really call myself an Oxford man."

[DAISY, JORDAN, NICK and TOM all look at GATSBY]

GATSBY: "It was an opportunity they gave to some of the officers after the Armistice; We could go to any of the universities in England or France."

[DAISY relaxes and NICK smiles, believing in Gatsby with renewed faith]

DAISY: "Open the whiskey, Tom, and I'll make you a mint julep. Then you won't seem so stupid to yourself. . . ."

TOM: [snaps at Daisy] "Wait a minute," [turns to Gatsby] "I want to ask Mr. Gatsby one more question."

GATSBY: [politely] "Go on,"

TOM: "What kind of a row are you trying to cause in my house anyhow?"

[GATSBY smiles, facing Tom, relieved that the truth about his affair is out in the open at last]

DAISY: [scared] "He isn't causing a row." [looks at Tom] "You're causing a row. Please have a little self-control."

TOM: [yells] "Self-control! I suppose the latest thing is to sit back and let Mr. Nobody from Nowhere make love to your wife. Well, if that's the idea you can count me out. . . . Nowadays people begin by sneering at family life and family institutions, and next they'll throw everything overboard and have intermarriage between black and white."

JORDAN: [irritated, under her breath] "We're all white here,"

TOM: "I know I'm not very popular. I don't give big parties. I suppose you've got to make your house into a pigsty in order to have any friends—in the modern world."

GATSBY: "I've got something to tell YOU, old sport——"

[DAISY looks desperately between them]

DAISY: [desperately] "Please don't! Please let's all go home. Why don't we all go home?"

NICK: "That's a good idea. Come on, Tom. Nobody wants a drink."

TOM: "I want to know what Mr. Gatsby has to tell me."

GATSBY: [puts his arm around Daisy and faces Tom] "Your wife doesn't love you. She's never loved you. She loves me."

TOM: "You must be crazy!"

GATSBY: [springs to his feet, facing Tom] "She never loved you, do you hear? She only married you because I was poor and she was tired of waiting for me. It was a terrible mistake, but in her heart she never loved any one except me!"

[Daisy rises, standing awkwardly between Tom and Gatsby, Nick and Jordan try to leave so the three can have privacy]

TOM: "Sit down, everyone,"

[TOM, DAISY, JORDAN, NICK and GATSBY all sit back down]

TOM: [to Daisy] "Daisy, what's been going on? I want to hear all about it."

GATSBY: [puts his arm around Daisy proudly] "I told you what's been going on. Going on for five years—and you didn't know."

TOM: [turning to Daisy sharply] "You've been seeing this fellow for five years?"

GATSBY: [stands, passionately] "Not seeing...No, we couldn't meet. But both of us loved each other all that time, old sport, and *you didn't know*. I used to laugh sometimes to think that you didn't know."

[GATSBY looks at Tom triumphantly]

TOM: [bored] "Oh—that's all."

[Gatsby is taken aback and stares at Tom]

[Tom paces the floor and then snaps at Gatsby]

TOM: "You're crazy! I can't speak about what happened five years ago, because I didn't know Daisy then—and I'll be damned if I see how you got within a mile of her unless you brought the groceries to the back door. But all the rest of that's a God damned lie. [moves to Daisy and puts his arm around her] Daisy loved me when she married me and she loves me now."

GATSBY: "No,"

TOM: "She does, though. [still has his arm around Daisy, pinning her to his side] The trouble is that sometimes she gets foolish ideas in her head and doesn't know what she's doing." [He nods, knowingly] "And what's more, I love Daisy too. [pause] Once in a while I go off on a spree and make a fool of myself, but I always come back, and in my heart I love her all the time."

DAISY: [twists out of his embrace, angrily] "You're revolting," [moves away from him and looks at Nick and Jordan] "Do you know why we left Chicago? [sarcastically] I'm surprised that they didn't treat you to the story of that little spree."

[Gatsby walks over and stands beside her]

GATSBY: [reassures her] "Daisy, that's all over now. It doesn't matter any more. Just tell him the truth—that you never loved him—and it's all wiped out forever."

DAISY: "Why—how could I love him—possibly?"

GATSBY: [firmly] "You never loved him."

[DAISY hesitates before answering. Everyone waits for her to speak.]

DAISY: [reluctantly] "I never loved him,"

TOM: [sensing Daisy's weakness] "Not at Kapiolani?"

DAISY: "No."

TOM: "Not that day I carried you down from the Punch Bowl to keep your shoes dry?"

[remembering tenderly] "Daisy?"

DAISY: [walks a step away] "Please don't." [pause, looks at Gatsby] "There, Jay," [she throws up her hands in defeat] "Oh, you want too much! I love you now— isn't that enough? I can't help what's past." [She begins to sob helplessly] "I did love him once—but I loved you too."

[Gatsby blinks hard, not believing what he's hearing]

GATSBY: "You loved me TOO?"

TOM: [savagely] "Even that's a lie. She didn't know you were alive. Why—there're things between Daisy and me that you'll never know, things that neither of us can ever forget."

[The words seem to bite physically into Gatsby]

GATSBY: "I want to speak to Daisy alone; She's all excited now——"

DAISY: [pitifully] "Even alone I can't say I never loved Tom...It wouldn't be true."

TOM: "Of course it wouldn't,"

DAISY: [turns angrily to TOM]: "As if it mattered to you," she said.

TOM: "Of course it matters. I'm going to take better care of you from now on."

GATSBY: [panicked] "You don't understand....You're not going to take care of her any more."

TOM: [laughs] "I'm not? Why's that?"

GATSBY: "Daisy's leaving you."

TOM: "Nonsense."

DAISY: [takes a deep breath] "I am, though,"

TOM: "She's not leaving me! Certainly not for a common swindler who'd have to steal the ring he put on her finger."

DAISY: "I won't stand this! Oh, please let's get out."

TOM: [to Gatsby] "Who are you, anyhow? You're one of that bunch that hangs around with Meyer Wolfshiem—that much I happen to know. I've made a little investigation into your affairs—and I'll carry it further to-morrow."

GATSBY: "You can suit yourself about that, old sport."

TOM: "I found out what your 'drug-stores' were. He and this Wolfshiem bought up a lot of side-street drug-stores here and in Chicago and sold grain alcohol over the counter. That's one of his little stunts. I picked him for a bootlegger the first time I saw him, and I wasn't far wrong."

GATSBY: [politely] "What about it? I guess your friend Walter Chase wasn't too proud to come in on it."

TOM: "And you left him in the lurch, didn't you? You let him go to jail for a month over in New Jersey. God! You ought to hear Walter on the subject of YOU."

GATSBY: "He came to us dead broke. He was very glad to pick up some money, old sport."

TOM: [yells] "Don't you call me 'old sport'!"

[Gatsby says nothing.]

TOM: "Walter could have you up on the betting laws too, but Wolfshiem scared him into shutting his mouth. That drug-store business was just small change, but you've got something on now that Walter's afraid to tell me about."

[Silence...Daisy looks terrified, Jordan looks cool and proud, and Nick looks thoughtful, and Gatsby looks guilty of all the rumors his party guests told about him]

GATSBY: [turns to DAISY and falls on his knees, pleading before her as she backs away slowly, frightened] [Ad lib. groveling and pleading] "Please, Daisy, understand me...you've got to give me a chance, you can't believe what they say about me... Daisy, don't back away –I deny everything that man says against me –none of it's true. Don't you remember the night we were together in your white car – Daisy! – you've got to remember how much we loved each other – I carried you in my heart for five years and you carried me in yours – you never loved Tom – you always loved me, you..."

NARRATOR: Gatsby began to talk excitedly to Daisy, denying everything, defending his name against accusations that had not been made. But with every word she was drawing further and further into herself, so he gave that up, and only the dead dream fought on as the afternoon slipped away, trying to touch what was no longer tangible, struggling unhappily, undespairingly, toward that lost voice across the room.

GATSBY: Daisy, don't turn away from me, you've got to believe me...

DAISY: [turning to Tom for help] "PLEASE, Tom! I can't stand this any more." [she nearly collapses, frightened]

TOM: [calmly] "You two start on home, Daisy," said Tom. "In Mr. Gatsby's car."

[Daisy looks at Tom, shocked]

TOM: "Go on. He won't annoy you. [looks condescendingly at Gatsby] I think he realizes that his presumptuous little flirtation is over."

[GATSBY and DAISY exit silently from the room as NICK, JORDAN, and TOM stare at their backs]

NARRATOR: They were gone, without a word, snapped out, made accidental, isolated, like ghosts, even from our pity.