

NICK. The war? Yes. I think I enjoyed it so much I came back restless. Made going home pretty dull.

GATSBY. I know what you mean. I doubt most of the people here have any idea what it's like being in the trenches.

NICK. It's not something you forget.

GATSBY. No, it's not. Where you from?

NICK. Saint ... Minneapolis.

GATSBY. I know them well. Listen, I just bought one of those new hydroplanes and thought I'd try it out in the morning. Want to go with me, old sport? Just near the shore along the Sound.

NICK. What time?

GATSBY. Any time that suits you best.

NICK. Yes. YES! I'd like that very much. By the way, I'm Nick, Nick — *(Jordan appears, dressed like a flapper, drink in hand.)*

JORDAN. Mr. Carraway!

NICK. Miss Baker. Hello!

JORDAN. I thought you might be here. I remembered you lived next door. Having fun?

NICK. Well, it's an unusual party for me. I've been here for hours and haven't even seen the host. I live over there — and this man Gatsby sent over his chauffeur this morning with an invitation. *(Gatsby and Jordan look at him.)*

GATSBY. I'm Gatsby.

NICK. What?! Oh, I beg your pardon. *(Gatsby smiles, a rare and radiant smile that brightens the world.)*

GATSBY. I thought you knew, old sport. I'm afraid I'm not a very good host. *(Meyer Wolfsheim, an elderly Broadway character, appears and crosses to Gatsby.)*

WOLFSHEIM. Sorry to interrupt, but there's a call from Detroit.

GATSBY. Tell him I'll call later.

WOLFSHEIM. That may not be such a good idea.

GATSBY. *(To Nick.)* If you want anything just ask for it, old sport. Excuse me. I'll rejoin both of you later. *(He bows and exits with Wolfsheim. Sotto voce as he exits.)* I said a small town, Meyer! He's no use to us if Detroit is his idea of a small town.

NICK. I feel like an idiot! I kept imagining Gatsby as extravagant and fat, middle-aged. *(She laughs.)* Who is he? Do you know?

JORDAN. He's just a man named Gatsby.

NICK. Where's he from, I mean? And what does he do?

JORDAN. I haven't the faintest idea.

Start

NICK. But people don't just come out of nowhere and suddenly buy a palace on Long Island.

JORDAN. Well, Gatsby did.

NICK. But he must have some sort of a past.

JORDAN. Now you're started on the subject.

NICK. It's just that everyone keeps talking about him.

JORDAN. Well — he told me once he was an Oxford man. However, I don't believe it.

NICK. Why not?

JORDAN. I don't know. I just don't think he went there.

NICK. I've heard the wildest rumors about him.

JORDAN. That he killed someone?

NICK. Yes!

JORDAN. That he was a German spy?

NICK. Yes!

JORDAN. That he runs an underground pipeline from Canada?

NICK. He does?!

JORDAN. (*Laughs.*) Anyhow, he gives large parties. And I like large parties. They're so intimate. At small parties there isn't any privacy. You having a good time?

NICK. I'm having a good time with you. (*Music.*)

JORDAN. Dance with me.

NICK. Alright. (*They dance.*)

JORDAN. You know, Daisy's very taken with you. She hasn't stopped talking about "flinging" us together.

NICK. Then she'd be happy about tonight.

JORDAN. Are you in love with her?

NICK. Isn't everyone?

JORDAN. Yes. If I tell you a secret, do you promise to do something about it?

NICK. What do you mean?

JORDAN. Tom's woman in New York? She isn't the first. One night in Santa Barbara, California, right after he and Daisy got married, Tom ran into a wagon on the Ventura road and ripped a front wheel off his car. The girl who was with him got into the papers too because her arm was broken — she was one of the chambermaids in the Santa Barbara Hotel.

NICK. Why does Daisy put up with it? Why doesn't she just leave him?

JORDAN. Maybe you're the one meant to help her. (*Wolfsheim appears.*)

End