

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE: WEST EGG, LONG ISLAND

The lights come up on a dimly lit bare stage, the only scenery a billboard featuring giant glasses, an ad for Dr. T.J. Eckleburg's optometry practice. In the foreground of the billboard is a martini glass in which stock Roaring Twenties' figures—a flapper, a gangster, a jazz musician—somersault as if drowning. The billboard is flanked by two similarly sized white backdrops which initially serve as projection screens but later function as the exterior walls of Gatsby's mansion. Currently these backdrops present contrasting images of Gatsby's palatial property and Nick's quaint but otherwise unremarkable summer cottage.

(Enter cabbie through the center aisle bearing a suitcase and a golf bag, trailed by the narrator, Nick Carraway, a man in his mid-thirties, with sensitive, refined features. He is dressed casually in light khaki-colored pants and a white shirt opened at the neck. He is carrying a typewriter case in his right hand and a writing portfolio under his left arm.)

CABBIE

(putting down what he is carrying)

Here ya go, mac. 27 Waterside as you requested.

NICK

Thanks for the hand. What do I owe you?

CABBIE

Four bits. Flat-rate from the train station.

NICK

(handing him a dollar)

Here. This should do it. The rest is for helping me lug my stuff.

CABBIE

Thank you, sir. And if you should need me again, the number's on the card. (He exits from whence he came.)

(For several moments Nick stands transfixed, awestruck at the grandeur and size of the mansion. Enter a sharply dressed, middle-aged woman, a real estate agent who is obviously expecting him.)

AGENT

Ah, Mr. Carraway. I see you've found it.

NICK

Yes. I took a cab from the station.

AGENT

So you did. Well, everything's in order. I've just been waiting to drop off the key.

NICK

(whistling, clearly mistaking Gatsby's place for his own)

Wow. That's a whole lot bigger than I expected!

AGENT

(chuckling bemusedly, recognizing his error)

Oh, I'm afraid that's your *neighbor's* place. Mr. Gatsby.

NICK

Gatsby? What kind of name is that?

AGENT

Apparently a very popular one. And a wealthy one at that. His place is quite the rage. Seems the place to be for anyone and everyone this summer. (Tilting her head in the direction of a small cottage), Your place is right next door. Though slightly smaller. Nevertheless I think you'll find it very quaint and quite satisfactory. (She hands him the key). Well, I must be getting along. Welcome to West Egg, Mr. Carraway and goodbye. (She exits through audience.).

NICK

(Looking around and breathing in deeply)

Well, Nick Carraway, you wanted a taste of big city life, and here you are!

1. ARRIVED! (NICK)

ARRIVED! ARRIVED!

ON THE SET, IN THE SCENE, WITH A DRIVE AND A DREAM.

I AM RARING TO GO, AND I'M COMIN' WITH A FULL HEAD OF STEAM!

NEW YORK STYLE, NEW YORK BEAT, ALL THE WORLD AT MY FEET—

I'LL DEFY AND DEFEAT ANY OBSTACLE OR CHALLENGE THAT I MEET.

BUYING AND SELLING SO PROFITS CAN SOAR,

FEELING THE PULSE OF THE STREET;

DRIVEN, DESIROUS I'LL SELL EVEN MORE,

CLIMB TO THE TOP OF THE HEAP!.

BATTERED BY PUNCHES AND ROCKED TO THE CORE,

FACING A CERTAIN DEFEAT,

I'LL FIND THE MOXIE TO GET OFF THE FLOOR,

FINISH THE ROUND ON MY FEET!

OPPORTUNITIES SHRINK, LIFE GOES BY IN A BLINK.

GOT TO PROVE, MAKE A MOVE, OR JUST HANG IT UP AND WATCH MY HOPES

SINK.

COME WHAT WILL, COME WHAT MAY, SET A COURSE, SEIZE THE DAY!

ON MY HORSE, ON MY WAY!, I'VE ARRIVED—AND I AM HERE TO STAY!

I'VE ARRIVED—AND I AM HERE TO STAY!

(Spoken) TO STAY!

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE TWO: THE SAME, THE NEXT EVENING

NICK

(Nick sits at a table, off stage right, under an umbrella, typing on an old manual Underwood. As the lights come up, he pauses, crumples the page he has been typing, then rises, ignoring the fourth wall and speaking directly to the audience.)

In my younger and more vulnerable years my father gave me some valuable advice... “Whenever you feel like criticizing anyone,” he said, “just remember that all the people in this world haven’t had the advantages you’ve had.” The aforementioned Thomas Carraway was a hard-working man of ordinary Midwestern stock whose family had been in the hardware business since the Civil War. Now you’d think that all a man like that’d know would be hammers and handsaws, but my father was an educated man, having attended on scholarship that famed institution of higher learning in New Haven. There he’d read the classics, pulled his weight in crew, and bandied about high ideas with admirably gifted classmates. But, in the end, he returned to Minneapolis, trading learning for labor

(crosses left of center.)

Eager for his son to have similar opportunity, he sent me East, fully certain that once I’d imbibed a limited measure of learning, I’d find my way home like he did. I, however, felt a different pull, and I conveyed to him on a visit home my desire to remain East and try my hand at big business. He agreed to back me—with the clear understanding that if I fell on my face, I would come back to Minneapolis and help out in the store. So I headed back East, armed with a suitcase, my father’s blessing, and some vague hopes of financial prosperity.

(returning to stage right)

By the summer of ’22 I’d been swept up in the madcap frenzy of investment, poring each day over thick leather tomes holding pecuniary secrets with which only Midas, Morgan and Maecenas were familiar. And eager to relieve some of the strain brought on by work, I decided to rent this small but quaint bungalow some twenty or so miles out from the city and squeezed between two imposing palaces that rented for twelve to fifteen thousand a season. It was here, intending to spend my leisure hours in blissful solitude, that I first encountered Gatsby.

Gatsby—a smooth-talking, elegantly-dressed roughneck who had eased himself into the insular world of Long Island with the subtlety of a tornado.

Gatsby—whose Bacchanalian orgies gathered the finest elements of society to him every weekend of that fateful summer.

Yes, Gatsby—whose unexpected Siren call lured me out of the safe cocoon of my summer rental and into a passion play from which I still haven’t recovered. It began innocently enough—with an invitation...

(Enter valet, bearing an envelope.)

VALET

Mr. Carraway I presume?

NICK

(unsure why he is being addressed)

Yes. May I help you?

VALET

Your neighbor, Mr. Gatsby, would like to extend you an invitation to tonight's gathering.

NICK

Well, that's very kind of him, but Mr. Gatsby and I have never met.

VALET

I can't speak for Mr. Gatsby, but I believe that's what he has in mind.

NICK

You mean to say I'm being invited by someone I've never met to a party. Just like that?

VALET

Just like that. Mr. Gatsby has a unique way of meeting people.

NICK

He sure does. You know, I've been listening to these 'gatherings' every weekend since I've moved in, and the music and the rowdiness never seems to stop.

VALET

Mr. Gatsby regrets any inconvenience his weekend socials may have caused you and would very much like to make amends—if you'd allow him to. (He hands Nick an invitation.)

NICK

(fingering the envelope, impressed by its calligraphy)

Sure this isn't for a wedding? (He opens it and reads) "Mr. Jay Gatsby requests the honor of your presence on Saturday, July 7th at..."

VALET
(smiling)

Mr. Gatsby insists upon the finest in everything.

NICK
(wavering but holding fast)

Look... the offer *is* tempting, but I've come out here to get away from all the craziness, not to become part of it. Tell Mr. Gatsby I—

VALET

Mr. Gatsby, I'm afraid, was quite insistent. It wouldn't be neighborly to decline.

NICK
(mulling things over)

Your boss, I sense, doesn't like to take no for an answer...(after a pause) Very well. Tell Mr. Gatsby I'd be flattered.

VALET

Very good, sir. (He turns to exit)

NICK

Wait. How does one dress for one of these affairs?

VALET

Oh, people pretty much come as they please—though many of them do try to make an impression. I'm sure whatever you choose will be quite satisfactory. (Valet again goes to exit.)

NICK
(following him)

Hey. How will I know which one is Gatsby?

VALET
(smiling)

Oh, I'm sure you'll figure that out. (He exits.)

NICK

(Raising the invitation with two hands as if
consecrating a host and reveling in this unexpected
and improbable portal into high society)

One day...*one day* in West Egg and you're already making connections! Nick, old boy, this is
going to be a *great* summer!

2. AN INVITATION (NICK)

AN INVITATION FOR ME!

A SALUTATION FOR ME!

A CONVOCAATION NEXT DOOR,

ANTICIPATION GALORE!

AN INVITATION FOR ME!

AN INCLINATION TO SEE!

AN INVITATION, FASCINATION, STIMULATION, EXULTATION—

OH, AN INVITATION FOR ME!

AN INVITATION FOR ME!

A SALUTATION FOR ME!

A CELEBRATION TONIGHT!

A LIBERATION SO RIGHT!

AN INVITATION FOR ME!

AN INSPIRATION TO BE!

AN INVITATION, ASPIRATION, INCARNATION, VALIDATION—

OH, AN INVITATION FOR ME!

THIS IS WHAT I'VE WAITED EVERY DAY FOR,

WANTED FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART.

THIS IS WHAT I'VE KNELT EACH DAY AND PRAYED FOR—

JUST A MOMENT'S CHANCE TO BE A PART.

AN INVITATION FOR ME!

A SALUTATION FOR ME!

AN OBLIGATION? AGREED.

SOME RESERVATIONS? INDEED.

MY SPECULATION IS HIGH!

INAUGURATION IS NIGH!

AN INVITATION, TREPIDATION, VACILLATION, PERSPIRATION—

OH, AN INVITATION JUST FOR ME!

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE THREE: WEST EGG—GATSBY’S MANSION

One by one, the central properties in the scene are moved into place: a pair of circular tables set along the periphery; a counter that serves as a bar; a string of velvet ropes separating tables from a central dancing area; an elevated platform for a jazz combo; and, on stage left, a raised platform or balcony from which one might oversee the festivities. Enter musicians, waiters and partygoers, tuning instruments, serving champagne and hors de oeuvres drinking and conversing respectively. Soon strings of outdoor lights begin to illuminate the set. The remainder of the participants—elegantly attired, old monied residents of this exclusive set—trickles in, some from the wings, others through the audience. The scene is redolent with elegance and extravagance.

3. GATSBY’S HOUSE TONIGHT (SOCIALITES)

CHAMPAGNE-SIPPIN,’ FINGER-DIPPIN’ DAPPERS;

OUTFIT-STRIPPIN,’ SKINNY-DIPPIN’ FLAPPERS;

INGENUES PARADING LATEST FASHIONS;

LOVERS LOST IN ECSTASIES OF PASSION;

MOVIE STARS ARRAYED IN ALL THEIR GLAMOR;

PAPARAZZI RAISING SUCH A CLAMOR;

WELL, THE PEOPLE ALL AGREE IT’S THE ONLY PLACE TO BE.

TAKE ME DOWN TO GATSBY’S HOUSE TONIGHT!

CROWD-ENTRANCING, CHARLESTON-DANCING SWINGERS;

SIREN-GLANCING NECROMANCING SINGERS;

POLITICIANS, FAMED PHYSICIANS, LAWYERS;

DEFT MAGICIANS, JAZZ MUSICIANS, VOYEURS;

WAITIERS WAITING TABLES, FLASHERS FLASHING;

SATYRS SATYRATING, CRASHERS CRASHING;

WELL, THE PEOPLE ALL AGREE IT’S THE ONLY PLACE TO BE.

TAKE ME DOWN TO GATSBY’S HOUSE TONIGHT!

(Tap dance sequence, followed by wild revelry.)

SOMEWHERE IN THE FUTURE TROUBLE'S BREWING;
 SOMEDAY THIS WILL LEAD TO OUR UNDOING.
 SOMEWHERE IN THE FUTURE STOCKS ARE CRASHING;
 SOME SAY IT'LL TAKE OUR DREAMS AND DASH 'EM;
 SOMEWHERE IN THE FUTURE GABE'S HORN'S RINGING,
 ENDING EACH AND EVERY PARTYGOER'S SWINGING;
 BUT I'D RATHER SIN TODAY THAN TO THINK ABOUT JUDGMENT DAY.
 TAKE ME DOWN TO GATSBY'S HOUSE TONIGHT!
 TAKE ME DOWN TO GATSBY'S HOUSE TONIGHT!
 TAKE ME DOWN TO GATSBY'S HOUSE TONIGHT!

(Music resumes unobtrusively under the dialogue as the socialites banter, drink, dance and indulge in various wanton behavior; there is a careless, libertine air, with little sense of propriety or reservation.)

NICK

(engaging a bemusing, bespectacled man who is pouring champagne liberally for a group of tittering women)

Excuse me. I was hoping you might steer me in the direction of our host?

MAN #1

Host? Whomever might that be, old boy?

NICK

(peering at his invitation)

Mr. Gatsby. His chauffeur brought over this— (Then, seeing his perplexity, trying to explain)
 You see, I live next door.

MAN #1:

Well, at that proximity I dare say you know him better than I do! I myself have never met the man.

NICK

Never met—

MAN #1

My dear fellow, nobody here *knows* Gatsby. Even if they have met him.

NICK

I'm afraid I don't understand. There must be hundreds of people here—dancing, drinking, having the time of their lives—*every* weekend of the summer.

MAN #1

Yes! By God, he does throw a magnificent party, doesn't he!

MAN #2

He's quite the enigma, you know. I've been here three straight weekends with nary a sight of him.

GIRL #1

(interjecting, confidentially)

One time a girl I know got her dress caught on a chair, one she had just bought, too. The very next day a courier showed up at her place toting a box from Crorier's, with a gas-blue evening dress inside it—and a handwritten apology from Gatsby. The price was almost *three hundred dollars*. I tell you, a man who'll do something like that doesn't want trouble from *anybody*.

GIRL #2:

Well, I've heard he's a bootlegger. That's where he gets all the hooch for these shindigs.

MAN #2

Gatsby? Posh. He's the nephew of von Hindenburg. Got out with a lode of war profits just before the tide turned. Least that's what I heard.

MAN #3

Aw, he fought in the War all right—but on *our* side. Struck it rich afterwards. Out West somewhere. Filthy rich now, anyways.

GIRL #3

Well, someone told me he was an Oxford man. I like a guy with smarts. And a bankroll. (Vamp begins)

NICK

I see what you mean... About nobody knowing Gatsby.

MAN #1

Something tells me he that's what he prefers.

4. MAN OF MYSTERY (NICK AND SOCIALITES)

NICK

WHAT MAKES A MAN INVITE A THOUSAND PEOPLE HE DON'T KNOW?

MAN #3

AND PLY THEM WITH CHAMPAGNE AND CAVIAR?

GIRL #4

WHAT MAKES HIM BUILD A PALACE LIKE THIS PLACE ALONG THE SHORE?

MAN #2

WHAT MAKES HIM DRIVE THAT SILLY YELLOW CAR?

NICK AND SOCIALITES

WHERE IS HE FROM (GOD KNOWS!) THIS MAN OF MYSTERY?

WHAT HAS HE DONE TO EARN THIS LIFE OF LUXURY?

WHERE IS HE FROM (GOD KNOWS!) THIS MAN OF MYSTERY?

FORTUNATE SON MADE HEIR TO WEALTH AND PEDIGREE.

MAN #3

I HEARD HE WENT TO OXFORD LIKE HIS FAMILY BEFORE.

GIRL #2

I'VE HEARD HE SAILED THE WORLD THREE TIMES AROUND.

NICK

I HEARD HE EARNED A MEDAL, WAS A HERO IN THE WAR.

MAN #2

I'VE HEARD HE PUT SOMEBODY IN THE GROUND... (There is an audible gasp.)

NICK AND SOCIALITES

WHERE IS HE FROM (GOD KNOWS!) THIS MAN OF MYSTERY?

WHAT HAS HE DONE TO EARN THIS LIFE OF LUXURY?

WHERE IS HE FROM (GOD KNOWS!) THIS MAN OF MYSTERY?

FORTUNATE SON MADE HEIR TO WEALTH AND PEDIGREE.

(Musical Interlude)

NICK AND SOCIALITES CONT'D

WHERE IS HE FROM? WHO DOES HE KNOW?

WHY THE CHAMPAGNE? WHY THE CHATEAU?

WHERE IS HE FROM? WHO DOES HE KNOW?

WHY THE CHARADE? WHY THE BIG SHOW?

WHERE IS HE FROM? WHO DOES HE KNOW?

WHO DID HE KILL? HOW DO YOU KNOW?

WHERE IS HE FROM THIS MAN OF MYSTERY?

(There are cheers and general applause.)

MAN #1

Well, I don't care who he is. I *still* say he throws one heckuva party. Have a drink?

NICK

No, thank you. I think I'll wander about a bit and take things in.

MAN #1

(raising his glass in salutation)

Suit yourself. Cheers!

(He vanishes into the crowd. Nick steps downstage, removing himself from the action and gazing up at the lavender sky. The lights and the volume of the music gradually diminish so that the action, while still ongoing, is not distracting.)

Enter Gatsby. He is resplendently dressed in a white linen suit. Everything about him resonates charm and composure. He is the ringmaster, the lord of misrule, despite his detachment from the merrymaking.)

GATSBY

(sidling over to Nick unobtrusively)

Enjoying yourself, old sport?

NICK

From a distance. I'm not one for large gatherings.

GATSBY

Nor I. Though it *is* quite the show.

NICK

It sure is.

GATSBY

You look somewhat familiar. Did our paths cross in the war?

NICK

I don't know. What outfit were you in? I was in the Ninth Machine Gun Battalion.

GATSBY

Seventh Infantry. I knew I'd seen you somewhere. (He gestures at the socialites.) Pretty good crowd tonight, eh?

NICK

Yes. Though I fail to see what satisfaction he gets from all these strangers living it up on his dime.

GATSBY

Whom do you mean?

NICK

The man responsible for this carnival. Gatsby. I mean, doesn't it seem odd that a man who hosts a blowout like this doesn't himself show the slightest interest in attending it?

GATSBY

Oh, I think he has his reasons. (pauses) You see, I'm Gatsby.

NICK

(flustered and apologetic)

Please forgive me. You see, I received this card and—

GATSBY

You'd never heard of the man who'd sent it. Well, *I'm* sorry to have put you on the spot that way, but I didn't think it neighborly not to invite you. Care for anything?

NICK

No...I'm fine. Fine, really. Just a tad embarrassed.

GATSBY

Forget about it. Perfectly understandable.

NICK
(attempting to recover)

You've got quite the place here. And quite the impressive guest list. Movie stars, opera singers...I even thought I saw the heavyweight champion down by the pool. You must be really raking it in to afford these amenities.

GATSBY
(downplaying his success)

Oh, I've done all right—in the market and with some other investments. Most of my money's inherited, of course. I'm the sole heir of wealthy Midwestern parents. Both dead now, unfortunately.

NICK

I see. What part of the Midwest? I'm from Minneapolis.

GATSBY
(hesitating)

San Francisco.

NICK
(uncomfortably, sensing this is a lie)

I see.

GATSBY
(hastily, as if eager to put this incongruity behind him)

The legacy they left allowed me to travel the world—London, Paris, Venice—collecting art, savoring the culture, learning how the real world functions.

NICK

I hear you're an Oxford man.

GATSBY
(laughing)

I'm afraid you'll hear a lot of things about me. But that one happens to be true. It's somewhat of a family tradition. (He reaches into his jacket pocket.) Look. Here's a picture of me in Trinity Quad with the Earl of Doncaster and some other chaps...right after a game of cricket.

NICK
(looks, then hands it back to him)

Seems quite the place.

GATSBY

It is, really. All history and tradition. Oh, and here's another trinket I carry about with me. (Pulling something from his pocket, he hands Nick a medal.)

NICK
(reading the Latin haltingly)

"Orderi di Danilo...Montenegro, Nicolas Rex...For Valour Extraordinare." What's this?

GATSBY

A decoration. For heroism. During the big one I led two machine-gun battalions so deep into the Argonne Forest that we outstripped the entire regiment. Held off three elite German divisions—with only fifty men and sixteen Lewis guns. After the war I was decorated for bravery by every allied government, even little Montenegro. (He takes the medal back from him and puts it away.) I don't show that to be boastful, you know—lots of chaps did far more than me. It's just that there are a lot of crazy rumors about me, most of them spread by people whom I don't even know. Some of which I'd like to dispel.

SERVANT

Excuse me, Mr. Gatsby. You've a phone call. Long distance.

GATSBY

I'm afraid I'll have to excuse myself, Mr. Carraway. It seems I've got some business to take care of. Alden, see that this gentleman gets anything he needs.

SERVANT

Yes, Mr. Gatsby.

GATSBY
(turning back momentarily)

Oh, by the way. I need to take care of a few things in the city on Monday. Care to ride in with me, old sport?

NICK

Well, I don't have anything planned—

GATSBY

Then it's agreed. Shall we say eleven?

NICK

Fine.

GATSBY
(shaking Nick's hand)

It was nice meeting you—may I call you Nick?—and I look forward to seeing you on Monday.

NICK

It was nice meeting you as well. And sorry about that—misunderstanding...

GATSBY

Forget it. The *important* thing is that *you* made it here—and *I* made your acquaintance. (He exits.)

(For a few minutes Nick is content to soak in the scene. He then walks about, enjoying the many attractive women that flit about, laughing, sometimes dancing spontaneously on top of a table. When one of them loses her balance and shrieks, he turns, accidentally colliding with an athletically built young woman and spilling her drink. She is attractive but in a Artemis-like manner: sensual but virginal, alluring but with a subtle sense of danger about her.)

NICK

Oh, I'm terribly sorry. That was most clumsy of me. May I get you another?

JORDAN

Oh, don't bother about it. There's no shortage of booze in this place.

NICK

I'd feel better if I—

JORDAN
(dabbing at her dress)

If you persist. But it really isn't necessary.

(Nick crosses to a servant carrying flutes of champagne and brings a glass back to Jordan.)

JORDAN

Thank you. (sipping) Your first time at Gatsby's?

NICK

Yes.

JORDAN

And what's your impression?

NICK

Something between a circus and a madhouse.

JORDAN
(laughing)

You might want to reserve judgment. The night's still young.

NICK

Forgive me—I should have introduced myself. I'm Nick Carraway.

JORDAN

Pleased to meet you. I'm Jordan Baker.

NICK

Jordan Baker the golfer?

JORDAN

If it's important to you.

NICK

You just won the Open. That's pretty important, no?

JORDAN

I suppose..but it's nice, you know, to get away from the sport for a while. That's what I like about Gatsby's. You can be who you are without anyone giving two hoots about it.

(There is a bit of an awkward silence.)

NICK

So...you know this fellow Gatsby.

JORDAN

Jay? Of course. We belong to the same country club.

NICK

I've only just met him. You see, he sent a valet over with this invitation—

JORDAN

A *personal* invitation...well, *you* must *really* rate. Most everyone else just shows up.

NICK

I'm afraid I don't know anyone here or in the area—apart from my cousin, Daisy, and her husband Tom, that is.

JORDAN

The Buchanans.

NICK

Yes. You know them?

JORDAN

Of course.. Daisy and I are close friends. As for Tom...well, our paths don't cross quite as often. Small world, isn't it—despite appearances to the contrary... Well, Mr. Carraway, it's late, and I have a session with my swing coach in the morning. It was nice making your acquaintance.

NICK

May I see you to your car?

JORDAN

Now who could refuse such a dashing escort? (They exit.)

(Gradually, the final musical number reaches a crescendo, followed by warm applause. Slowly, the remaining partygoers depart, drifting away singly or in groups as if in a dreamy, choreographed ballet. The effect should be one of time passing, and the scene should not be carried out in haste. The servants clear the stage of debris, then vanish into the interior of the house as the lights gradually dim to a blue darkness. Almost spectrally, Gatsby emerges onto the moonlit balcony, staring beyond the audience into the darkness across the bay at a barely perceptible green light. He sings.)

5. ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE (GATSBY)

SO CLOSE...SO FAR. A LANTERN? OR A STAR?

A GLINT OF POSSIBILITY? A SYMBOL OF FUTILITY?

SO CLOSE...SO CLOSE...SO FAR...

AND ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE THERE IS LOVE.

AND DEFYING TIME AND TIDE THERE IS LOVE.

IN THE DARKEST HOUR OF NIGHT SHINES A BRIGHT INSPIRING LIGHT.

THERE IS LOVE, THERE IS LOVE.

IN THE STARS' RESPLENDENT GRACE THERE IS LOVE.

IN A CHILD'S ADORING FACE THERE IS LOVE.

O'ER THE BARRICADES AND MILES,

THROUGH THE YEARS AND THROUGH THE TRIALS,

THERE IS LOVE, THERE IS LOVE.

EACH AND EVERY LUMINARY PALES BENEATH ITS LIGHT.

EACH AND EVERY ADVERSARY QUAKES BEFORE ITS MIGHT.

AND ACROSS THE GREAT DIVIDE THERE IS LOVE.

AND DEFYING TIME AND TIDE THERE IS LOVE.

THOUGH THE PILLARS OF OUR FAITH SWAY BENEATH OUR SORROW'S WEIGHT,

THERE IS LOVE, THERE IS LOVE—

'MIDST THE FURY AND THE FIGHT THERE IS LOVE

(The faint, intermittent green light flickers
in the distance as he stretches to embrace it.)

(FADE TO BLACK)

SCENE FOUR: EAST EGG—THE BUCHANAN RESIDENCE

(The triptych of billboards remains, but the scene changes to the sitting room of the Buchanan summer residence. The interior of the room is only approximated. Folding panels, the kind used for art presentations, suggest the interior walls, and the space itself is brightly lit to mimic a light and airy day. The furniture is sparse but elegant, an effect that can be achieved by inexpensive throws and ample pillows. Two matching divans or sofas point downstage at forty-five degree angles and there is a coffee table, two end tables—one with a phone, the other with a lamp—and perhaps several tropical plants. Jordan Baker stands before a standing mirror, studying her putting stance as she taps a ball towards an overturned kitchen glass. Daisy Buchanan sits on the pieces of furniture, studying herself in a handheld mirror.

JORDAN

(putting a golf ball and seeing it drift off to the right)

Drat. How am I ever going to win a tournament if I can't make a putt in your living room?

DAISY

Perhaps you're still fretting over that to-do about changing your lie in the Open.

JORDAN

That rubbish?. You know damn well that Jordan Baker doesn't need to cheat to take home a golf trophy.

DAISY

I didn't suggest you did. I only thought you might be piqued about it.

JORDAN

(retrieving the ball)

Well, I'm not. I'm just trying to develop a little consistency with my putting. Besides, jealous people will always take a shot at you when they see a chance. (She putts another with better success.). Where's Tom?

DAISY

(combing her hair and responding with seeming disinterest)

He's around.

JORDAN

It's so quiet I thought he might be out. You know how loud his voice is.

DAISY
(cryptically)

Not lately. Especially if he's on the phone. It's always something hush-hush about 'business'....

JORDAN
(knowingly but evasively)

Well, you know men. They keep things pretty close to the vest. Especially if it involves money.

DAISY

I guess. But he's always running into the city to check on some 'account' or other. You'd think we were running out of it.

JORDAN

Now just listen to yourself. You know there can *never* be enough money. Not with your taste in travel and clothes. (returning to her putting) That's why *I* need to start sinking some of these. I'm not wed to a well-off man like you are!

DAISY

Through no fault of mine. I keep steering every deep-pocketed, good looking creature I run into in your direction, but you fend them all off.

JORDAN

I suppose I do...There's somehow no challenge in men who are so readily attainable...

DAISY
(softly and to herself)

Yes...just in keeping the one you have... (attempting to change the topic) Seriously, Jordan. What are the odds of your winning the tournament?

JORDAN

Not very good if my putting doesn't improve. (laughing whimsically as she looks at her reflection.) Perhaps there's a clue in the mirror...

6. MIRROR, MIRROR (JORDAN AND DAISY)

JORDAN

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL, TELL ME WHAT YOU SEE.
 IS MY JOURNEY GARLAND-GRACED? OR PAVED WITH MISERY?
 ALL THE WORLD'S ENCHANTED BY YOUR FAITHFUL PROPHECY—
 MIRROR, MIRROR, WHAT'S IN STORE FOR ME?

DAISY

MIRROR, MIRROR IN MY HAND, SHROUDED IN YOUR DEPTHS
 LIES THE SECRET OF TRUE LOVE AND LASTING HAPPINESS.
 TELL ME WHETHER LOVE IS BLISS OR ONLY SOME CRUEL JEST.
 MIRROR, MIRROR, DO YOUR TRUTH CONFESS.

JORDAN

THROUGH THE PRESSURE-RIDING, FATE-DECIDING, TREMOR-HIDING,
 RULE-ABIDING SHINES THE GOLDEN ORB OF VICTORY.

DAISY

'MIDST THE ALLEGATIONS, REFUTATIONS, FABRICATIONS, ALTERCATIONS
 TOLLS THE FATEFUL KNELL OF LOVE'S DECEASE.

(During the ensuing musical interlude
 Jordan crosses behind the divan and begins
 combing Daisy's hair.)

JORDAN

WITH THE CELEBRATION, EXULTATION, ELEVATION, ADULATION
 COMES THE ADDED PRESSURE TO SUCCEED.

DAISY

ALL THE CONSTANT STRAYING, LIE-PURVEYING, LOVE-DECAYING,
WIFE-BETRAYING DRIVES THE LOYAL HEART TO SOON SECEDE.

JORDAN

MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL, CONFIDENTIAL FRIEND

[DAISY:: TELL ME, MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL.]

GUARDIAN OF SECRETS, TRIED AND TRUE UNTIL THE END,

[DAISY: TELL ME, MIRROR, MIRROR ON THE WALL.]

OFFER UP YOUR COUNSEL EVEN THOUGH IT MAY OFFEND

MIRROR, MIRROR, TELL ME WHAT PORTENDS.

JORDAN AND DAISY

MIRROR, MIRROR, GREAT OR SMALL, HELP ME TO DECEIVE

DAISY

HIDE THE LINES OF WORRY CARVED BY INFIDELITY.

JORDAN

SCRUPLES ARE A NUISANCE.

DAISY

AND LOVE'S A FANTASY..

JORDAN AND DAISY

MIRROR, MIRROR, HIDE YOUR TRUTH FROM ME.

MIRROR, MIRROR, HIDE YOUR TRUTH FROM ME.

MIRROR, MIRROR, HIDE YOUR TRUTH FROM ME...

(Daisy lays her head on Jordan's shoulders.)

NICK
(peering in from upstage left)

Hello! I hope I'm not interrupting anything.

DAISY

Nick! How delightful to see you! (She makes a concerted but futile effort to rise.) Forgive me for not getting up—I'm just p-p-paralyzed with happiness.

NICK

Don't trouble. No one wants to move around in this heat. (After a pause) Well, Daisy. Heat or no heat, you look beautiful as ever.

DAISY
(rising and crossing to him, as if energized by the compliment)

I'll accept that gallant lie for the time being, but I'll expect you to be honest with me from this time forward. Do you know this resplendent young thing who is helping me defray boredom?

NICK

Yes. We met somewhat briefly. At a party last Saturday. Hello, Jordan.

DAISY

Briefly you say. Well, I must find a way to expand that acquaintance since you are both so conveniently eligible.

JORDAN

Oh, I'm sure Mr. Carraway can find his own way—if he has any interest.

NICK
(looking around)

Where's Tom?

DAISY

Oh, he's about. Tell me, Nick. Have you enjoyed spending your summer nestled in this lap of luxury? We could almost make out your house from here were it not for that monstrosity next door to it.

NICK

That “monstrosity” belongs to my neighbor, Mr. Gatsby. And mine is just a modest summer rental. You’d need a telescope to see it.

DAISY
(strangely)

Gatsby, you say...What a singular name.

NICK

Yes, he’s quite the character. Why, he—

(Enter Tom Buchanan, carrying a cocktail. A former collegiate football player, he is broad-shouldered, amiable and magnetically handsome. In his early thirties, he is a man who values brawn over brainpower, the physical over the intellectual; a man used to getting his way if not by word then by force. Tanned and trim for a man of his bulk, he is an athlete striving hard to defer the ravages of time though his face displays some of the puffiness brought on by drink and other worldly vices.)

TOM

Well, here’s our luncheon guest! How are you, Nick?

NICK
(shaking his hand)

Fine, Tom, fine. My, you’re looking great. Why, I bet you could step back on a football field and not miss a beat.

TOM
(pausing nostalgically.)

Yeah, those were some times... Seems like everything afterwards has savored of...anticlimax. You know what I mean? Say, what can I get you?

NICK

Whatever you’re having.

(The telephone rings.)

TOM
(noticeably anxious)

Sorry. That's for me. I'll fix you something right after I take this call. (He starts to exit.)

DAISY

Why not take it in here, Tom?

TOM

It might be a few minutes, hon. And I don't want to bore our guest. Sorry, Nick. Always business. (He exits into the interior as Daisy looks after him grimly.)

DAISY

Excuse me, Nick, but I'd better go upstairs and check on the baby. (She exits. Once she has left, Jordan stealthily picks up the receiver.)

NICK
(in an admonishing whisper)

Jordan! What in blazes are you doing?

JORDAN
(covering the receiver)

What does it look like I'm doing? I'm listening.

NICK
(crossing to her and taking the receiver,
placing it gently back on its cradle)

And do you regularly eavesdrop on a man's private business?

JORDAN

Business? Monkey business is more like it.

NICK

What do you mean?

JORDAN

Oh, Nick, don't be so naïve. Tom's having an affair.

NICK
(disbelievingly)

A what?

JORDAN

An affair. Surely you've heard of one.

NICK

I...I can't believe it.

JORDAN

It's public knowledge. That's her on the phone right now.

NICK

How do you know?

JORDAN

By how antsy he was to pick it up. (then, wryly) In another room, of course.

NICK
(stunned)

Does Daisy—

JORDAN

Know? Of course, she knows. This isn't the first you know. (She lights a cigarette and inhales.) Tom's been cheating on Daisy since they got back from their honeymoon. Like that \$300,000 necklace he gave her gives him license to stray.

NICK

Why that ungrateful—

JORDAN

Shhh...not so loud. You need to pretend that everything's normal.

NICK

Normal?

JORDAN

Yes. It would upset Daisy if you knew.

NICK
(after a pensive pause)

What's she going to do?

JORDAN

What can she do, a married woman with a baby? It's not like she has options. (There is a sound of footsteps.) Quiet. Here she comes.

NICK
(as Daisy re-enters)

Everything all right?

DAISY

Yes. She's sound asleep, thankfully.

NICK

I'm sorry. I—

DAISY

You'll just have to meet her another time. Do you want to know what I said when she was born, Nick? Well, I had just come out of the ether and Tom was nowhere to be found and I felt totally alone. Like I had been kicked out of Eden. And when they told me I'd given birth to a girl, I turned to the wall and cried. And I said "All right. I'm glad it's a girl. And I hope she'll be a fool—that's the best thing a girl can be in this world—a beautiful, little fool."

NICK

Daisy, I don't know what to say—

DAISY
(sensing he knows but dismissive)

Oh, don't worry about it. I'm a big girl, Nick, and I know what I've gotten myself into.

TOM
(re-entering from within)

Sorry, Nick, but that drink'll have to wait. Got to go into the office...problems with an account or something. Can I give you a lift?

NICK

No, thanks. I drove.

TOM

We'll do this another time, okay? Without interruption.

JORDAN

I'd best be going, too. My car is blocking the drive. Come on, Nick. I'll walk you out.

DAISY

Goodbye, Jordan. I'll see you at the club. Do come again, Nick. It's comforting to have family close by.

NICK

Goodbye, Daisy.

(All exit except Daisy who stands pensively, before picking up a framed picture of herself and Tom from the time before their marriage.)

7. FAIRYTALE ROMANCE (DAISY)

WHEN YOU'RE IN LOVE FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME, ALL OF YOUR WORLD'S IN A SPIN.

NOTHING YOU DO HAS A REASON OR RHYME. ALL YOU CAN THINK OF IS HIM.

HEARING HIS NAME MAKES YOUR PULSE START TO RACE, KNOWING HE'S

WALKED THROUGH THE DOOR.

PEERING ABOUT FOR A GLIMPSE OF HIS FACE MAKES YOUR HEART JUMP EVEN

MORE.

IT WAS A FAIRYTALE ROMANCE...A TANTALIZING GLANCE,
 A WARM, EMBRACING DANCE...A HEART HELD IN A TRANCE.
 THE LOVE I KNEW WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE A FAIRYTALE ROMANCE.

(She crosses the stage, re-enacting the day
 of her wedding.)

WALKING THE AISLE WITH A MAN ON YOUR ARM, DREAMING OF RAPTURES
 WITH HIM.
 SWEPT 'CROSS THE THRESHOLD WITH CAVALIER CHARM, TAKEN ABROAD ON A
 WHIM.
 INTIMATE DINNERS BY TROPICAL SEAS WATCHING THE SUN'S SLOW RETREAT.
 WALTZING ALL NIGHT UNDER RUSTLING TREES, LIFTED RIGHT OFF OF YOUR
 FEET...

IT WAS A FAIRYTALE ROMANCE...A TANTALIZING GLANCE;
 A WARM, EMBRACING DANCE...A HEART HELD IN A TRANCE.
 THE LOVE I KNEW WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE A FAIRYTALE ROMANCE.
 OH, DOES IT HURT TO FIND LOVE SUDDENLY BRUISED AND BETRAYED.
 OH, CAN LOVE BE SO KIND, THEN TEAR ITS AFFECTIONS AWAY?

(Her response indicates her consciousness
 that her marriage is over.)

IT WAS A FAIRY TALE ROMANCE...A FLOWER DYING FAST,
 A RELIC OF THE PAST; A BOND NOT MEANT TO LAST.
 THE LOVE I KNEW WAS ALWAYS MEANT TO BE A FAIRYTALE ROMANCE.
 MY LOVE WAS JUST A FAIRYTALE ROMANCE...

(FADE TO BLACK)

SCENE FIVE: WILSON'S GARAGE IN THE VALLEY OF ASHES

(The shift of scene to a rundown, unprosperous garage is radical, and care should be taken to make the change as efficiently as possible. Properties here should be spare but specific: a dolly, a hose, a wall calendar, perhaps a stack of old tires. Oil cans, assorted automotive products, and several discarded rags litter the premises. A battered chair and a counter upon which rests the cash register are the only other properties of consequence. A short staircase between what serves as the walls suggests living quarters above.

As the lights come up, Wilson is seen sweeping the floor. He is a generally saturnine sort, dressed in dingy grey overalls made even more so by the perpetual dust that seems endemic to the locale. The failure of his business is written on his face, and dejection pervades his every action.)

7. DEAD END STREET (GEORGE WILSON)

DEAD END JOB—DULL ROUTINE: “FILL ‘ER UP. WIPE HER CLEAN.”

WORKING LIKE A PACK-HORSE TO THE BONE,

BLEEDING OUT A LIVING FROM A STONE.

DESPERATION, POVERTY, EXASPERATION, MISERY—

WHEN YOUR JOB’S A DEAD-END STREET.

DEAD END LOVE, SORDID JEST; MOCKERY OF MY FAITHFULNESS.

DRESSED TO KILL AND ALWAYS ON THE GO,

READY WITH A HAND OUT FOR SOME DOUGH;

SAD CHARADE OF HARMONY, A PRETENSE OF FIDELITY

WHEN YOUR LOVE’S A DEAD-END STREET.

THERE WAS A TIME OF POSSIBILITY.

THERE WAS A TIME WHEN I COULD DREAM.

NOW THERE’S A STORM CLOUD OF UNCERTAINTY,

A TIGHTENING VISE THAT MAKES ME SCREAM.

DEAD END LIFE, DEAD END DREAMS: UNFULFILLED, UNREDEEMED.
BEATEN DOWN WITH MERCILESS DISDAIN;
GOD AND MAN INDIFFERENT TO MY PAIN.
LITTLE CAUSE TO PERSEVERE;
ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE RIGHT HERE—
WHEN YOUR JOB'S A DEAD-END STREET.
WHEN YOUR LOVE'S A DEAD-END STREET
WHEN YOUR LIFE'S A DEAD-END STREET...

(A horn blares outside by the pump,
then again more insistently.)

WILSON

Alright already. I'm not deaf.

TOM

(entering through one of the spaces)

Say, what does a fella have to do to get some gas around here?

WILSON

(apologetically)

Oh, Mr. Buchanan. Sorry, I was just sweeping up a bit. What can I get you?

TOM

Tank of gas will do. And clean the windshield and mirrors while you're at it. I'm heading into the city.

WILSON

Just let me finish up here. Why don't you sit down? (gestures to the chair) Out of the sun.

TOM

Okay, Wilson. Thanks.

(As Wilson's finishes this comment, his wife, Myrtle Wilson, makes a sultry entrance. Overweight and without any sense of innocence or youthful beauty, she nevertheless retains a noticeable sensuality in the way she walks, carries herself, and speaks. When she makes eye-contact with Tom from the landing, it is clear that the two know each other in more than passing fashion. Upon entering she speaks to her husband in a gruff, imperious tone.)

MYRTLE

Why didn't cha tell me we had company?

WILSON
(servile and apologetic)

Uh, sorry, Myrtle. Mr. Buchanan, this is my wife. Myrtle Wilson.

TOM
(feigning like they have never met)

Pleased to meet you.

WILSON

Mr. Buchanan's my best customer.

MYRTLE

That so? (cheekily) Ain't you a little high-class to be stopping at a dump like this?.

TOM

Well, I try to remain loyal—

MYRTLE
(sardonically)

Do you? Well, I'm sure my husband appreciates it. (crossing to Wilson) Gimme some money, will ya, George? I'm goin' into the city to see my sister.

WILSON

Again? You just went two days ago?

MYRTLE

Well, she's sick. And she needs me. Are you going to begrudge me that?

WILSON

No—no, of course not. It's just that—things are a little tight this week. (He searches his pockets fruitlessly before stumbling on an idea.) Mr. Buchanan—can I have a word with you? In private.

TOM
(crossing to him)

Sure. What's on your mind, Wilson?

WILSON

It's about that car—

TOM

Car? Oh, yes...the one I was thinking of dumping.

WILSON

Have you decided if you're gonna part with it?

TOM

No, I'm afraid not, Wilson. I've had other things on my mind.

WILSON

I don't mean to press you, you see, but I gotta get some cash together. You see, Myrtle and I, we wanna get out of here. Quick.

TOM
(taken aback and looking briefly at Myrtle)

You do? Why the haste?

WILSON

Look around. Business is terrible. Most cars just pass this place by. Those fancy new stations are killing things.

TOM

That's tough, Wilson. Real tough.

WILSON

You see, if I could fix that car up a bit, I might turn it into some cash.

TOM

Well, I'll give it some thought, Wilson.

WILSON

I just need a little start, you understand. A leg up, so to speak.

8. LIFT ME OUT OF THE TRASHCAN, MISTAH (WILSON, MYRTLE AND TOM)

WILSON

LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTER.

SHARE A MINUTE OF TIME;

YOU GOT YOUR SHARE OF FORTUNE—

WON'T YOU SPARE A BROTHER A DIME?

ALTHOUGH SOME MAY THINK IT SCANDALOUS,

I'M TIRED OF GREASE AND GRIME.

SO WON'TCHA LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTER,

'FORE I'M PAST MY PRIME.

TOM

Well, no promises, Wilson, but I'll see what I can do.

WILSON

You see, if I could just blow this place and start over again, things with me and Myrtle might be different.

(more persistently)

LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTER.

BACK MY PLAY WITH SOME DOUGH.

ONE LAST WINDOW TO MAKE IT.

MAYBE ONE LAST CRACK AT THE SHOW.

ALTHOUGH SOME MAY THINK IT SCANDALOUS,

IT'S BUSINESS *QUID PRO QUO*

SO WON'TCHA LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTER.

SEND ME WESTWARD HO!

TOM

Look, I'll do what I can. Now I'd appreciate your getting to work on that car.

WILSON

Thanks, Mr. Buchanan. I won't forget it. (He exits upstage to the gas pumps.)

(Tom and Myrtle are left facing each other across the stage. They remain in stoic, dispassionate silence for a long moment until they each break out in laughter.)

MYRTLE

God. If he kept that crap up any longer, I'd have burst

.

TOM

(crossing and meeting her center-stage)

So you're *not* heading West on a second honeymoon?

MYRTLE

Not on your life.

TOM

But you *are* going to your sister's?

MYRTLE

Not if I get a better offer.

LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTAH.

BUY ME SOMETHIN' TO WEAR.

DRAG ME OUTTA THIS DEAD END DUMP, BOY.

THIS PLOT AIN'T GOT A PRAYER.

ALTHOUGH SOME MAY THINK IT SCANDALOUS,

I'M NOT A GIRL WHO CARES.

SO WON'TCHA LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTAH.

TAKE ME ANYWHERE.

(Wilson re-enters. Tom and Myrtle strike poses of nonchalance, he reading the paper, she powdering her nose.)

WILSON

Excuse me, Mr. Buchanan. What type of gas do you want? Regular or hi-test?

TOM

High-test. That's a top-flight engine.

WILSON

Sure thing. You want I should check the oil while I'm at it?

TOM

No. Gas'll be fine. (Wilson again exits, and they drop their pose.)

MYRTLE

LIFT ME OUT OF THE TRASH CAN, MISTAH.

PUT MY FACE ON THE SCREEN.

MAKE ME FEEL LIKE A MILLION DOLLARS.

FEED ME FANCY CUISINE.

AND THOUGH SOME MAY THINK IT SCANDALOUS,

I'LL WILLINGLY COME CLEAN:

C'MON AND LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTAH.

LET ME BE YOUR QUEEN.

(seductively reminding him of the difference
between a wife and a mistress.)

SURELY THERE ARE BETTER THINGS TO PINE FOR,

THINGS WITHOUT THE STRINGS ALL MEN HATE SO.

SURELY THERE'S A MAN WHO ISN'T HAPPY WITH HIS WIFE,

ONE WHOSE NEEDS I'VE CATERED TO AND KNOW.

(She pushes him into a chair, placing her
foot between his legs in a suggestive manner
as Tom caresses it with his hands. Enter Wilson,
stumbling upon this.)

MYRTLE

(caught red-handed but totally nonplussed)

Oh, that cramp is so much better!

WILSON

LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTAH.

TOM

DON'T BE A PEST!

WILSON

PLUCK ME OUTTA THIS HELL.

TOM

SHOW SOME PATIENCE NOW!

MYRTLE

(coming to his side while her husband's back is turned)

PLUCK ME OUTTA THIS LUCKLESS MARRIAGE.

TOM

(softly deterring her advances)

I'LL DO MY BEST!

MYRTLE

TAKE ME TO A HOTEL.

WILSON

ALTHOUGH SOME MAY THINK IT SCANDALOUS,

MYRTLE

THESE DESPERATE TIMES COMPEL.

MYRTLE AND WILSON

SO WON'TCHA LIFT ME OUTTA THE TRASH CAN, MISTAH---'FORE I START TO SMELL.

WILSON
(still oblivious)

You're all set, Mr. Buchanan. Say, you'd better hurry, Myrtle, or you'll miss that train.

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE SIX: A SPEAKEASY IN NEW YORK CITY

(The lights come up on a dimly lit, New York speakeasy. Again, properties are minimal: a small spotlighted stage rear center on which a quadron croons to the accompaniment of the pit orchestra, and several circular tightly packed tables crowded with men marked by power and money and characterized by the decadence which these endow. Some roguish-looking gangsters are sprinkled about. The patrons drink, flirt with women, and carouse. As Nick and Gatsby enter the scene from downstage right, the singer is in the midst of finishing her song.)

9. FLAPPER’S LAMENT (BLUES SINGER)

MY MOMMA’S A DRUDGE; SHE IRONS AND SCRUBS. SHE LABORS THE WHOLE
DAY THROUGH.

WITH FIVE MOUTHS TO FEED AND DESPERATE NEED, SHE’S FEELIN’ SO BLACK
AND BLUE.

MY DADDY’S A DRUNK; HE’S DOWN ON HIS LUCK. HE SITS IN HIS CHAIR AND
BROODS.

HE’S SHARP WITH HIS TONGUE AND QUICK WITH HIS HANDS. WHAT’S A GIRL
GONNA DO?

(The combo launches into a short musical interlude.)

NOW MEN’LL USE CHARM TO OPEN YOUR ARMS. THEY’LL SWEAR THAT THEIR
LOVE IS TRUE..

THEY’LL PROMISE YOU RINGS AND OTHER FINE THINGS, THEN LEAVE BEFORE
THE SUN PEEPS THROUGH.

THE CHANCES ARE SLIM; THE PROSPECTS ARE DIM THEY’LL UTTER THE WORDS
“I DO.”

THE PRICE TO BE PAID IS VIRTUE BETRAYED—WHAT’S A GIRL GONNA DO?.

WHAT’S A GIRL GONNA DO? I SAY, WHAT’S A GIRL GONNA DO...

MC

Let's have a big Mortimer's hand for Angela Carter. (There is loud applause, whistling.) That's it for this afternoon's show, gents. Be sure to come see us again. (The crowd gradually exits except for gangsters, molls, Gatsby, and Nick)

GATSBY

Welcome to Mortimer's, Nick. One of those places no one knows about but everybody knows about—if you get my drift. Let me introduce you to some business acquaintances of mine. One of them's the man who fixed the 1919 World Series.

NICK

The World Series? How did he manage that?

GATSBY

He just saw the opportunity, I guess. Anyway, they're strictly backroom guys. Not the type to talk business in public. Just say little and smile a lot and you'll fit right in.

WOLFSHEIM

Well, the prodigal son returns. (He rises, embracing Gatsby.) How are you, my boy?

GATSBY

Fine, Meyer. Just fine.

WOLFSHEIM

And business?

GATSBY

Moving right along. On all fronts.

WOLFSHEIM

Good. Very good. You know what Shakespeare said: "He that wants money, means, and content is without three good friends." And you can't get the last one without having the others, no?

GATSBY
(nodding toward Nick)

This is Nick Carraway, Meyer. A good friend of mine.

WOLFSHEIM
(extending his hand)

Pleasure to meet you, Mr. Carraway. Anyone who does business with Jay is—

GATSBY

Actually, he's my next-door neighbor.

WOLFSHEIM

Ahhh...my apologies. I just presumed—

NICK

No offense taken. (changing the subject) Quite the place you've got here.

WOLFSHEIM

Yes. As long as the government denies hard-working people the right to drink, there will always be a demand for places like this.

GATSBY

I'm going to leave Mr. Carraway with you for a few minutes, Meyer, while I take care of some business. Try not to corrupt him. (He exits to the interior with one of the gangsters.)

WOLFSHEIM

Why, what a thing to say? (shaking his head) That Gatsby...always *kibbitzing*. (After a pause) Well, Mr. Carraway. What line of work are you in?

NICK

Investments. Mainly bonds

WOLFSHEIM

A respectable profession, certainly. Of course, one with a ceiling, no? A man like you could possibly do better.

NICK

I make out okay.

WOLFSHEIM

Yes, yes. I'm sure you do. Only, life being so short, it's best not to struggle. I mean, if one doesn't have to.

NICK

(conscious of temptation and eager to avoid it)

My neighbor certainly doesn't. Fortune...fashion...notoriety— he's got everything. It's like living next to a pharaoh.

WOLFSHEIM

(*laughing*)

Oh, it wasn't always that way for him. Not when I first met him. But—and this is forever to his credit—he *learned*. Learned how to be successful. The rest speaks for itself.

NICK

What do you mean “learned?” Is there a how-to manual for becoming wealthy?

WOLFSHEIM

In a manner of speaking, yes...

10. OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS (WOLFSHEIM AND GANGSTERS)

WOLFSHEIM

PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ME WHAT'S THE SECRET OF MY LUCK—

IS IT MERELY ACCIDENT OR BORN OF GUILE AND PLUCK?

PEOPLE SEEM TO THINK THERE'S SOMETHING MAGICAL I DO

WHEN MY WHOLE PHILOSOPHY IS SIMPLE, TRIED AND TRUE:

YOU'VE GOT TO PLAY THE RIGHT HORSE AT THE RIGHT COURSE.

PICK THE RIGHT NAME IN THE RIGHT GAME.

CALL THE KNOCKDOWN IN THE RIGHT ROUND WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

YOU'VE GOT TO ROLL THE HOT DICE. DOUBLE DOWN, TWICE.

LET THE WHEEL SPIN WITH A BIG GRIN.

PLACE THE HUGE BET, HIDE YOUR COLD SWEAT WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

NICK

That's an interesting philosophy—but how do you know when you're right?

WOLFSHEIM

(taps his temple, laughing)

Instinct, my boy—pure instinct—*and* not being afraid to take a risk now and then. You can't expect to have success in life without sticking your neck out a little.

WOLFSHEIM

PEOPLE THINK I SCAN THE SKY, SEEK FORTUNE IN THE STARS.

FINGER THROUGH A TAROT DECK AND PLUCK A WINNING CARD.

TRUTH IS LUCK'S INSIDE OF 'EM IF PEOPLE ONLY KNEW,

NOT SOME FLIGHT OF FORTUNE THAT APPEARS OUT OF THE BLUE.

YOU'VE GOT TO PICK THE LONG SHOT.

GANGSTER #1

CHASE THE BIG POT.

WOLFSHEIM

BET THE STRAIGHT RED.

GANGSTER #2

AND THE BIG SPREAD!

WOLFSHEIM

STAKE A BOLD CLAIM.

GANGSTER #3

TAKE A HIGH AIM.

ALL GANGSTERS

WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

WOLFSHEIM

YOU'VE GOT TO HOLD YOUR CARDS RIGHT.

GANGSTER #1

GRIT YOUR TEETH TIGHT.

WOLFSHEIM

HAVE A BLANK STARE.

GANGSTER #2

AND A BIG PAIR!

WOLFSHEIM

BUCK THE HIGH ODDS,

GANGSTER #3

FLOUT THE HIGH GODS.

ALL GANGSTERS

WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

WOLFSHEIM

THE BIGGER THE MOMENT, THE BIGGER THE MAN, NO MATTER THE POT OR THE
STAKES;

AND IF YOU CAN'T HANDLE THE HEAT OF THE ROOM? WELL, BROTHER, THEY
SAY "THEM'S THE BREAKS!"

ALL GANGSTERS
(shouted)

“THEM’S THE BREAKS!”

ALL GANGSTERS

YOU’VE GOT TO PLAY THE RIGHT HORSE

WOLFSHEIM
(spoken)

AT THE RIGHT COURSE.

ALL GANGSTERS

PICK THE RIGHT NAME

WOLFSHEIM
(spoken)

IN THE RIGHT GAME.

GANGSTERS

CALL THE KNOCKDOWN

WOLFSHEIM
(spoken)

IN THE RIGHT ROUND

WOLFSHEIM & GANGSTERS

WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

ALL GANGSTERS

YOU’VE GOT TO PICK THE LONG SHOT.

WOLFSHEIM

CHASE THE BIG POT.

ALL GANGSTERS

BET THE STRAIGHT RED.

WOLFSHEIM

AND THE BIG SPREAD.

GANGSTERS AND FLAPPERS

EYE THE RIGHT DAME.

WOLFSHEIM

FIX THE RIGHT GAME,

ALL

WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS! WHEN OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS!

GATSBY

(Re-entering as the number ends.)

All right, Nick, we're done here. Meyer hasn't been preaching to you, has he?

WOLFSHEIM

(innocuously)

Now what would make you think that? Do you hear the abuse I suffer from this rogue? (He grabs Gatsby affectionately around the neck.) Yet he's a lovable rogue at that.

VOICE FROM THE REAR

Hey, Nick! Nick Carraway!

(As Nick turns Tom Buchanan signals him from the rear When Gatsby sees who is approaching, his face conveys extreme discomfort, and he turns away, looking for an exit.)

TOM

I thought it was you, but I thought you were much too righteous ever to be seen in a joint like this. I waited outside. Thought I might've missed you.

NICK

Actually, I'm here with a friend—the fellow who lives next door to me. Mr. Gatsby.

TOM

(straining to be heard over the noise)

Who?

NICK

Gatsby. Jay Gatsby.

TOM

Never heard of him. Must be new money.

NICK

Here. Let me introduce you to him. (turning) Jay, this is— Well, I'll be damned. (To Wolfsheim) Where's Gatsby gone?

WOLFSHEIM

He left.

NICK

Left?

WOLFSHEIM

Yes. Said you'd understand.

NICK

(nods, perplexed but trying to be gracious)

Yes. Thank you. Thank you for everything. (Then, almost inaudibly) Understand what?

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE SEVEN: A HOTEL ROOM IN NEW YORK CITY

(The lights come up on a room in a New York City hotel. Again, the scene should be minimally furnished: an ample bed, if possible a mirrored dresser, perhaps a chair and a writing desk. Tom is staring out a window upstage right. He is still dressed but is in the act of fingering the buttons on his dress shirt. Myrtle is not seen but can be heard humming in what must be the adjacent bathroom. When she enters, she is wearing a robe.)

MYRTLE

Well, that's more like it. It's a helluva lot cooler in here than in that speakeasy. (Seeing him still dressed, she stops short, then, after a moment, crosses to his side, leaning her head on his left shoulder.) Aw, honey, why so down in the dumps? Relax a little.

TOM

Sorry. I was just thinking about something.

MYRTLE

(rolling her eyes and moving to the foot of the bed)

Are you experiencing pangs of remorse *again*?

TOM

(stung a little)

No...no, of course not. (He crosses to Myrtle and raises her up, embracing her.) You know I've missed you. Desperately.

MYRTLE

(pulling away)

Not desperately enough to leave your wife for me.

TOM

Ah, tyhere's just a lot to consider. I have a child, remember?

MYRTLE

(crossing to him with sexual aggression)

I remember how much you used to burn to be here with me. How you couldn't wait to—

TOM

(pulling her to him)

I still do, baby. You know I love it when we're alone together.

MYRTLE
(relenting)

Well...we do have similar appetites, don't we?

(Vamp begins.)

11. ADULTERY, ADULTERAH! (TOM AND MYRTLE)

(This is a very campy number and should be played quite a bit to the audience.)

TOM

LET'S FACE IT, MEN ARE JUST A CHEATING LOT.

WE BOAST ABOUT OUR CONQUESTS LIKE WE'RE WARRIORS.

WE'VE GOT A SPECIAL KNACK TO SLING 'EM IN THE SACK AND THEN—

WELL, I WON'T BORE YOU.

MYRTLE

A WOMAN AIN'T EXPECTED TO BE HOT,

BUT RATHER TO BEHAVE LIKE QUEEN VICTORIA.

BUT GIVE HER JUST A CRACK, AND SHE'LL BE ON HER BACK WITH ONE,

WITH ONE OR MORE O' YA.

TOM

ADULTERY, ADULTERAH!

MYRTLE

MONOGAMY IS SO DAMN BORING.

TOM

SING *CE'ST LA VIE*.

MYRTLE

SING *QUE SERA*

TOM & MYRTLE

SING HEY, ADULTERY ADULTERAH

(They cross to the opposite side of the stage.)

TOM

NOW MARRIAGE IS A MANY-SPLENDORED THING—

MYRTLE

FOR PEOPLE WHO ELECT TO NAVIGATE IT.

TOM

BUT SOME MUST PLAY THE FIELD.

MYRTLE

AND OTHERS SIMPLY YIELD—

TOM & MYRTLE

LIKE US. IT SEEMS WE'RE FATED.

TOM

SO OTHERS CAN ABIDE THE GOLDEN RULE

MYRTLE

AND STICK LIKE GLUE TO THEM WITH WHOM THEY'RE MATED.

TOM

BUT WE PREFER TO CHEAT

MYRTLE

AND UNDERNEATH THE SHEETS

TOM & MYRTLE

WE FIND WE'RE COPULATED! (N.B. ALTERNATES: "CONSUMATTED" OR "COMPENSATED")

TOM

ADULTERY, ADULTERAH!

MYRTLE

MONOGAMY WILL START YOU SNORING.

TOM

SING *CE'ST LA VIE*.

MYRTLE

SING *QUE SERA*.

TOM & MYRTLE

SING HEY, ADULTERY ADULTERAH!

(Musical interlude and dance sequence)

TOM & MYRTLE

ADULTERY, ADULTERAH!

TOM

MONOGAMY?

MYRTLE

WE SAY "WHAT FOR-ING?"

TOM

SING *CE'ST LA VIE*.

MYRTLE

SING *QUE SERA*.

TOM & MYRTLE

SING HEY, ADULTERY! HEY, ADULTERY! HEY, ADULTERY! HEY, ADULTERAH!

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE EIGHT: WEST EGG— GATSBY’S MANSION

(The setting is identical to that of Scene Two except the festivities are already in full swing. Nick stands on the lower balcony, leaning on the stone railing and observing the action below.)

12. IT’S A ROARING AGE! (SOCIALITES)

SOCIALITES

JEEPERS-CREEPERS, WE’RE ON THE MOVE.

TIMES ARE CHANGING; WATCH US IMPROVE!

OUT WITH OLD STUFF, IN WITH THE NEW—

STATUS QUO NOW JUST WILL NOT DO!

WAR IS OVER, PEACE IS AT HAND;

HOIST THE FLAG, BOYS! STRIKE UP THE BAND!

RAISE YOUR GLASSES—ISN’T IT GRAND?

IT’S A ROARING AGE!

PROHIBITION GAVE US THE BLUES

OPPOSITION BROUGHT BACK THE BOOZE.

NOW THE WORLD IS HAPPY AND GAY—

ONE, TWO, THREE, FOUR—HIP, HIP HOORAY!

LUCKY LINDY FLEW ‘CROSS THE POND;

THE BAMBINO SWATS ‘EM BEYOND;

DEMPSEY PLANTS ONE, THEY DON’T RESPOND—

IT’S A ROARING AGE!

(Musical interlude and dancing.)

WHEN THEY WRITE ABOUT US AND THESE GLORY DAYS,
 THINKING BACK ON ALL THIS BALLY-HOO,
 THEY'LL BE SURE TO TOUT US AND OUR ZANY WAYS,
 JEALOUS OF THE ROARING TIMES WE KNEW.

SEIZE THE DAY AND LIVE IN THE NOW;
 DANCE THE LIGHTS OUT—MAKE IT A VOW;
 SQUEEZE AS MUCH AS LIFE WILL ALLOW—
 IT'S A ROARING AGE! IT'S A ROARING AGE! IT'S A ROARING AGE!

(Applause and cheers. The band breaks into
 a more sedate number as lights and music
 diminish so as not to distract. Nick leans with
 two hands on the balcony, surveying the action.
 Enter Jordan Baker.)

JORDAN
 (noticing Nick and crossing to the foot of the stair)

So, I see you're becoming a regular.

NICK
 (descending)

Yes—I'm drawn here like all the others. Moths to a flame.

JORDAN
 (lighting a cigarette)

I don't believe that for a minute. Jay doesn't go out of his way to meet everyone, you know.

NICK
 (confused)

Meaning?

JORDAN

Meaning that invitation you got wasn't just coincidence. (She walks away, lighting her cigarette.)
He wants you to do him a favor.

NICK

Me? What could I possibly provide that he can't manage?

JORDAN

Oh, it's not a business favor, silly. It's a personal one.

NICK

I'm afraid I don't follow.

JORDAN

He wants you to invite Daisy.

NICK
(perplexed)

Where? To one of his parties?

JORDAN

No. He wants something—more intimate.

NICK
(understandably oblivious)

Well, I'm sure Tom and Daisy wouldn't mind meeting one afternoon for lunch in the city—

JORDAN

He doesn't want Tom to be there.

NICK
(stunned and a bit scandalized)

Let me get this straight. Gatsby wants me to invite Daisy somewhere *without* her husband.

JORDAN

Of course not. He wants you to invite her to *your* place. He thinks she might find this scene too overwhelming.

NICK

But Daisy's married.

JORDAN

Yes. And *unhappily* so if you haven't noticed. Besides, she's known Jay for some time.

NICK
(misunderstanding)

You mean, Gatsby's been seeing Daisy? Behind Tom's back?

JORDAN

Oh, sometimes you are so obtuse. (matter-of-factly) Jay knew Daisy *before* the War. In Louisville. *Before* she got married. He was in Officers' Candidate School when she was a deb. (dreamily) Oh, he cut such a dashing figure in that uniform, and Daisy was just wild about him. You'd never seen such a dotting couple. When he was sent overseas, she was quite devastated. In fact, she'd packed a bag and taken a train to New York, planning to elope with him. But her family got wind of it and quickly put a stop to that.

NICK

Go on.

JORDAN

Well, the War, which everybody thought would be over in weeks once the Yanks came in, dragged on, and in time her passion for Gatsby faded. Daisy has always been a little impatient, you know, and when Tom Buchanan began paying her attention—to the tune of a \$300,000 engagement necklace—well, show me the girl who'd resist?

(She takes a last puff and extinguishes her cigarette).

So she married Tom in June of 1918, just months before the Armistice, and when Jay finally got back to the States, they'd already left on their honeymoon to the South Sea. He read about it in the newspaper...

NICK
(after a significant pause)

Am I to understand, Jordan, that I'm to be an accomplice to an assignation?

JORDAN

Darling, you can be *so* charmingly melodramatic. Relax—he simply wants to see her again.

NICK

Then why not see her in public?

JORDAN

Because he wants it to be a surprise. That's why he wants you to invite her to lunch. At your place.

NICK

No. Unequivocally no. Tom may or may not be faithful to Daisy, but he is a friend. And I won't be a party to such shenanigans.

JORDAN

Suit yourself. But Jay has a way of making things that he wants to happen happen.

NICK

Not this one.

JORDAN
(smiling knowingly)

We'll see.

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE NINE: THE SAME, BUT NEARLY DAWN.

(It is just before sunrise. All the guests have left or are asleep in the rooms within. Enter Gatsby, alone. He glances up reflectively as a low roll of thunder rumbles overhead.)

13. HOW CAN SHE TELL I LOVE HER? / ANYTHING FOR YOU (GATSBY)

GATSBY

HOW CAN SHE TELL I LOVE HER?

CAN SHE KNOW BY THE LOOK IN MY EYES?

CAN SHE SEE THAT MY THOUGHTS ARE ALL OF HER?

CAN SHE GUESS WHAT MY HEART HAS TO HIDE?

HOW CAN SHE TELL I LOVE HER?

CAN SHE POSSIBLY FATHOM THE PAIN

I GO THROUGH EVERY DAY I'M WITHOUT HER?

EVERY HOUR AGAIN AND AGAIN?

MONDAY MORN. THE RAIN COMES TUMBLIN' DOWN.

SO FORLORN...MY FEELINGS UNDERGROUND.

BUT EVERY TIME I THINK OF YOU MY PULSE BEGINS TO BEAT,

RE-KINDLED BY THE NEARNESS OF THAT MOMENT WE WILL MEET.

I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR YOU,

GO OUT ON ANY WING FOR YOU,

ABANDON EVERYTHING FOR YOU—

I SWEAR UPON THE STARS.

I'D CHALLENGE ANY KING FOR YOU,
I'D SUFFER ANY STING FOR YOU.
I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR YOU—
AND THAT IS JUST THE START....

WHO CAN EXPLAIN HOW A LOVE CAN EVOKE
A GIDDINESS JUST LIKE A CHILD'S?
WHO CAN RESTRAIN A STRONG PASSION LONG STOKED,
OR A DREAM TOO LONG UNRECONCILED?

I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR YOU,
GO OUT ON ANY WING FOR YOU,
ABANDON EVERYTHING FOR YOU—
I SWEAR UPON THE STARS.

I'D CHALLENGE ANY KING FOR YOU,
I'D SUFFER ANY STING FOR YOU.
I WOULD DO ANYTHING FOR YOU—
AND THAT IS JUST THE START....

(FADE TO BLACK)

SCENE TEN: WEST EGG—THE INTERIOR OF NICK’S COTTAGE

(Due to its small size the main room serves as both a living room and dining room. Again, there are minimal props: a settee and matching armchair an end table with a porcelain lamp, an umbrella stand, perhaps a shelf or fireplace with an antique clock, in addition to a bookshelf and a table set against the wall to preserve space. The effect should be simple and homey. Two entrances lead to the kitchen and ostensibly to other rooms inside. When the lights come up, Nick is seen reading in the armchair. The patter of rain outdoors is apparent.)

(Doorbell rings.)

NICK
(rising and opening the door)

May I help you?

MAN’S VOICE OUTSIDE

We are here per Mr. Gatsby’s instructions.

NICK
(caught somewhat off-guard)

To do what?

SERVANT
(entering peremptorily)

To set up for the luncheon.

NICK

What luncheon?

SERVANT
(enters nonplussed, carrying a tray)

Can’t say. All I do is follow orders. And if Mr. Gatsby says go over and set up a luncheon, well, it’s not something to be debated. If it’s okay with you, we’ll get started.

(He proceeds as if anticipating acquiescence, motioning others to enter while Nick steps back, incredulous. Enter several domestics carrying fresh flowers, a tea setting, trays of small finger sandwiches, and desserts.)

All right if we use this table?

NICK

Now wait a minute. Is Mr. Gatsby under the impression that I'm hosting something this afternoon?

SERVANT

Given all this food, I suspect so. Not to worry, sir. We'll be out of your hair in a jiffy.

(They busy themselves with setting the table.)

NICK

Well, we're going to see about this. (He picks up the telephone) Operator? I'd like the number of a Mr. Gatsby. Yes, *that* Mr. Gatsby. In East Egg.

(While Nick is waiting, Gatsby enters through the open door.)

GATSBY

Hello, Nick. Ah, good. Things seem to be shaping up.

NICK
(putting down the phone)

Gatsby, what in God's name is going on here?

GATSBY

I want to thank you, old sport, for doing this. It means the world to me.

NICK

Doing what? I don't have a clue what's happening!

GATSBY

Why, the luncheon, of course. With your cousin and Jordan Baker.

NICK

Now hold on a minute. You don't for a minute believe Daisy is coming here?

GATSBY

Isn't she? Jordan said you'd arranged it.

NICK

Look, I don't know what Jordan said or didn't say, but I'm afraid you're mistaken. I'm not expecting—

GATSBY

Then there must have been some miscommunication. Jordan's driving her over right now. (He paces anxiously.) I only hope the rain lets up. The papers said it might.

NICK

(laughing in disbelief)

Gatsby, I almost believe you think this is going to happen... (At the sound of a car horn outside, Nick goes to the door and looks out.) On second thought, maybe it *is* —

(He crosses to the door, opening it. There is another low rumble of thunder.)

JORDAN'S VOICE (OFFSTAGE)

Oh, Nick? Do you have an umbrella handy? It's starting to come down.

NICK

Yes. Just a second. (He takes an umbrella out of the stand and begins to exit, speaking to Gatsby as he does.) We'll get to the bottom of this. In a minute.

(Gatsby flits about nervously, then, grabbing a newspaper, he suddenly exits the interior. There is a delay of a few seconds before Jordan enters, followed by Nick and Daisy.)

JORDAN

Thank God there are still gentlemen. That rain would have ruined my new dress.

DAISY

And my new shoes. (stepping in and looking about) So this is where you've been hiding all summer. It's absolutely charming. (She sees the table.) And look at this delightful spread! Why, there's food enough for twenty and we make only three—

NICK

That I can explain. (The doorbell rings.)

DAISY

You're expecting others?

NICK

No. Not exactly. You see— (He is flummoxed.) Just a second.

(Nick opens the door. Enter Gatsby. He stands in the doorway forlorn, rain-soaked, like a dog left out in the rain. When he enters, he does so timidly. Nick, after a very pregnant pause)

Daisy—I think you may already know Mr.—

DAISY

Gatsby...

(There is a palpable, discomfiting but wondrous silence as if neither Gatsby nor Daisy can fully comprehend this reality.)

JORDAN

(sensing the awkwardness and taking Nick by the arm)

Nick, why don't you show me 'round that lovely little garden I saw 'round back?

NICK

But it's still raining—

JORDAN

Yes. That'll make it more fragrant. I just love the smell of flowers in the rain. Don't you? (She ushers him out.)

(For what seems like a lifetime, Gatsby and Daisy stand there in silence, frozen in a tableaux until Daisy finally speaks.)

DAISY

Jay. Is it really you?

GATSBY
(crossing to her)

Daisy.

DAISY

It's been such a long time.

GATSBY

Five years.

DAISY

Five? It seems but yesterday that you were leaving for the war, and I was worried sick that you'd be—

GATSBY
(crossing to her and taking her hand)

Shhh, I know. I know, Daisy. But here I am. Safe and sound.

DAISY
(trance-like)

Safe and sound. And now you're—

GATSBY

Living here, right next door—and directly across from your house. Most nights, if the fog's not thick, I can just about make out the green light at the end of your dock.

DAISY
(emotionally overcome)

Oh, Jay, here I'd given you up for dead, and now you reappear out of nowhere. It doesn't seem real.

GATSBY

I'm sorry if I frightened you.

DAISY
(composing herself)

Frightened? No. You just caught me off-guard is all. I'm happy to see you, Jay. I truly am. (after a long pause) But tell me. Was it as bad as they say? Over there?

GATSBY

Yes. War's a dirty thing, Daisy. There's nothing romantic about it. All that got me through it was the dream of making it back to you and picking up where we—

DAISY
(turning away, embarrassed)

Jay, a lot...has happened in those five years. (turning back) I'm married now. To Tom Buchanan.

GATSBY

I know. I read the banns in the paper. After I was stateside.

DAISY

And I have a child. A wonderful little girl.

GATSBY

Yes, I know that, too. (There is a long pause.) Look, Daisy. I understand. You did what you had to do. You couldn't be sure that I'd make it through and you had to get on with your life. But I've come back now, and we can start over. The way it was meant to be.

DAISY

Oh, Jay, I don't know what to say. This is all so—unexpected...

(They each walk to different sides of the stage, Gatsby chagrined by the emotional turmoil his reappearance has created, Daisy torn between past love and present happiness. The song they sing is thus less a duet than a pair of soliloquies, both Gatsby and Daisy acknowledging the awkwardness of their reunion and their mutual inability to put their emotions adequately into words.)

14. I NEVER KNOW WHEN (GATSBY AND DAISY)

GATSBY

I NEVER KNOW WHEN, I NEVER KNOW HOW.

I NEVER CAN SENSE THE RIGHT TIME, BUT POSTPONE AND DELAY AND
CONFOUND.

I NEVER KNOW WHEN, I NEVER KNOW HOW.

I NEVER CAN FIND THE RIGHT WORDS, BUT BELABOR, CONFUSE AND GO
'ROUND.

I NEVER KNOW WHEN, I NEVER KNOW HOW TO WHISPER THE WORDS THAT
MIGHT JUST ALLOW...

AGAIN AND AGAIN...IT'S HAPPENING NOW. I NEVER KNOW WHEN NOR HOW...

DAISY

I NEVER KNOW WHAT, I NEVER KNOW WHY.

I NEVER AM SURE OF THE ONES AND THE THINGS I'M MADE HAPPIEST BY.

I NEVER KNOW WHAT, I NEVER KNOW WHY.

I NEVER KNOW WHETHER TO JUMP AT A CHANCE OR STAND IDLY BY

I NEVER KNOW WHAT, I NEVER KNOW WHY I DO WHAT I DO—I JUST CLOSE MY
EYES.

AGAIN AND AGAIN, I CANNOT DENY—I NEVER KNOW WHAT NOR WHY

GATSBY & DAISY, IN UNISON

TRYING AND TRYING, IT'S SO MYSTIFYING TO NEVER BE SURE WHAT TO DO.

SIGHING AND SIGHING, THERE'S NO USE DENYING OUR FAILURE TO FOLLOW ON
THROUGH.

GATSBY & DAISY, ALTERNATELY

I NEVER KNOW WHO [I NEVER KNOW WHO], I NEVER KNOW WHERE [I NEVER KNOW WHERE].

GATSBY

I NEVER KNOW WHETHER A WHIM WILL EMBOLDEN MY SPIRIT TO DARE.

GATSBY & DAISY ALTERNATELY

I NEVER KNOW WHO [I NEVER KNOW WHO], I NEVER KNOW WHERE [I NEVER KNOW WHERE].

DAISY

I NEVER KNOW WHAT MIGHT PERCHANCE WERE I SUDDENLY 'DEVIL-MAY-CARE'..

GATSBY & DAISY, ALTERNATELY

I NEVER KNOW WHO [I NEVER KNOW WHO], I NEVER KNOW WHERE [I NEVER KNOW WHERE]

GATSBY

TO FINALLY TURN

DAISY

TO FINALLY SHARE.

GATSBY AND DAISY

AGAIN AND AGAIN...IT SEEMS SO UNFAIR...I NEVER KNOW WHO NOR WHERE,
WHO NOR WHERE, WHO NOR WHERE....

JORDAN
(peeking in)

Yoo-hoo. I hate to interrupt, but I've had quite enough horticulture for one afternoon. It's even stopped raining and a beautiful rainbow's come out.

GATSBY
(hearing her but almost oblivious to her comment)

Would you like to see where I live, Daisy? It's just across the lawn.

DAISY

You don't mean that magnificent showplace that we passed as we turned in?

GATSBY

Yes. I had it brought here, stone by stone. From France.

DAISY
(to Jordan and Nick)

I can't wait to see it. You two lovers entertain yourselves. Jay and I are going for a walk. (They exit. Upon their departure Nick closes his umbrella and slams it into the stand petulantly.)

JORDAN

Oh, for heaven's sake, Nick, stop being such a spoil-sport.

NICK

I just don't like being deceived in this manner.

JORDAN

Why? It was going to happen. Sooner or later. Besides, if Tom can play the field, why can't Daisy?

NICK

At least he carries out his indiscretions in private.

JORDAN

If you consider taking telephone calls from your mistress during dinner 'private.' And what crime is Daisy committing? She's meeting an old friend, someone who's built himself up from nothing solely to get *her* back.

NICK

Back?

JORDAN

You heard me. You think that house, this luncheon, all those spectacular parties are for himself? He's been waiting *five whole years* to prove to Daisy that he's made it. He thinks the only reason she didn't wait for him was money. Because he could not compete with a blue blood mastiff like Tom Buchanan. Everything, *everything* he's done, is for Daisy.

NICK

(stunned by the enormity of this assertion)

And? What does he expect? That she'll drop Tom for him?

JORDAN

Yes, frankly. That's why he's showing her the house. As a testament to his making it. Once she divorces Tom, he expects she'll move in.

NICK

(walks away, then turns)

Look. I *know* Tom. And he's not going to let his wife and child go without a fight.

JORDAN

Perhaps. But this latest affair of his isn't his first, you know. He's been cheating on Daisy since their honeymoon—

NICK

I...I don't believe it.

JORDAN

No? The first was with a chambermaid in the Santa Barbara hotel—oh, it doesn't take much to lead *him* off the straight and narrow. Then, when his wife was in labor, he was nowhere to be found. Though we scoured all of his favorite hangouts. And now, this dalliance with this other woman...He continues tomcatting around as if nothing can ever satisfy him. Daisy deserves better.

NICK

(crossing to her)

And Gatsby's your idea of 'better?' Look. You've heard the rumors. He's a bootlegger. He *was* a German spy. For all we know he could have been best pals with the Kaiser.

JORDAN

Like you said, *rumors*... Truth is nobody knows *anything* certain about Gatsby—other than his having a seemingly inexhaustible supply of money. Old money? New money? Who cares? As long as he spends it as if the world's about to end, no one's complaining. All I know is that *he* loves Daisy—and she deserves someone to love back. So get over it. (She exits. Nick hesitates, then plops himself petulantly in a chair.)

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE ELEVEN: THE EXTERIOR OF THE SAME, LATER

(Gatsby and Daisy return from what has been an elaborate tour of his mansion. Ideally this scene should be played downstage and spotlighted.)

GATSBY

(heard offstage as he reenters with Daisy)

And that's about everything. Save for the wine cellar, of course. And the dock.

DAISY

I love it! I love every inch of it. It's like something out of a...a fairy tale. Oh, Jay, it's remarkable what you've accomplished. Jordan says you host the most wonderful parties, parties that everyone says are the rage.

GATSBY

Every Saturday night. With the finest entertainment money can buy. Come see for yourself.

DAISY

Well, I—I really don't get out much anymore. With the baby, you understand. And Tom—well, he isn't keen on mingling with strangers.

GATSBY

Oh, I'm sure he'd find something to keep him amused.

DAISY

Well—I'll mention it to him. But I doubt that he'll embrace it. *(Calling out)* Nick? Jordan? *(There is no response.)* Now I wonder where those two could have wandered... *(Turning back to Gatsby, wonderstruck)* You made it, Jay. You really did. It must feel wonderful to have achieved all this for yourself

GATSBY

(quizzically)

Myself? All of this, Daisy, all of it is for you.

DAISY

Oh, Jay. I don't know what to say.

GATSBY

Say you still love me. Say that things between us can still be the same.

DAISY

Can they? Possibly?

GATSBY

They will—if you only believe it.

15. THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES (GATSBY AND DAISY)

GATSBY

HERE WE ARE. WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES.

DAISY

SO BIZARRE...HAND IN HAND, TWO LOVERS LONG DENIED.

GATSBY

NEITHER FULLY KNOWING WHAT'S WAITING 'ROUND THE BEND.

DAISY

NEITHER FULLY SHOWING THE FEARS WHICH WE CONTEND.

GATSBY AND DAISY

AND WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES, HOPING ALL

UNCHARTED TRIALS TO COME ARE TRIALS WE CAN SURVIVE.

NOTHING MORE FOR US TO SAY OR DO BUT WAIT TILL THEY ARRIVE AS

WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES...

DAISY

Oh, Jay, there so much to be undone. Can we really do it?

GATSBY

Daisy, we're going to start over again. Like none of this ever happened.

DAISY

HERE WE ARE, WE'RE STANDING ON THE THRESHOLD OF OUR DREAMS.

GATSBY

BRUISED AND SCARRED...SO MUCH LOST EXISTENCE TO REDEEM.

DAISY

CAN THE HEART RECOVER FEELINGS FROM THE PAST?

GATSBY

CAN IT REDISCOVER FEELINGS MEANT TO LAST?

GATSBY AND DAISY

AND WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES, HOPING ALL
UNCHARTED TRIALS TO COME ARE TRIALS WE CAN SURVIVE.

NOTHING MORE FOR US TO SAY OR DO BUT WAIT TILL THEY ARRIVE AS
WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES...

GATSBY

DARING A FUTURE UNSEEN.

DAISY

SHARING AN OUTCOME UNKNOWN.

GATSBY & DAISY

BOTH SWEARING A LOVE THAT WILL WEATHER THIS LIFE, NOW AND FOREVER
OUR OWN.

AND WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES, HOPING ALL
UNCHARTED TRIALS TO COME ARE TRIALS WE CAN SURVIVE.

NOTHING MORE FOR US TO SAY OR DO BUT WAIT TILL THEY ARRIVE

AS WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES,

AS WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES.

AS WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES...

(FADE TO BLACK)

END ACT ONE

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE: WEST EGG—GATSBY’S MANSION

(Saturday night, two weeks later. As on every summer weekend past, the festivities are in full swing, the attendees celebrating their youth, wealth and carpe diem attitude with drink, dance, and song.)

16. LET THE PARTY BEGIN! (SOCIALITES)

SOCIALITES

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

LET THE CROWD SHUFFLE IN!

LIFE’S A SHORT RACE---YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO THROUGH IT AT A FAST PACE.

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

THESE ARE HIGH TIMES, SELL AND BUY TIMES.

TURN A PROFIT, MAKE YOURSELF A HAUL.

THESE ARE CRY TIMES. HUMBLE PIE TIMES.

LOSE YOUR SHIRT AND FACE A MARGIN CALL.

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

LET THE CROWD SHUFFLE IN!

LIFE’S A SHORT RACE---YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO THROUGH IT AT A FAST PACE.

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

THESE ARE DRY DAYS, LOW SUPPLY DAYS.

PROHIBITION’S GOT US IN A FUNK.

THESE ARE GAY DAYS, SEIZE-THE-DAY DAYS.

BOOTLEG? BATHTUB? BOTH STILL GET YOU DRUNK!

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

LET THE CROWD SHUFFLE IN!

LIFE'S A SHORT RACE---YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO THROUGH IT AT A FAST PACE.

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

(A vocal trio, backed by the big band, breaks into a popular ditty called "The Girl with Strawberry Hair" as the crowd cheers and dances.)

CROONER 1

YOU GOTTA LOVE THAT GIRL WITH STRAWBERRY HAIR.

CROONER 2

SHE'S GOTTA A SIREN SONG AND JEZEBEL STARE.

CROONER 3

AND A DELILAH DANCE DESIGNED TO ENSNARE.

ALL THREE IN UNISON

I GOTTA HAVE THAT GIRL TONIGHT.

CROONER 1

SHE'S GOT A TEMPERAMENT THAT'S MERRY AND MILD.

CROONER 2

SHE'S GOT A SENTIMENT AND SMILE OF A CHILD.

CROONER 3

SHE'S GOT A CRAZY STREAK THAT'S DRIVING ME WILD.

ALL THREE IN UNISON

I GOTTA HAVE THAT GIRL TONIGHT!

CROONER 1

WHEN I'M READY FOR SLEEP AND I TURN OUT THE LIGHT,
SHE BEDEVILS MY DREAMS LIKE A WRAITH IN THE NIGHT.

CROONER 1

YOU GOTTA LOVE THAT GIRL WITH STRAWBERRY HAIR.

CROONER 2

SHE'S GOTTA A SPIDER'S TOUCH AND MATADOR'S FLAIR.

CROONER 3

AND WHEN YOU'RE IN HER ARMS YOU HAVEN'T A PRAYER.

ALL THREE IN UNISON

I GOTTA HAVE THAT GIRL TONIGHT.

(There is a percussive and brass bridge in which jazz musicians play out to an animated response from the crowd. During this wild interlude Daisy and Tom enter the scene but remain on the periphery.)

SOCIALITES

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

LET THE CROWD SHUFFLE IN!

LIFE'S A SHORT RACE---YOU MIGHT AS WELL GO THROUGH IT AT A FAST PACE.

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

LET THE PARTY BEGIN!

(The number concludes to exuberant cheers and applause. The band continues playing a version of *Ain't Misbehavin'* below the dialogue.)

NICK
(to Gatsby)

What a show, Jay! You've outdone yourself this time.

GATSBY

It's about to get even better.

NICK

How so?

GATSBY
(leaning toward him triumphantly)

Daisy's arrived.

NICK

Well, I'll be.

DAISY
(crossing exuberantly as she spots Gatsby)

Jay! This is amazing! The band, the lights, the people...It's fantastic! Hello, Nick. Where've you been hiding? You haven't been by in weeks. (then, trying to hide her awkwardness) Jay, this is my husband—Tom Buchanan

GATSBY
(extending his hand and masking his discomfort)

Nice meeting you, Mr. Buchanan. Welcome to Gatsby's.

TOM
(shaking it, but only as a formality)

How do you do? Say, where can a guy wet his whistle around here?

GATSBY

You'll find several stations along the side of the house. Additional ones inside.

TOM

C'mon, Nick. You can show me around this joint. (then, as an afterthought) You want something, Daisy?

GATSBY

Please. Allow me the pleasure.

TOM

(He shrugs, indifferent to the request.)

Suit yourself. It's your party.

(He exits with Nick)

GATSBY
(to Daisy)

Champagne?

DAISY

Delighted.

GATSBY

Waiter, a glass for the lady.

WAITER

Yes, sir, Mr. Gatsby.

(After he secures Daisy a drink, they walk
downstage, away from the festivities.)

GATSBY

You look beautiful in that blue dress. It brings out your eyes.

DAISY

This rag? Oh, I've had it for years. I just don't get to wear it much anymore.

GATSBY

Like someone I remember...a girl on a swing, flirting precociously with the dashing heroes of
Camp Taylor.

DAISY

Hmm...I only remember one of them. An obstinate young man who stood sentry outside my door for the entire summer of 1917—and who wouldn't take no for an answer.

GATSBY
(laughing)

And who would have rued it forever if he'd had.

DAISY

Oh, Jay, it weren't for that damned war things might have been so different for us.

GATSBY

Forget it, Daisy. You know your parents would have forbidden it. Like on that night you tried to come to New York.

DAISY

Oh, why is someone's name and bank account so goddamn important? Can't love ever be enough by itself? (She strokes his face gently.) Oh, Jay, fate has made such a mess of our lives.

GATSBY

Not one that can't be fixed.

DAISY

How do you mean?

GATSBY

I mean by leaving Tom and marrying me.

(There is a palpable and elongated silence.)

Look, Daisy. I may have been a nobody. I may not have been fit to sit at any of these people's tables. But now these same people flock here like pilgrims and glut themselves on *my* food and *my* booze and *my* entertainment. Yes, they can still keep me out of their precious East Egg neighborhood, but they greet me as a peer in every other place people like them favor. Maybe I couldn't measure up then, but I sure can now.

DAISY

You...want me to leave Tom.

GATSBY

Why not? He doesn't love you. He's never loved you. Hell, he doesn't even respect you. If he did, why all these other women?

DAISY

You know about...(He nods.) Oh, Jay. I don't know what to say.

GATSBY

Say you still love me. Say that you're still the girl I fell in love with in Louisville.

DAISY

Jay, all of this is so quick. I need time.

GATSBY

I've waited *five years*, Daisy. That's enough time. (He turns away, hurt by her indecision. Then, returning, apologetically.) I'm sorry. I didn't mean to—

DAISY

Yes, you did. You couldn't help it.

17. OPEN UP YOUR HEART (GATSBY AND DAISY)

DAISY

THERE YOU STAND, FAILING TO UNDERSTAND

FEELINGS YOU'VE NEVER KNOWN.

WHAT COMMAND! READY TO REPRIMAND, CAST THE VERY FIRST STONE.

HAUNTED STILL BY THE PAST, DAUNTED STILL BY YOUR CASTE...

OPEN UP YOUR HEART. LET ME EASE THE STRAIN.

LET ME SHARE THE BURDEN THERE. LET ME HEAL THE PAIN.

OPEN UP YOUR HEART. LET THIS LOVER IN.

I'LL PUT FAITH IN YOUR HOPES AND YOUR DREAMS IF YOU'LL ONLY BEGIN
TO OPEN UP YOUR HEART.

GATSBY

THERE YOU SIT, HESITANT TO ADMIT FEELINGS YOU'VE ALWAYS KNOWN.
SO MIS-FIT...WED TO A COUNTERFEIT TOO WELL-OFF TO DISOWN;
WHY ATTEMPT TO DEFEAT HEARTS SO DESTINED TO MEET?

OPEN UP YOUR HEART. LET ME EASE THE STRAIN.

LET ME SHARE THE BURDEN THERE. LET ME HEAL THE PAIN.

OPEN UP YOUR HEART. LET THIS LOVER IN.

I'LL REKINDLE YOUR HOPES AND YOUR DREAMS IF YOU'LL ONLY BEGIN TO
OPEN UP YOUR HEART.

DAISY

YOUR INSECURITY'S A KING YOU MUST DETHRONE!

GATSBY

ONCE FREE, YOUR LONELY HEART WILL SOAR TO HEIGHTS UNKNOWN!

GATSBY & DAISY, ALTERNATELY

OPEN UP YOUR HEART. [OPEN UP YOUR HEART.]

LET ME EASE THE STRAIN. [LET ME EASE THE STRAIN.]

DAISY

LET ME SHARE THE BURDEN THERE.

GATSBY

LET ME HEAL THE PAIN.

GATSBY AND DAISY, IN UNISON

OPEN UP YOUR HEART. LET THIS LOVER IN.

I'LL BE PART OF YOUR HOPES AND YOUR DREAMS IF YOU'LL ONLY BEGIN TO

OPEN UP YOUR HEART. OPEN UP YOUR HEART. OPEN UP YOUR HEART....

(They embrace as Nick and Tom reenter the scene, carrying drinks. Tom observes the action from across the stage initially unsure what to make of it. Then, putting his glass down, he crosses peremptorily to Daisy, stepping between her and Gatsby.)

TOM

C'mon, Daisy. We're going home.

DAISY

But Tom, we just got here.

TOM

I've got a splitting headache, and I want to go, okay. We thank you, Mr. Gatsby. We had a swell time. (He escorts her away by the elbow, not violently but clearly against her will.)

GATSBY

I'm sorry you're not feeling well, Mr. Buchanan. Perhaps another—

TOM

Goodnight, Nick. Good night, Mr. Gatsby. (Daisy and Tom exit.)

(Slowly, the music plays itself out, the guests departing in an ethereal fashion. This effect can be achieved through a gradual dimming of the scene and by a slow, swirling, kaleidoscopic effect that visually suggests the passing of time. Eventually all that are left are Nick, seated, Gatsby, and one or two servants unobtrusively cleaning the party's residue and prepping the set for the next scene change.)

GATSBY
(disconsolate)

She didn't like it.

NICK

Of course, she liked it.

GATSBY

She didn't have a good time. (He paces, like a troubled prince.) I feel so...distant from her...She...doesn't understand. She used to be able to...

NICK

I wouldn't ask too much of her. You can't repeat the past.

GATSBY
(incredulously)

Can't repeat the past? Why, of course, you can? (He moves downstage left, determinedly.) You'll see, Nick. I'm going to fix everything. Just like it was before. And when the time's right, we'll go back to Louisville and be married, the way we should've been before things went...off-track.

NICK
(rising and coming to his side)

Stop fooling yourself, Jay. You're not the first guy to be dumped by a girl, you know.

GATSBY
(excitedly)

I tell you Daisy loves me. I *know* she does. She just needs more time, that's all. It's just so hard to be patient...

NICK

I don't know. It might just be better to forget Daisy and move on.

18. SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW (NICK)

NICK

SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW AND YOUR LOVE MAY BLOOM AGAIN.

SEEK YOUR LIGHT ON SOME OTHER BALCONY.

THOUGH YOUR HEART MAY BURN AND YOUR SOUL MAY YEARN, SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW AND BE FREE.

SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW. LET YOUR WOUNDS BEGIN TO MEND.

SAY GOODNIGHT TO THIS HOPELESS FANTASY.

THOUGH THE PAST MAY TEMPT, FOR YOUR HEART'S CONTENT SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW FAITHFULLY.

THROW AWAY EVERY SENTIMENTAL RELIC OF THE PAST. (GATSBY: I CAN'T DO THAT.)

BID GOODBYE TO SUCH PASSIONATE EXTREMES. (GATSBY: I STILL BELIEVE.)

CAST AWAY EVERY VESTIGE OF DELUSIONAL ROMANCE. YESTERDAY'S BUT A LONG FORGOTTEN DREAM. (GATSBY: HOLD ONTO LOVE THOUGH LOVE DECEIVE.)

SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW AND YOUR LOVE MAY BLOOM AGAIN.

HITCH YOUR HOPES TO A BRIGHTER DESTINY.

THOUGH YOUR WILL MAY BEND AND YOUR HEART MAY REND, SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW AND BE FREE.

THOUGH YOUR WILL MAY BEND AND YOUR HEART MAY REND, SET YOUR SIGHTS ON TOMORROW AND YOU'LL SEE...

GATSBY
(patting him on the shoulder)

You're a good egg, Nick—and a true friend. (then, almost helplessly) But it's Daisy. Be seeing you. (He exits.)

BLACKOUT

SCENE TWO: WEST EGG—GATSBY’S MANSION (THREE WEEKS LATER).

One by one properties that were central to the party scene are removed by livery of an unsavory sort. Chairs are folded, lights unstrung, umbrellas closed, the bar removed. Though an isolated outdoor furnishing or two remain, the scene has a pervasive sense of abandonment, as if its primary occupant has forsaken the premises. Enter Nick.

NICK

(walking up to a man removing a chair)

Excuse me. Is Mr. Gatsby at home?

WOLFSHEIM’S CRONY

(gruffly, as if perturbed)

Nope.

NICK

Oh. I’m his neighbor, Mr. Carraway. I haven’t seen him in some time and, well, I was afraid he might be ill.

WOLFSHEIM’S CRONY

He’s fine. I’ll tell him you asked.

NICK

(gesturing in the direction from whence he came)

Isn’t that his car parked in the drive?

WOLFSHEIM’S CRONY

I told you he’s not here. I don’t know whose car that is.

NICK

You sure—

WOLFSHEIM’S CRONY

Look, he’s not home, I don’t know where he is, and I don’t know when he’s coming back. Now if you’ll excuse me, I’ve got work to do. (He starts to exit around back.)

NICK
(calling after him)

Wait. Please tell him I called. My name's Nick. Nick Carraway.

WOLFSHEIM'S CRONY
(leaving)

Right.

(Nick pauses a moment, then turns to leave. As he does, Gatsby exits from the interior and comes down the stairs, calling after him.)

GATSBY

Nick! Hold on.

NICK

Jay. What's going on? Three Saturdays ago everything just stopped. Then I saw complete strangers dismantling things. I finally thought I'd come over and find out for myself—

GATSBY

I appreciate your concern. Nick. I really do.

NICK

Where is everyone?

GATSBY

Gone. I fired all the staff. There's only a few of Wolfsheim's acquaintances about—though I'm afraid they're not very personable.

NICK

Fired them? What on earth for?

GATSBY

Privacy. You see—Daisy comes over every afternoon now. And I don't want gossip.

NICK

Daisy comes here?

GATSBY

Yes. We've got so many things to talk about, so much lost time to recover.

NICK

I see. And Tom? What does he think of this arrangement?

GATSBY

Tom's through. Daisy's going to leave him.

NICK

Daisy leave Tom? I don't believe it.

GATSBY

She is, though. She just hasn't told him.

NICK

Look, Jay. You're setting yourself up for a big letdown. I know Daisy and she's not very—

GATSBY

Decisive? I know. It's a big step for her and she's terrified of making it. But we've talked it out and she's finally agreed that it has to be done. She's planning on telling him tomorrow.

NICK

I'll believe it when I see it.

GATSBY

And you will. In fact, come along. You're her cousin. I'm sure she could use the support. I'll be heading there around noon.

NICK

And what happens afterwards? Assuming, of course, she does tell him.

GATSBY

I bring her back here. For good. Shall I pick you up, or will you get there on your own?

NICK

If you don't mind, I'll ride with you.

GATSBY

Good. You know, things are finally working out, old sport. You were wrong about not being able to repeat the past.

NICK

I hope I was.

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE THREE: EAST EGG—THE BUCHANAN RESIDENCE

(The décor is the same as in the earlier scene in the Buchanan residence though the position of the characters has changed. Jordan sits in an easy chair, cooling herself with a paper fan. Daisy stands, back to the audience, smoking and staring distractedly out onto the bay. Tom is not present.)

(The doorbell rings.)

DAISY
(rising)

I'll get it.

TOM'S VOICE, UPSTAIRS

Who's that? Are we expecting anyone?

DAISY

I don't know, really...

(Enter Nick, followed by Gatsby.)

JORDAN

Well, look who's arrived. Forgive me if I don't rise. It's absolutely stifling. Must you always pick the hottest day to visit?

NICK

Hello, Jordan. Daisy.

DAISY
(crossing to him)

Nick. How have you been? (She pauses, seeing Gatsby behind him.) Hello, Jay. I wasn't expecting you so—

TOM
(descending the stairs and booming a greeting)

Nick! I didn't know you were coming. (spying Gatsby and acknowledging him coolly) Oh, hello, Mr. Gatsby. To what do we owe this visit?

NICK

Jay was out showing me his roadster and we—

TOM

You mean that yellow eyesore people have been chattering about?

GATSBY

It's a Rolls Royce. Custom made in England. It's got quite the pick-up.

TOM

(largely ignoring him)

And quite the color. Fix you a drink, Nick?

NICK

All right.

TOM

I'd offer you one, Mr. Gatsby, but I hear you don't touch the stuff. (He pours out two whiskeys.) Jordan? Daisy? (Daisy shakes her head.)

JORDAN

None for me, please. I'm in training.

TOM

That so? (returning with the drinks) Here, Nick. At least someone'll join me.

(There is a noticeably discomfiting silence.)

Quite the party you had the other night, Mr. Gatsby. Big band...celebrities galore. Sorry we couldn't stay. Say, how'd you manage to get all that booze laid in without being busted?

GATSBY

The same way you get yours, I imagine.

TOM

Oh, I've got a bottle or two stashed away, I admit, but nothing like the volume you were pouring. You must have quite the connection.

DAISY

Really, what does it matter where the booze comes from? You didn't have any qualms about drinking it.

TOM

Easy, Daisy. I'm just trying to make conversation.

DAISY

Oh, it's too hot for chatter. Let's go someplace cooler. Like town.

TOM

Town? That's ridiculous. It'll be twenty degrees hotter there. And an hour's drive.

DAISY

I don't care. I'm suffocating in here. If you won't go, I'll drive there myself. (She goes to exit.)

TOM

(putting down his drink and following)

Okay, okay. We'll go into town. (turning to Nick) Jesus, Nick, I don't know what's gotten into her lately. (rhetorically) Shall we bring along something to drink? (then, answering his own question). I'll grab a bottle. (to Gatsby as he crosses to the liquor cabinet) Say, how 'bout letting me try that fancy car of yours?

GATSBY

(understandably reluctant)

I'm afraid there isn't enough gas. I mean, for the city and back.

TOM

I'll fill it up. I know a place on the way.

GATSBY

(Cornered, Gatsby shrugs in concession, handing him the keys.)

All right.

TOM

C'mon, Daisy. Let's see how this circus-wagon of his handles.

DAISY

No, you take Nick and Jordan. Jay and I will follow in the coupe.

TOM

(grudgingly)

All right. If that's what you want. C'mon you two. (to Daisy and Gatsby) See you at the Plaza. Last one there pays for the suite.

(Tom, Nick and Jordan exit. Gatsby crosses to Daisy, who smiles but avoids looking at him directly.)

GATSBY

You haven't told him you're leaving him.

DAISY

No.

GATSBY

But you have to tell him.

DAISY

I know. (She turns away from him in frustration) It seems so simple when you say it, but I can't muster the courage when I'm alone.

GATSBY

Shhh. You'll tell him at the hotel. I'll be right by your side, and you'll tell him you're leaving him. Promise?

DAISY

Yes. Jay. I'll tell him.

GATSBY

Remember. I'll be right there next to you. It'll make it easier.

DAISY

I know it will.

19. THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES (REPRISE)

GATSBY AND DAISY

AND WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES,
HOPING ALL UNCHARTED TRIALS TO COME ARE TRIALS WE CAN SURVIVE.
NOTHING MORE FOR US TO SAY OR DO BUT WAIT TILL THEY ARRIVE WHILE
WE'RE STANDING AT THE CROSSROAD OF OUR LIVES...

(They exit.)

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE FOUR: WILSON'S GARAGE, IN THE VALLEY OF ASHES

(The scene is the same as in Act One except that Wilson sits at a rickety card table, playing cards with Michaelis, the owner of the Greek diner up the block. Tom enters from rear.)

TOM

Say, doesn't anybody work around here anymore?

WILSON
(looking up over his shoulder)

Oh, Mr. Buchanan. I was just killing time with Michaelis here. He owns the diner next door.

MICHAELIS
(He rises.)

Georgie, I go now, yes? Maybe I come back later.

WILSON

Sure. We can start a new game.

MICHAELIS

Okay. (He backs out of the scene deferentially). Nice to meet you. (Tom nods.)

(Tom walks around as Wilson packs up the cards and folds the table. Meantime, Myrtle is seen surreptitiously peering out, drawn ostensibly by Tom's voice.)

TOM

Business that slow?

WILSON

Worse than you can imagine.

TOM

That's too bad, Wilson. Really.

WILSON

Me and Myrtle, we're thinking of moving out West somewhere. Somewhere you can still make a living.

TOM
(taken aback by this)

You and Myr— (He catches himself before he slips.) Mrs. Wilson—she's agreed to that?

WILSON

She will—whether she likes it or not. (talking confidentially) Between you and me, Mr. Buchanan I've just wised up to somethin' funny going on around here, though I haven't put it all together yet.

TOM

Funny?

WILSON

With Myrtle. All these trips to her sister...all these late arrivals home. I think she's seeing someone. In town.

TOM
(aware he is on dangerous ground)

You do. What makes you so sure?

WILSON

Oh, little things... The way she talks back to me, for instance. Life's been tough, you know, and we've never had much, but we've always stuck it out together. Now—well, she seems somehow...discontented.

TOM

Gee, I'm sorry to hear that, Wilson.

WILSON

Oh, it'll be all right—once we get outta here. Though if I ever catch that sonuvabitch she's been foolin' around with, I'll kill the bastard.

TOM
(trying to hide his discomfort)

Yes. Well, I'm heading into the city, Wilson, and I really need to get going. I'm sure everything will work out for you. One way or another.

WILSON
(resignedly)

You know, you put a lifetime of sweat into something and for what? Three strikes is all. A bad back, a cheating wife, and an empty wallet. (He moves towards the exterior.) You've been a loyal customer, Mr. Buchanan, and I appreciate the business. (He sees Gatsby's Rolls through the doorway.) Say, that's some new car you got there.

TOM

It isn't mine, I'm afraid. A friend's just letting me stretch its legs a bit.

WILSON

Fancy. And yellow as a lemon. It must really have some juice.

TOM

Look, I'd love to shoot the breeze, Wilson, but—

WILSON

Sorry. I didn't mean to hold you up. I'll fill it up right away. (They exit.)

(For a period of time the stage remains empty as Wilson fills the tank with gas. Enter Myrtle. Clearly perturbed, she cranes her neck by the doorway, endeavoring to hear the exchange between Tom and her husband.)

TOM (OFFSTAGE)

What do I owe you?

WILSON (OFFSTAGE)

A buck twenty.

TOM (OFFSTAGE)

Here. Keep the change. (There is the roar of a departing auto.)

WILSON

(returning and gazing at the bill until
becoming aware of his wife's presence.)

Well, how about that? He gave me ten dollars, Myrtle. On a buck twenty tank.

MYRTLE

Yeah? A real big-shot. Real big spender.

WILSON

Say, why don'tcha get dressed? We can get some lunch at the diner.

MYRTLE

(She looks at him with daggers.)

Now, don't paint the town red on my account, honey. You're gonna need that money. For Callee-for-nia.

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE FIVE: NEW YORK CITY—A SUITE AT THE PLAZA HOTEL.

(Lights come up on the sitting room of an opulent hotel suite at the Plaza. Tom stands, holding a glass, his back to the audience, ostensibly gazing out a large open window on the city street below. Daisy sits in an armchair, head toward the floor, Gatsby next to her on the chair arm. Jordan is stretched out on a matching divan, her head in Nick's lap. The furnishings in the scene can be the same as in the Buchanan residence but adorned by different color throws. On the coffee table is a whisky bottle, a bucket of ice, and several glasses. There is a sense of ubiquitous heat.)

TOM
(loosening his collar)

Christ, it's blazing in here. Not a hint of a breeze.

JORDAN

And there won't be any if you continue blocking that window.

TOM
(returning to where they are seated)

I warned you it'd be stifling, Daisy. (He reaches for some ice and picks up the bottle.) Refill, Nick?

NICK

No. I'm good for the moment.

TOM

I tell you, Daisy, this is the last time I indulge one of your foolish notions. It's at least ten degrees hotter in town.

GATSBY

Why don't you let her alone, old sport?

TOM

Excuse me?

GATSBY

I said, why don't you leave her alone.

TOM

And who are you to tell me how I should talk to my wife?

NICK

Relax, Tom. Everyone's on edge because of the temperature.

TOM

This has nothing to do with temperature.

DAISY

(rising, reluctant to confront the issue)

Tom, please. You were right. Let's go. We should never have come to town.

TOM

Just a minute, Daisy. I've got something to ask 'old sport' here. Just what kind of trouble are you trying to sow in my house?

DAISY

(desperately)

Please, Tom. Let's get out of here. Now.

TOM

We'll leave once Mr. Gatsby's answered my question.

GATSBY

(rising defiantly)

Your wife—doesn't love you. She never has loved you. She only married you because I was poor and away in the war.

TOM

(incredulous)

Doesn't love me? Why...you're out of your mind! Daisy and I have been happily married for over five years now. Tell him, Daisy.

(Daisy says nothing. Despite his self-confidence he is troubled by her silence.)

Say, what's going on here? Has this rube been putting ideas in your head? Trying to convince you you're unhappy?

GATSBY

I already told you what's been going on. Going on for five whole years, right under your nose.

TOM

Five years? (to Daisy) You've been seeing this character for five years?

GATSBY

No, not seeing—we couldn't meet—but both of us loved each other all that time, and you didn't know. I used to laugh that you could be so obtuse.

TOM

Look, I don't know what happened five years ago, but I can't see how you got anywhere near Daisy unless you delivered the groceries to the back door. Now, you can weave any fantasy you like, but Daisy loved me when she married me and she loves me now. (turning to Daisy) Come on, honey. Let's go.

GATSBY

Daisy's through listening to you.

TOM
(incredulous)

Through? And why's that?

GATSBY

Because she's leaving you.

TOM

For you? Don't be ridiculous.

DAISY
(crossing to Gatsby)

No, Tom. We're through. I am leaving you.

TOM

Leaving me? For whom? A two-bit crook who hasn't earned an honest buck in his life?
(scoffing) Oxford man—

NICK

He did go there. I've seen pictures.

TOM

Pictures, my— Why don't you tell them, Mr. Gatsby, the real truth about your 'Oxford' days?

GATSBY

(gamely, trying to hide his embarrassment)

All right. I did go there—though only for six weeks. It was an opportunity extended to American officers after the war.

NICK

See, I—

TOM

That's not the only whopper. All this stuff about being the child of rich Midwestern parents—that's another fable. I had someone check into his background. No one in the Heartland has ever heard of any 'Gatsby.' But he's sure in thick with Wolfsheim's shady crew, of that you can be certain.

JORDAN

Oh, so what? Everybody's hands are dirty.

TOM

Not like this guy's. Bootlegging, gambling—that's just the tip of it. Why, he's involved in doings so dark that people won't even talk about 'em. (to Daisy, softening his tone, as if aware of the precariousness of his situation) Baby, what's come over you? Haven't I always bought you the best things? Taken you the best places? Hell, I know I stray off the path once and awhile, but what man doesn't?

GATSBY

That's all over now, Mr. Buchanan. (to Daisy, trying to give her courage) Tell him, Daisy. Tell him you never loved him and it'll all be over.

DAISY

(repeating his words, almost mechanically,
as if aware of both their untruth and their
awful consequence.)

Loved him? How could I—possibly...

TOM

Never loved me? Not on our wedding night? Not in Kapiolani? Not when I carried you down
from the Punch Bowl to keep your shoes dry?

DAISY

(surrendering)

Oh, Jay, you want too much! I can't change the past. I *did* love him once—but I loved you, too.

GATSBY

You loved me 'too?'

TOM

Hell, she didn't know you were alive. Why, there are things between Daisy and me that you'll
never experience. She just needs to be reminded of them from time to time.

20. REMEMBER LOVE (TOM, DAISY & GATSBY)

TOM

REMEMBER LOVE? DINNERS IN FANCY PLACES? MEMORIES RETURN IN A FLOOD.

REMEMBER LOVE? TROPICAL ISLE EMBRACES? PASSIONS THAT BLAZED IN OUR
BLOOD?

A TRUST BETRAYED CAN BE RE-WON; A MOMENT STRAYED BE SOON UNDONE.

A HEART DISMAYED BE SOOTHED AND NUMBED IF YOU WOULD JUST
REMEMBER LOVE.

DAISY

REMEMBER LOVE? UNDATED PILLOWCASE. PHONE CALLS RECEIVED IN A
RUSH.

REMEMBER LOVE? TROLLOPS AND TRYSTING PLACES. SCANDALS YOUR
MONEY WOULD HUSH.

A BROKEN TRUST MAY BE RESTORED; A MOMENT'S LUST MAY BE IGNORED;
A BROKEN HEART'S FOREVER SCORED—OH, NO, I CAN'T REMEMBER LOVE.

GATSBY

SPARE US ALL YOUR LIES AND YOUR SUPPLICATIONS,
DAISY'S DONE WITH YOU AND YOUR FORNICATIONS.
SHE DESERVES A LIFE, NOT THIS TRIBULATION, HERE AND NOW.

GATSBY

WIPE OUT ALL THE PAST
SHOW NO HESITATION.
TELL HIM THAT HE'S THROUGH.
SHOW NO VACILLATION.
I'M THE ONE YOU LOVE.
MAKE YOUR DECLARATION NOW.

TOM

WHAT'S THIS?
YOU MUST BE MAD.
SHE'D NEVER LEAVE
FOR SUCH A CAD.

(In the ensuing trio Tom reminds Daisy
of their life together, slowly loosening her
resolve while Gatsby pleads with her to
leave him.)

TOM (alluringly)	DAISY (weakening)	GATSBY (desperately)
REMEMBER LOVE? TOKENS OF ADORATION? DRESSES AND DIAMONDS SUCH.	I DO RECALL. THINGS GREAT AND SMALL. THEY DO ENTHRALL.	COME LIVE WITH ME AND BE MY LOVE. I'VE HAD THE WORLD; IT'S NOT ENOUGH.

TOM	DAISY	GATSBY
REMEMBER LOVE? AMOROUS ASSIGNATIONS. CAFES AND CHALETS SO LUSH.	IT COMES TO MIND... TWO HEARTS ALIGNED... TWO HANDS ENTWINED...	ON STORMY SEAS, IN BLACKENED NIGHTS I'VE SEARCHED THE SHORE FOR YOUR GREEN LIGHT.

TOM

WHAT'S IN THE PAST IS PAST AND DONE.

DAISY AND TOM
(embracing)

LOVE MEANT TO LAST TAKES TWO, NOT ONE.

GATSBY, DAISY AND TOM
(in unison, Tom realizing that he's safe, Daisy
that she's too weak to leave her comfortable position,
and Gatsby that his dream is over.)

A DREAM DEFERRED'S A DREAM UNDONE...

TOM
(In unison with the others)

OH, YES, I CAN REMEMBER LOVE!

DAISY
(In unison with the others)

OH, YES, I CAN REMEMBER LOVE!

GATSBY
(In unison with the others)

OH, NO, I CAN'T REMEMBER LOVE...

TOM

Now, you start on home, Daisy. In Mr. Gatsby's car. (Gatsby and Daisy exit. Tom, after a significant pause, remarking) I know Daisy, through and through, Nick. She's not going anywhere.

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE SIX: WILSON'S GARAGE, IN THE VALLEY OF ASHES

(The scene is the same as in Scene Four. It is late afternoon, bright and sultry. Myrtle, who is dressed in a manner that hints at seduction, stands over Wilson, who is seated at a table, doing some calculations on a piece of paper. They are seemingly embroiled in an argument.)

MYRTLE

Whaddya mean you won't give me any money? How am I supposed to get to my sister's?

WILSON

I just don't see why you have to visit her so often. Especially with things being so tight. (getting to his feet and imploring her to look at the sheet) Myrtle, honey, look. I've been working things out, thinking what we might clear on this place. Yeah, it's seen better days, but the property's right on the road, and they say this whole area's going to be developed. Somebody might want to take a flyer on it.

MYRTLE

On this dump? I got news for ya, Willy Boy. Life has passed this place by, and it ain't making no u-turn.

WILSON

Try to show some optimism. The way I have it figured if we can clear—

MYRTLE

Look. Are you gonna give some money or not? I don't wanna miss the train.

WILSON

That's what I've been trying to tell you. If we're going to get outta here, we're gonna have to tighten things up a little.

MYRTLE

Tighten things up? If things were any tighter around here, I couldn't breathe.

WILSON

You'll feel different, Myrtle, once we get out West and make a new start. I promise you.

MYRTLE

We are not going anywhere. I'm tired of being yoked to a loser. If you won't spring for a train ticket, I'll hitch a ride into town.

WILSON

Myrtle, honey. Please. If you'd just look at the numbers you'd see that—

MYRTLE

(ripping the paper from his hands and tearing it in half)

I don't care about any of your numbers. I just want out of this dump. Now get outta my way before I knock you out of it.

(She exits the garage bay, approaching the roadway.
Then, heard offstage)

The yellow car. It's Tom. He's come back. Hey! Stop! Stop! (She runs out into the road.)

WILSON

(running outside after her)

Myrtle, watch out! (There is a screeching of brakes and the dull thud of a collision, followed by Wilson's long, agonizing "No.")

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE SEVEN: THE SAME BUT LATER

(As the lights come up, Wilson is seen kneeling on the floor, stroking the hair of his wife Myrtle's lifeless body. Michaelis, the owner of the diner, leans over his right shoulder, offering consolation. A crowd consisting of local merchants, customers from the diner, passing motorists and reporters press in, trying to see, though they are checked somewhat by a policeman who bars their entry. Two other policemen stand off to the side, comparing notes on the event.)

WILSON
(lamenting)

Oh, God! God! God! Why? Why?

POLICEMAN RESTRAINING THE CROWD
(turning his head)

They're here, chief.

CHIEF

All right. Clear a path now so they can get the gurney in. (He consults a notepad) Mr.—er, Michaels. If I could have a word with you.

MICHAELIS

Mich-ae-lis. I'm Greek.

CHIEF
(noting the correction)

Mich-ae-lis. Got it. I understand you witnessed the accident.

MICHAELIS

Yes, I see. She run out into the road. Then—bam—she get hit by the car.

CHIEF

Could you tell how fast the vehicle was going?

MICHAELIS

Fast. Very fast. Thirty, maybe forty miles an hour. I call as soon as I see.

(Tom and Nick approach the scene, peering over the heads of those in front of them.)

CHIEF

Is there anything else you can remember? Anything that might be helpful?

MICHAELIS

No. Nothing. But it was a fancy car. Real fancy.

TOM

(softly, to a bystander, his view of the
body still obstructed)

What's happened here?

BYSTANDER #1

Accident. A woman killed.

TOM

Collision?

BYSTANDER #1

Nah. Hit-and-run.

BYSTANDER #2

She run right out into the road. Like she knew who was driving. Poor kid. She didn't have a chance.

BYSTANDER #3

Bastard who hit her just kept goin'. Oughta throw the book at him when they catch him.

(The orderlies from the morgue start to
thread their way through the crowd.)

POLICEMAN RESTRAINING THE CROWD

All right, everybody, let 'em through. Let 'em pass.

NICK

This is really serious, Tom. That's vehicular homicide.

TOM
(seemingly putting it together)

Well, there's nothing we can do here. C'mon, Nick. Let the police do their job. (He pushes his way outside.)

CHIEF
(approaching the kneeling Wilson.)

Mr. Wilson, the fellas from the morgue have arrived. They'll be needing to collect the body.

WILSON
(disconsolate and resistant)

Please. Don't take her from me. Don't—.

CHIEF
(gently raising him to his feet)

I'm sorry, Mr. Wilson, but you'll have to let go.

(The orderlies lift Myrtle's body and place it on the gurney, then carefully roll it through the crowd and out of the scene. The chief continues, delicately.)

I know this is a terrible time, Mr. Wilson, but I need you to ask... Is there anything, anything you can recall that might help us catch who did this?

WILSON
(wiping his eyes)

I—I don't know. Myrtle and I... we had words and—

CHIEF

Words about what?

WILSON

Money. And then she got upset and ran out into the road.

OTHER POLICEMAN

Do you remember anything about the car? The license, maybe? The model?

WILSON

I don't know. Everything happened so fast— (He pauses as if struck by an epiphany) All I remember is—its color...

OTHER POLICEMAN

Well, that's something. What was it?

WILSON

Yellow. Bright yellow.

CHIEF

(pulling one officer aside)

Put out a call on it. It isn't much, but an impact like that had to do some damage. We might get lucky. (The policeman exits.) Hey. You gonna be okay here, Mr. Wilson? You want us to call anybody? Your children? Or a family member?

WILSON

(distractedly)

Thanks, but there's no one to call.

CHIEF

Well, if we hear anything, we'll let you know. (He exits, shaking his head) Terrible thing. Terrible.

MICHAELIS

Come back to my place, George. No good you stay here by yourself.

WILSON

Thanks, but I'll be all right. I just need to be alone for a while.

MICHAELIS

Okay, but you no feel good, you gimme a call, yes.

WILSON

Thanks, Mavros. I'll be all right.

(Michaelis exits. For a long time, Wilson stands staring at the floor. Then he begins mechanically to shut down the garage, dimming the lights while staring broodingly at the ground before him.)

21. SOMEONE MUST PAY (WILSON)

FLATTERED THEN USED...WOODED THEN REFUSED. AMOROUS CASTAWAY.

BATTERED AND BRUISED...MAIMED AND ABUSED. END OF A PASSION PLAY.

SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST PAY THE PRICE!

HE'LL RUE THE DAY HE TOOK THIS LIFE.

SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST SACRIFICE!

HIS JUDGMENT DAY HAS NOW ARRIVED.

SOMEONE MUST PAY!

LECHEROUS LUST...PARRY AND THRUST. INNOCENCE LED ASTRAY.

TRAITOROUS TRUST...CORPSE IN THE DUST. NO ONE SHOULD DIE THIS WAY.

SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST PAY THE PRICE!

HE'LL RUE THE DAY HE TOOK THIS LIFE.

SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST SACRIFICE!

HIS JUDGMENT DAY HAS NOW ARRIVED.

SOMEONE MUST PAY!

IF THERE WAS A GOD SOME KIND OF JUSTICE MIGHT ENSUE.

IF THERE WAS A GOD THIS SORDID LIFE HE MIGHT UNDO...

SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST PAY THE PRICE!

HE'LL RUE THE DAY HE TOOK THIS LIFE.

SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST SACRIFICE!

HIS JUDGMENT DAY HAS NOW ARRIVED.

SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST PAY! SOMEONE MUST PAY!

(He crosses behind the counter and removes a
cigar box, disclosing a gun wrapped in cloth.
He tucks it in his waistband and exits the garage.)

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE EIGHT: EAST EGG—THE BUCHANAN RESIDENCE

(The scene begins in darkness with only the sound of footsteps and the voices of Tom and Nick)

TOM (OFFSTAGE)

Dinner at the club is always first-rate, isn't it, Nick? Nothing like fresh catch on the table. Time for a nightcap?

NICK (OFFSTAGE)

Sure.

TOM (OFFSTAGE)

That's funny. All the lights are out. Daisy must be asleep. Wait'll I turn a light on for you.

(As the lights come up, Daisy is observed, huddled on the divan, her arms hugging her knees.)

Daisy? What're you doing here? I thought you'd gone to bed.

DAISY

There was an accident.

TOM
(not yet making the connection)

I know. Something terrible. Traffic's backed up for miles.

DAISY

No, Tom. *We* had an accident.

TOM
(coming to what he thinks is an understanding)

You mean Gatsby? He hit that woman? Why, that heartless cur didn't even have the decency to—. Well, now that you know what kind of guy he is, Daisy. Teach you to appreciate the one you've got.

DAISY

He wasn't driving, Tom. I was.

TOM

Wasn't driving? You mean you were driving the car, Daisy? The car that killed that woman?

DAISY

Yes. She ran out into the road. I tried to swerve, but there was a truck—Oh, the impact was horrifying. (She weeps uncontrollably.)

TOM
(pulling Nick aside)

Nick, this is serious. Leaving the scene of an accident is a felony. I'm afraid I can't drive you home. Got to reach out to my lawyer.

NICK

I understand. Just call me a cab.

TOM

Thanks. (Tom picks up the phone and calls; then, to Nick) It'll be a few minutes. He'll pick you up out front. (He escorts Nick to the door.) Eventful day, Nick...After this blows over, we'll have that drink. I promise.

NICK

Right. Good luck, Tom. With everything.

TOM

Thanks, Nick. Goodnight.

(Nick exits downstage right to floor level to await his taxi. The lights dim on the interior though the dialogue between Tom and Daisy continues *sotto voce* or in pantomime, Tom talking animatedly, Daisy merely nodding or responding monosyllabically. Eventually, Tom helps Daisy to her feet and escorts her upstairs, extinguishing the light as he exits. Enter Gatsby from the darkness.)

GATSBY

Hello, Nick.

NICK

Jay. What are you doing here?

GATSBY

I just wanted to make sure Daisy was okay. She's had quite a shock. (He pauses.) Was the woman killed?

NICK

Yes.

GATSBY

I thought so.

NICK

Why didn't you stop, Jay? Go back?

GATSBY

And see Daisy arrested? I couldn't bear that.

NICK

The police have a lead on the car, Jay. They're going to find it.

GATSBY

Not here they won't. I've driven it back to my place.

NICK

Your place? But it's bound to be found there as well.

GATSBY

I know.

NICK
(disbelievingly)

You—Wait a minute. You're not thinking of taking the rap for this? Daisy threw you over for her husband. You heard it yourself.

GATSBY

She's still Daisy, Nick. I can't have her endure that.

(There is a prolonged silence.)

NICK

How long you plan to stay out here?

GATSBY

All night—if I have to.

NICK

She's in no danger, Jay. She's gone to bed. Tom's busy calling his lawyer.

GATSBY

I'll wait, Nick. I'd rather be certain for myself. (There is the flash of headlights and the sound of a car engine.) There's your cab, Nick. You'd better go.

NICK

(starts to exit, then turns)

They're a rotten crowd, Jay. You're worth the whole lot of them.

GATSBY

Thanks, Nick. That means a lot to me. I'll see you around.

(There is the sound of a car door being closed and the soft purr of a departing engine, leaving Gatsby, a lone sentinel in the summer night.)

22. I'M NEVER FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN (GATSBY & DAISY)

GATSBY

LIVING EACH DAY WITH MY MIND IN A MAZE AND MY THOUGHTS ALWAYS

TURNING 'ROUND YOU;

DYING EACH NIGHT WITH MY HEART ALL ABLAZE AND MY FEELINGS ALMOST

BURNING ON THROUGH;

WANTING TO LET OUT THIS SONG IN MY SOUL, THEN REMEMBERING THAT IT

HAS TO STAY IN—

NO, I'M NEVER FALLING IN, I'M NEVER FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN.

(Enter Daisy on the balcony above, totally unaware of his presence. Again, the balcony or window where she appears need not be a physical construction; a ladder or elevated platform will do just as well as long as she is spotlighted.)

DAISY

LIVING EACH DAY LIKE A BIRD IN A CAGE, ALWAYS KNOWING THAT THE BARS
WILL HOLD FAST.

DYING EACH NIGHT LIKE A WORD ON A PAGE WHEN THE LIGHT GIVES WAY TO
DARKNESS AT LAST.

WANTING TO LET OUT THIS SONG IN MY SOUL, THEN REMEMBERING I'M TOO
SCARED TO BEGIN.

NO, I'M NEVER FALLING IN, I'M NEVER FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN.

GATSBY

WHY IS IT LOVE'S SO, SO FAR AWAY?

DAISY

WHY IS IT LOVE'S SO UNWILLING TO STAY?

GATSBY

LIVING EACH DAY WITH MY MIND IN A HAZE AND MY ARMS ALWAYS
YEARNING FOR YOU.

DAISY

DYING EACH NIGHT WITH MY HEART ALMOST CRAZED, AND THEN BIDDING
HOPELESS PASSION ADIEU.

GATSBY & DAISY

WANTING TO LET OUT THIS SONG IN MY SOUL, THEN REMEMBERING THAT IT
HAS TO STAY IN.

NO, I'M NEVER FALLING IN, I'M NEVER FALLING IN, FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN.

NO, I'M NEVER FALLING IN, I'M NEVER FALLING IN, FALLING IN LOVE AGAIN.

(The spotlight on Daisy is extinguished.
Upon seeing this, Gatsby departs. For
some time the stage remains empty. Then
Tom emerges from within, carrying a drink.
He stands for a moment, seemingly lost in
thought. Enter Wilson, carrying the pistol.)

TOM

(looking up in alarm)

Wilson. What are you doing here?

WILSON

You know why I'm here. It was you. You and Myrtle all along.

TOM

What are you're talking about?

WILSON

It was you. You Myrtle was meeting. You who ran her down like a dog.

TOM

That's crazy, Wilson. Why, I just saw you this afternoon when I stopped for gas. Remember?

WILSON

Yeah? But that yellow car you were driving was the car that killed her.

TOM

You're wrong, Wilson. Dead wrong. Like I told you, it belongs to—someone I know. *He* was driving it. Check the garage. The property. You won't find that car here.

WILSON

Then where is it? Tell me whose it is or I swear I'll put a bullet in you!

TOM
(hesitating)

All right! Calm down! The man who owns the car...He lives—just across the bay. In West Egg.

WILSON

Where in West Egg?

TOM

I don't know exactly where. But it's the biggest place on that side. Man by the name of Gatsby. Anyone can tell you where he lives.

WILSON
(putting the gun in his waistband)

If you're lying, I'll come back. And no words will save you.

TOM

Don't do anything rash, Wilson. He might not be responsible.

WILSON

I'll find out, and if he's not, I'll comb every inch of Long Island till I find who is. (He exits).

TOM
(Shaken, he staggers inside to the telephone,
picking up the receiver)

Operator, get me the West Egg police.

OPERATOR

This is the West Egg Police Department. (Tom starts to speak, then hesitates, dropping the receiver to his side.) Who's calling, please? Hello? This is the West Egg Police Department. Who's calling...

(BLACKOUT)

SCENE NINE: WEST EGG—GATSBY’S MANSION.

(There is an overriding sense that summer is over. A few chair-less tables remain; otherwise, the set is empty. Gatsby sits, jacketless, facing forward, his shirt collar open, his face careworn and haggard. He leans forward, hand on brow, lost in contemplation. Enter Nick.)

NICK

Hello, Jay. I thought I might find you here...I called several times, but no one answered.

GATSBY

Sorry, Nick. I just didn’t feel like talking to anyone.

NICK

Did you stay all night?

GATSBY

Only until her light went out. There seemed no sense in staying afterwards.

NICK

Jay...have you reconsidered anything?

GATSBY

Like?

NICK

Like taking the rap for someone who’s committed murder. (Gatsby remains silent.) You know they’re searching for that car. What are you going to do about it?

GATSBY
(smiling weakly)

You mean like stashing it somewhere, or paying one of Wolfsheim’s friends to make it disappear? No, Nick. I’ve spent a lifetime doing dirty things under the table. This time everything’ll be above board. Out in the open. When the police get here I’ll take them to it, In person. (then, pensively) I just can’t figure out where I went wrong...

NICK

You didn't go wrong, Jay. It's people—people like the Buchanans—who mess things up. They smash cars and people, then leave somebody else to clean up the wreckage. You're worth ten Tom Buchanans. (There is a prolonged silence.) You want me to wait with you?

GATSBY

No. No sense your being dragged into this. In a few minutes I'll call the police, and when they arrive, I'll tell them exactly what I told you—that Daisy was a passenger and I was driving. (He smiles half-heartedly.) You want to move into this place while I'm away? (He pauses as if half-hoping Nick might agree.) I didn't think so. Bet you wish you'd turned down that invitation...

NICK

If I had, I would've missed out on a great individual—and a great friend. (He stands there, torn between the need to leave Gatsby and his desire not to abandon him.) Sure you'll be all right?

GATSBY

(Nods then looks at him quizzically.)

You know, I've spent my whole life dodging the authorities, and now I've got to work up the nerve to turn myself into them. Ironic, isn't it?

NICK

(smiling)

Goodbye, Jay. Call me if you need anything.

GATSBY

Goodbye, Nick. (He laughs with mild cynicism.) Maybe someday you can turn all this into a novel. What would you call it anyway?

NICK

(pausing to contemplate)

Gatsby. The *Great Gatsby*. (Gatsby nods in quiet appreciation before Nick exits.)

(For a few moments Gatsby looks wistfully after Nick; then, he turns and looks out across the bay, staring longingly in the direction of Daisy's dock before closing his eyes as if squirreling away one last impression of love and summer. There is a long pause, the action

frozen as if in a *tableau*. Then Wilson enters, unobtrusively through the audience, He stands, ominous and silent, until Gatsby stares as if drawn by some magnetic and minatory presence.)

GATSBY

(surprised that it is not the police)

Excuse me. Can I help you with something? (Wilson is silent.) If you're here about a payment, I can have someone check the invoice and— (Wilson says nothing.) Look, if you're here for one of the parties, they're over, so I'd appreciate if you'd—

WILSON

Is that your car in the driveway?

GATSBY

Pardon?

WILSON

The yellow one. With the busted fender?

GATSBY

Yes, why do you— (He notices his mechanic's attire and mistakenly thinks he seeks work.) Oh...you're interested in repairing it. Well, I'm afraid I need to leave it that way, old sport. For the time being at least. If you'll leave your name and number, I'll be happy to—

WILSON

Murderer!

(There is a single gunshot, at which Gatsby crumbles, then a second one as Wilson shoots himself in the temple.)

(BLACKOUT)

END OF ACT TWO

CODA**THE SAME: WEST EGG—GATSBY’S MANSION**

(The set is bare save for Gatsby’s crumpled body and eerily empty, like some ancient sacred site where worshippers once thronged but have long since vanished into the ether. Enter Nick, walking downstage center and addressing the audience directly.)

23. DREAM DETERRED (NICK AND ENSEMBLE)

NICK

WHAT HAPPENS TO A DREAM DETERRED?

DOES IT REST IN HARMONY?

DOES IT SLEEP IN SILENT GRACE LIKE ATLANTIS UNDERSEA?

WHAT HAPPENS TO A DREAM DETERRED?

DOES IT WRITHE IN AGONY?

DOES IT RAGE AGAINST ITS CHAINS LIKE A CAPTIVE WHO’D BE FREE?....

24. BOATS AGAINST THE CURRENT (NICK AND ENSEMBLE)

NICK

BOATS AGAINST THE CURRENT, FISH AGAINST THE STREAM;

BIRDS AGAINST A MAELSTROM; MAN AGAINST A DREAM.

TIME AGAINST A MOUNTAIN; WIND AGAINST A TREE;

SOLDIER ‘GAINST A RAMPART; SWIMMER ‘GAINST THE SEA.

IT’S A STRUGGLE, DON’T YOU KNOW?

IT’S LIKE DROWNING IN THE DARK.

BUT A LITTLE BIT OF HOPE CAN KEEP A MAN AFLOAT AND PROP HIM LIKE A
SPAR.

CAN A FAITH MOVE MOUNTAINS? CAN A WISH SPROUT WINGS?

CAN A DOUBT BE CONQUERED? CAN A WOUND LOSE STING?

DOES THE SKY HAVE LIMITS? DOES THE RAINBOW END?

IF A HEART BE BROKEN, CAN ITS CHASM MEND?

IT'S A STRUGGLE, DON'T YOU KNOW?

LIKE A VOYAGE, LONG AND FAR.

BUT THE GLIMMER OF A LIGHT CAN SET A MAN ARIGHT

AND STEER HIM LIKE A STAR.

(Enter full ensemble from backstage
and the wings.)

NICK AND ENSEMBLE

BOATS AGAINST THE CURRENT, FISH AGAINST THE STREAM;

BIRDS AGAINST A MAELSTROM; MAN AGAINST A DREAM.

CAN A FAITH MOVE MOUNTAINS? CAN A WISH SPROUT WINGS?

CAN THE LARK BE SILENCED IF ITS SONG STILL RINGS?

THE END