

# Illusions from the great gatsby



Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald is one of the greatest American writers. He entered the history of the world literature because of his marvelous novels about life of America in the 1920s. The most prominent place among his works occupies *The Great Gatsby*. It is a surprisingly elegant and lively story of the “ way up” of a strong man, who candidly believed that those who reach the heights of power and wealth will get happiness automatically.

Illusion is a self-deception, distorted perception of reality. People always believe in their illusions despite they are terribly dangerous. In pursuit of false dreams, the man usually loses himself. The theme of lost illusions permeated the entire work of Francis Fitzgerald. The protagonist of the novel, Jay Gatsby, is a good example of a man who sacrificed all his life to faith in the illusion of a happy, luxurious life with the beloved woman. However, this love can be interpreted as self-deception. “ It excited him, too that many men had already loved Daisy - it increased her value in his eyes.”(Fitzgerald, 158) He understood that material things meant too much for her. Even her timorous voice was “ full of money.”(Fitzgerald, 128)

The main problem of Jay Gatsby was that he could not allow past be in the past. Gatsby lived in his created world, a world of illusions and dreams, but the reality is always cruel, and there is no space to illusions.

Loss of illusions was slow and extremely cruel for the poor man. Many people surrounded the protagonist, but it was just a fallacy. None of these so-called “ friends” came to his funeral. Jay Gatsby had a lot of different phantasms: he fabricated another name in order to change his fate and lied about his background:

“ His parents were shiftless and unsuccessful farm people his imagination had never really accepted them as his parents at all. The truth was that Jay Gatsby, of West Egg, Long Island, sprang from his Platonic conception of himself. He was a son of God—a phrase which, if it means anything, means just that, and he must be about His Father’s Business, the service of a vast, vulgar and meretricious beauty. So he invented just the sort of Jay Gatsby that a seventeen-year-old boy would be likely to invent, and to this conception he was faithful to the end” (Fitzgerald, 105).

In order to look better in the eyes of wealthy people, he lied about education in Oxford. Gatsby had a strong faith that he could have love his Daisy again with the help of money. What is more, Gatsby believed that one can even turn back the time. When Nick tried to explain to Gatsby that Daisy has been probably changed, and one cannot repeat the past, he cried incredulously:

“ Can’t repeat the past? Why? Of course you can!” (Fitzgerald, 118)

He loved the phantom of a girl, but not real Daisy. Gatsby invented this illusion himself, like many other things. The author points out:

“ Almost five years! There must have been moments even that afternoon when Daisy tumbled short of his dreams - not through her own fault but because of the colossal vitality of his illusion. It had gone beyond her, beyond everything. He had thrown himself into it with a creative passion, adding to it all the time, decking it out with every bright feather that drifted his way. No amount of fire or freshness can challenge what a man will store up in his ghostly heart” (Fitzgerald, 103).

All people have different kinds of illusion in this novel. Daisy imagines herself as a happy woman and a loving mother. Tom believes that he has a staunch family. However, Gatsby is the greatest idealist in the novel. Passionate imagination pushed Gatsby to self-affirmation.

Gatsby unbelievably longed to become a rich man, though he did not know what actually means wealth and success. His meeting with the millionaire Dan Cody decided his fate. Having realized his ideal, Gatsby tried to find something worth his living. This second dream of Gatsby was fulfilled when he met Daisy, the daughter of wealthy parents, who became his sweetheart. However, the relationship with the world of wealth leads to the death of Gatsby. The "American Dream" is fraught with traps. The death of Gatsby at first glance is an absurd, but in fact, it is logical and the only possible ending. The means which he chose to gain happiness were unable to provide it. The illusion was crumbled, because Daisy was selling, and the compelling spiritual deception of Gatsby was strong. He decided to conquer natural happiness by the infamous, unnatural way, paying for Daisy more than Buchanan. Gatsby existence is meaningless without the "dream". The author keeps the hope in the future:

"Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter—tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther.... And one fine morning—"

So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past." (Fitzgerald, 193)

The problem is just that fine morning cannot come. The ideal is unattainable.

The narrator thinks over deceptive illusions of Gatsby:

“ And as I sat there, brooding on the old, unknown world, I thought of Gatsby’s wonder when he first picked out Daisy’s light at the end of his dock. He had come such a long way to this blue lawn, and his dream must have seemed so close he could hardly fail to grasp it. But what he did not know was that it was already behind him, somewhere in the vast obscurity beyond the city, where the dark fields of the republic rolled on under the night.”

(Fitzgerald, 193)The ideal is turning against Gatsby forcing him to follow the rules of success, profitable commerce and enrichment, otherwise the peaks of happiness cannot be conquered, and the pursuit of happiness is inherent in man by its very nature and, therefore, justifies all the efforts of the individual to achieve it.

Fitzgerald confessed that his novel was about wasting illusions that give the world its brilliance. Fitzgerald showed to readers that the man became indifferent to the concept of true and false and experienced this magic.

In conclusion, it should be said that Fitzgerald naturally does not blame illusions and phantasms. What is more, practically, this book would not be so life-asserting without the illusion that the author created around Gatsby.

Fitzgerald tried to tell the readers through this book that a person should look down upon illusions. People must stop to pretend what they are not and what they will never be.

The author believes that there is a place for illusion in every life. Illusion brings people out of despair, loneliness and grief during the entire life. The

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reader needs some mystery, illusion, and he wants to see things deeper than meets his eye. The important purpose of the illusion is to add vitality to the monotonous way of life of every person.

The illusions are just mirages. They both can be helpful and dangerous things. They help to avoid fuse of everyday routine, but, at the same time, they can lead to unexpected consequences. Gatsby is a really great person, but he lost himself in a pursuit for an insignificant goal.