

Winter dreams:
dreams that end
before they can begin



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

In the work, *Winter Dreams*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald, the dream is perceived to be unobtainable for our protagonist, Dexter. Correlating love with wealth, Dexter's dream is to "not be in association with glittering things and glittering people." Instead, "he wanted the glittering things themselves." A desire to see himself succeed farther than being the best caddy in the club, evolved after seeing Judy Jones.

Meeting her for the first time at the Sherry Island Country Club, his interest in her persuades him to act on his winter dreams unintentionally, concluding in Dexter quitting his job because he believed he deserved better than his position as a fourteen year old. Growing up as a poor boy, in a wealthy society, Dexter was now motivated to not only climb the social ladder and gain wealth but, create a relationship with Judy Jones. However, by Fitzgerald's portrayal of this dream is that it is unrealistic and truly ended before it ever started.

As the story starts to unfold, Fitzgerald begins to give the readers some insight into the setting and its significance to Dexter. In the second paragraph, the narrator states, "At these times the country gave him a feeling of profound melancholy... It was dreary, too, that on the tees where the gray colors fluttered in the summer there were now only the desolate sand-boxes knee-deep in crusted ice. When he crossed the hills the wind blew cold as misery," (Fitzgerald 1).

Within the first page the readers are able to see how Dexter is impacted by the cycle of the four seasons. The narrator explains that in months like fall, spring, and summer Dexter is inspired, hopeful, and imaginative. However,

as the passage above shows, when the winter season begins, the harsh cold, desolate landscape, and lack of living things, causes extreme melancholy within Dexter. Unlike most of us, our protagonist is affected by the change of the seasons, and more specifically, winter.

During this time, Fitzgerald explains Dexter's actions as "being unconsciously dictated by his winter dreams." Throughout the story this is shown through Dexter's decision to quit his job, pursue Judy Jones, gain his wealth in order to win Judy Jones, divorce his wife for her, and ultimately, be the hopelessly romantic social climber who truly only chased dead, superficially based dreams. An example of Judy Jones' unconscious authority over him and his dreams is shown in this statement after the incident in her motor boat, "His heart turned over like the fly-wheel of the boat, and for the second time, her casual whim gave a new direction to his life," (Fitzgerald 4).

Due to his aspiration of being with Judy Jones, the epitome of glittering people, her casual, even mundane actions, influence his dreams and affect his happiness in varying ways. In this scene, Dexter is delighted because Judy Jones asks him to drive her boat for her. Although, it was in a rude fashion, Dexter does not mind it, or even notice, and appreciates the fact she asked him at all. After this, she asks him to go to dinner with her the next night, therefore, continuing the process of playing into his illusion.

Unfortunately, at the end of the story, Dexter never is able to achieve these dreams and eventually becomes aware of the illusion of his life. The narrator describes this epiphany as, "The dream was gone... For he had gone away and he could never go back anymore. The gates were closed, the sun was

gone down.... Even the grief he could have borne was left behind in the country of illusion, of youth, of the richness of life, where he winter dreams had flourished," (Fitzgerald 9). At this moment in the story, Dexter realizes that he led his life with a false hope and lived in an illusion, that Fitzgerald describes as winter dreams, dreams that never truly start.

Dexter's winter dreams symbolically represent the dreams that he will never achieve because they are dead, and behind this illusion that they were obtainable, the reality is he never had a chance, these dreams ended before they could begin. Our protagonist desired the world that he was raised around but, was never able to experience. He also wanted to be able to "possess the most glittering person," not just associate himself with her. However, Fitzgerald's portrayal of these winter dreams show that they were unrealistic, fantasy like, and stagnant, like the stunted growth of agriculture as the winter season begins.