

# Daisy Buchanan in the Great Gatsby

[Literature](#), [American Literature](#)



The character of Daisy Buchanan in F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby* is not the woman she first appears to be. In the beginning, we see her as an innocent, charming woman, the Daisy that Gatsby had fallen in love with. As we go further into the novel, we see Daisy's true colors. Daisy's innocent image has transformed in our eyes, and we now see a woman absorbed with money, reputation and her own desires. When given a chance at true love, a chance to be truly heard and cared for, she chooses wealth and social status as her true form of happiness, eventually leading to her own misery.

Living in East Egg, Daisy's lifestyle represents old money and high class society. This "East Egg" standard of living defines her actions and choices. Raised as an elite member of society, she's very familiar with money, ease and material luxury. She practically only knows one form of true happiness; Money. She puts money ahead of everything, even her own means of ending her miserable relationship with Tom and being truly happy. Nick observes: "It seemed to me that the thing for Daisy to do was to rush out of the house, child in arms—but apparently there were no such intentions in her head." (25) After Nick had seen the way Tom treated Daisy, he assumed the best thing for her to do was to leave Tom right away. But since money and reputation play big factors in Daisy's life, she cannot risk leaving Tom and abandoning her "East Egg" way of life.

Growing up in a high class society, reputation means everything. Daisy was raised to be exactly what she is now, superficial. When Daisy and Gatsby first met, Gatsby lied about his background, claiming to be from a wealthy family, trying to convince her he was worthy of her love. Though she had promised to wait for him until he came back from war, she felt the pressure

of the outside world. She wanted security of her wealth in the future. “ She wanted her life shaped now, immediately—and the decision must be made by some force—of love, of money, of unquestionable practicality—that was close at hand.”(159) and that’s when Tom came along, a young man from a solid, “ old money” family who could promise her a wealthy lifestyle and who had the support of her parents. Even when seeing Gatsby again after many years, rich and powerful, he was still not truly worthy of her. She had an “ East Egg” reputation. Both her and her husband grew up into wealth such as a blue blood, while Gatsby was “ new money” and earned his money himself. Even though it was pretty obvious Daisy would rather be with Gatsby; leaving Tom for another man, especially one of a lower social class, would ruin her reputation.

When Gatsby falls in love with Daisy, he falls in love with her charm and beauty. She was wealthy and sophisticated, everything Gatsby wanted and strived to be. She was his American dream. But we end up seeing that Daisy falls short of Gatsby’s expectations for her. Past her outer façade, there is a fickle, shallow, bored and cynical person. It seems as though Daisy is knowingly toying with Gatsby’s emotions. Maybe she had just wanted to be admired and adored by Gatsby. She desired his affection and love towards her. But her personal desires lead to confrontation with her two lovers, something she did not expect. “ Oh you want too much!” Daisy cried to Gatsby. “ I love you now— isn’t that enough? I can’t help what’s past. I did love him once—but I loved you too.” (139-140). She’s at war with her own feelings. She now realizes that in her mind, she’s better off with Tom. Not only has Tom accused Gatsby of being involved in illegal business, he’s

brought up past events to make her remember their love for each other. She also knows that Tom can continue to provide her with security and financial stability. At that point, she wishes things would have gone back to normal. She had said she loved Gatsby in the very beginning of the argument, but by the end, she had sided with Tom again. She doesn't seem to care for Gatsby's feelings anymore, though she tries pretending like she did nothing wrong in the first place. At first, she comes off as confused and love-struck, but once Tom starts to convince her and remind her of their past, it almost seems like she forgets all about Gatsby and instantly goes back to Tom. Now it seems that it was all just a game to her. Maybe she did it because she craved Tom's attention and she wanted two men fighting over her, but in the end she knew that she would go back to Tom because he could give her what she really wanted: money, power and social status.

Although some believe that Daisy could truly be looking for love, evidence of her true love of money and social status are clearly proven when she chooses Tom over Gatsby. Daisy knew that she most likely would have been happier with Gatsby, but in her mind, her true happiness was in the pursuit of money. Her love for money, her reputation and her own desires led to her downfall. Even though she knew Tom couldn't love her like Gatsby did, she knew Tom could provide her with wealth. She believed that this wealth would give her the attention and the love she had always wanted. Unfortunately she was wrong; it eventually led to her own unhappiness.