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Belling, Sara
English 102
Monday 3 - 5:45

An Analysis of a Passage from Fitzgerald's
"The Great Gatsby"

The three paragraphs from F. Scott Fitzgerald's "The Great Gatsby" are presented in the middle of the novel. This passage comes just as the story starts to get interesting. Preceding this passage Gatsby and Daisy are again seeing each other for the first time in five years and we are hearing how they reacted. The passage shows us the opinion and regard that the narrator has for Gatsby. The arrangement of the comparisons, diction and judgement of Gatsby makes this evident.

Gatsby has told Nick about his life and now Nick is telling the readers how he sees Gatsby's life. The first paragraph we see Gatsby as a young boy and how he grew up. In the second paragraph, we see Gatsby as a young man and how he went from day to day. In the third paragraph, we see Gatsby now Nick explains to us what Gatsby goes through every night. This passage shows us a side of a person that we would not know about any other way. We get to see part of the background of one of the main characters.

The comparisons in this passage are used very eloquently. They help us to see Gatsby as Nick sees him and partially as Gatsby sees himself. Nick tells us though Gatsby came from Plainsville, Indiana, for he was not from there and not other anywhere. It seemed as though Nick felt that Gatsby saw himself as the son of God. He truly compared him with him also. He went "about his father's business" (1). Fitzgerald used comparisons throughout his novel. He seemed to make sure that you were able to relate something to oneself. The one thing that these

comparisons did do is make you want to hold the characters up to a higher standard sometimes, and sometimes it lowered your expectations and thoughts about the character. Fitzgerald uses the right times to put a comparison in and how he wanted you to see the character using the comparison.

The diction that Nick uses makes everything seem fine and happy when if you look up the words you find out how sad and somewhat depressing Nick is making Gatsby sound. In sentence number two Nick refers to Gatsby's parents as "indifferent." This gives the reader the idea that they might have been lazy and incapable of being good parents. Gatsby never really came out and said this, but that is how Nick saw it and described it to us. In sentence number four Nick refers to "reprehensible behavior" if you were just reading along you would think that it was something good but really it means to make something look good that really isn't so good. Another place Nick makes something look pretty, but it really is not in sentence number eight. Nick refers to Gatsby as "overstating self-obsorption" all this is saying is that Gatsby is self centered and only wanted to think about himself instead of what a girl might want. In the third paragraph, Nick says "greed and belated remorse" (10). All this says is that Gatsby had an exaggerated opinion of himself, he was very vain and these thoughts haunted him when he went to bed. This is not something that I would want to think about every night while trying to sleep. The words that Fitzgerald chooses for this passage really gets the point across and you really understand who and where Gatsby is coming from.

Nick states in the first chapter "I'm inclined to reserve all judgements," yet in this passage he does seem to give us his judgement of Gatsby. When someone gives you their opinion on another person, they are consequently judging that person. Therefore, whether Nick

realizes it or not he is judging Gatsby. Nick lets us now how he sees Gatsby's parents and how they probably were not suitable. He concluded that Gatsby became disillusioned of women because he dated them early in life. He lets us that Gatsby is a very self-absorbed person. If this is not a judgement than I do not know what is. In the last bit of how Gatsby let his imagination take over and how he thought that the rock of the world was founded on a wing of a fairy. This makes me want to judge Gatsby as a weird and possibly unstable person, but it is not good to make a judgement on someone from one sentence that is said to us by a narrator. These passages let us now that Nick really does judge people and we now know how he judges Gatsby.

Readers are more likely to understand where Gatsby is coming from in the rest of the novel now that they have a view of his background. The passage from "The Great Gatsby" shows us how Nick regards Gatsby and in a way, you hear his regard for him as a man. The portrayals he has as hard and isolated and when someone talk to him like that, you seem to listen on her even if you do not originally like them. We are now more prepared to now about the rest of the after and the attack that Tom makes on Gatsby. In retrospect, we had pity for Gatsby when we had had how his life ends and then you remember how it began. He made something out of nothing all to be murdered. This passage lets us in on Gatsby's life and lets us appreciate him and what he has accomplished, and how Nick saw him.

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