

# [The foreshadowing of tragedy in the first five chapters](https://assignbuster.com/the-foreshadowing-of-tragedy-in-the-first-five-chapters/)

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A reader who is skimming through the novel ? The Great Gatsby' by F. Scott Fitzgerald might consider a happy ending by the end of the fifth chapter, however at a slightly more detailed look there are clear signs that indicate that a tragic and miserable ending is the only possible one. This essay will be looking at how Fitzgerald foreshadows tragedy, and how he presents tragedy in the lives of the novel's characters.

One of the indicators for Gatsbyfailureis the unstableness of the harassers he is depending on. This begins with the woman he loves, Daisy Buchannan. Daisy's life is a tragedy in its own, because she married the wrong man, who ischeatingon her, as she was too weak to follow her conscience and wait for Gatsby to return from the war. Nick, the narrator of the novel and her second cousin once removed, expects her to " rush out, child in arms" (chapter 1), but she stays in her unhappy marriage.

Thus it is clear that Daisy is rather shallow, and without enough confidence to contravene social conventions. Having this in mind, one cannot e sure if she would resolve to go with Gatsby, once it comes to a conflict with her husband Tom. This conflict is easily predictable with the knowledge about Tom Buchannan character. He is an aggressive, " unrest" (chapter 1) man, bursting with potency and confidence, but already behind his zenith, as his best years were those in college. He would never tolerate a rival, even though he has an affair himself.

The way he and his wife are living contains signs of tragedy as well: they both are eternally restless, chasing after pleasure and trying to fulfill themselves with enormous spending ofmoney. Fitzgerald criticizes the high-society vulgar pursuit of materialhappinessof his time with these characters. He uses zephyr, blowing wind, tosymbolismthe Buchannan chaotic lifestyle. Already in his first appearance, Jay Gatsby carries indications of a tragic character. In this Nick sees him staring at the water: " He stretched out his arms toward the dark water in a curious way, as far as I was from him I could have sworn he was trembling.

Involuntarily I glanced seaward - and distinguished nothing except a single green light C... " (chapter 1). Later it becomes clear that the green light comes from Daisy Buchannan dock, it is a symbol of Gatsby desire to win her back. His unquestioning love for Daisy made him follow her for five years and buy a huge mansion next to her. It is the contrast between the two that indicates a tragedy: whereas Gatsby would do anything to fulfill his dream, Daisy is more likely to stay in the safe live she is - and it is clear that Gatsby would not be able to live without her.

Besides, Nick describes him being " pale as death" (chapter 5) when he waits for Daisy to arrive. This foreshadows the bad influence Daisy will have on him. In chapter four Nick describes Gatsby party guests. Although he does not say it, it is clear that he sees them as superficial, materialistic and immoral: " they were never quite the same ones in physical person, been there before". These people always use the situation for their profit and they gossip about Gatsby history at his own party. None of them can be regarded as a friend who would support Gatsby in case of a conflict.

In Fitzgerald view, America's white high-society is tragic, because it postulates morality, but is false and superficial. Fitzgerald ironically uses a line of the song " Mint we got fun" to emphasize his criticism: " One things sure and nothings surer/ The rich get richer and the poor get - children" (chapter 5). In the Greek belief, tragedy is always caused by chaos. Regarding the flighty, erratic lifestyle of most of the characters in the novel, there must appear a conflict, a tragic moment at some point.

The catastrophe is foreshadowed by the car breaking a wheel n the ditch after an excessive and chaotic night. And although Gatsby doesn't want to " do anything out of the way' (chapter 5), he is involved in illegal activities (shown by his connection to the known criminal Wolfishly and his calls to Chicago). His lax handling of legality is a form of chaos that is likely to become his undoing. Thus, in conclusion, chaos is an important key to the tragedy in the end because it has been obvious that the more unstable and unreliable the characters and their actions are, the easier an event ends into a catastrophe.