Chapter Five
When I came back to West Egg that night I was afraid for a moment that my house was on fire. The whole corner of the peninsula was blazing with light.

Turning a corner I saw that it was Gatsby's house, lit from tower to cellar. At first I thought it was another party, but there wasn't a sound.
Your place looks like the World's Fair.

Does it?

I've been glancing into some of the rooms... Let's go to Coney Island, old sport - in my car -

It's too late.

Well, suppose we take a plunge in the swimming pool?

No - I've got to go to bed.

I talked with Miss Baker. I'm going to call up Daisy tomorrow and invite her to tea.

Oh, that's all right - I don't want to put you to any trouble.
Well, good-night.

Wait—there's another little thing—I thought—

Wait—

Look here, old sport—you don't make much money, do you?

You see, I carry on a little business on the side—a sort of a side-line.

And I thought that if you don't make very much, well, this would interest you...

It happens to be a rather confidential sort of thing...
I realise now that under different circumstances that conversation might have been one of the crises of my life.

I've got my hands full—
I'm much obliged, but I couldn't take on any more work.
I called up Daisy from the office next morning and invited her to come to tea.

Don't bring Tom.

What?

Don't bring Tom.

Who is 'Tom'?
The day agreed upon was pouring rain.

Mr Gatsby sent me over to cut yer grass.

At two o'clock a greenhouse arrived from Gatsby's, with innumerable receptacles to contain it...
An hour later the front door opened nervously and Gatsby hurried in.

Is everything all right?

The grass looks fine, if that's what you mean—

What grass?

Oh, the grass in the yard... Looks very good.

Have you got everything you need in the shape of - tea?

Together we scrutinised the twelve lemon cakes from the delicatessen shop.

Will they do?

Of course, of course! They're fine!

... old sport.
He sat down miserably, as if I had pushed him, and simultaneously there was the sound of a motor turning into my lane...
The exhilarating ripple of her voice was a wild tonic in the rain. I had to follow the sound of it for a moment, up and down, with my ear alone, before any words came through.

Is this absolutely where you live, my dearest one?

Are you in love with me, or why did I have to come alone?

That's the secret of Castle Rackrent. Tell your chauffeur to go far away and spend an hour.

Come back in an hour, Ferdie.

His name is Ferdie.
We went in. To my overwhelming surprise the living-room was deserted.

Well, that’s funny...

What’s funny?

knock knock

knock knock
Gatsby, pale as death, was standing in a puddle of water glaring tragically into my eyes.

He stalked by me into the hall, turned sharply as if he were on a wire...

and disappeared into the living-room.

It wasn't a bit funny.
For half a minute there wasn't a sound.

Then from the living-room I heard a sort of choking murmur and part of a laugh, followed by Daisy's voice on a clear artificial note.

I certainly am awfully glad to see you again.

A pause; it endured horribly.
I had nothing to do in the hall, so I went into the room.

We've met before.

Ha ha -
I'm sorry about the clock.

It's an old clock.

I think we all believed for a moment that it had smashed into pieces on the floor.
we haven't met for many years -

Five years next November.

The automatic quality of Gatsby's answer set us all back at least another minute...

Ah... the tea.

I made an excuse at the first possible moment.

Where are you going?

I'll be back.

I've got to speak to you about something before you go.
He followed me wildly into the kitchen and closed the door.

Oh God!

What's the matter?

This is a terrible mistake. A terrible, terrible mistake.

You're just embarrassed that's all. Daisy's embarrassed too.

She's embarrassed?

Just as much as you are.

Don't talk so loud.

You're acting like a little boy! Not only that, but you're rude. Daisy's sitting in there all alone.

He looked at me with unforgettable reproach, and, opening the door cautiously, went back into the other room.
I went in - after making every possible noise in the kitchen short of pushing over the stove - but I don't believe they heard a sound.
There was a change in Gatsby that was simply confounding. He literally glowed; without a word or a gesture of exultation a new well-being radiated from him and filled the little room.

Oh, hello old sport.

I thought for a moment he was going to shake hands.

It's stopped raining.

What do you think of that? It's stopped raining.

Daisy's throat, full of aching grieving beauty, told only of her unexpected joy.

I'm glad, Jay.
I want you and Daisy to come over to my house. I'd like to show her around.

You're sure you want me to come?

Absolutely, old sport.

Daisy went upstairs to wash her face — too late I thought with humiliation of my towels — while Gatsby and I waited on the lawn.

My house looks well, doesn't it?

See how the whole front of it catches the light.
It took me just three years to earn the money that bought it.

I thought you inherited your money.

I did, old sport. But I lost most of it in the big panic—the panic of the war.

I think he hardly knew what he was saying, for when I asked him what business he was in, he answered:

That’s my affair.

—before he realised it was not an appropriate reply.

Oh, I’ve been in several things. I was in the drug business and then I was in the oil business. But I’m not in either one now.

Do you mean you’ve been thinking over what I proposed the other night?
Before I could answer, Daisy came out of the house.

That huge place there?

Do you like it?

I love it, but I don't see how you live there all alone.

I keep it always full of interesting people, night and day. People who do interesting things. Celebrated people.
Instead of taking the short cut along the Sound we went down to the road and entered by the big postern.

Oh!

It was strange to reach the marble steps and find no stir of bright dresses in and out the door, and hear no sound but bird voices in the trees.
And inside as we wandered through Marie Antoinette's music rooms and Restoration Salons, I felt that there were guests concealed behind every couch and table...

Ooh

... under orders to be breathlessly silent until we had passed through.

He hadn't once ceased looking at Daisy, and I think he revolved everything in his house according to the response it drew from her well-loved eyes.
Sometimes too, he stared around at his possessions in a dazed way, as though in her actual and astounding presence none of it was any longer real.

He had been full of the idea so long, dreamed it right through to the end, waited with his teeth set, so to speak, at an inconceivable pitch of intensity.

He was consumed with wonder at her presence.

It's the funniest thing, old sport — I can't — when I try to —

Now, in the reaction, he was running down like an over-wound clock.
I've got a man in England who buys me clothes.

He sends over a selection of things at the beginning of each season, spring and fall.

Suddenly, with a strained sound, Daisy bent her head into the shirts and began to cry stormily.

They're such beautiful shirts. Sob: It makes me sad because I've never seen such beautiful shirts before...

Ringing!
Yes -

Well, I can't talk now, old sport -
I said a small town... He must know what a small town is -

Well, he's no use to us if Detroit is his idea of a small town.

Come here quick!

Look at that...

I tried to go then, but they wouldn't hear of it. Perhaps my presence made them feel more satisfactorily alone.

I'd just like to get one of those pink clouds and put you in it and push you around.
If it wasn’t for the mist we could see your home across the bay.

You always have a green light that burns all night at the end of your dock.

Compared to the great distance that had separated him from Daisy it had seemed very near to her, almost touching her. It had seemed as close as a star to the moon...

Gatsby seemed absorbed in what he had just said. Possibly it had occurred to him that the colossal significance of that light had now vanished forever...

Now it was again a green light on a dock. His count of enchanted objects had diminished by one.
As I went over to say goodbye I saw that the expression of bewilderment had come back into Gatsby’s face, as though a faint doubt had occurred to him as to the quality of his present happiness...

Almost five years! There must have been 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.
He had thrown himself into it with a creative passion, adding to it all the time, decking it out with every bright feather that drifted his way.

No amount of fire or freshness can challenge what a man can store up in his ghostly heart.