

Student Essay on Great Gatsby Exegesis

Great Gatsby Exegesis by F. Scott Fitzgerald

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Essay

...he must have felt that he had lost the old warm world, paid a high price for living too long with a single dream. He must have looked up at an unfamiliar sky through frightening leaves and shivered as he found what a grotesque thing a rose is and how raw the sunlight was upon the scarcely created grass. A new world, material without being real, where poor ghosts, breathing dreams like air, drifted fortuitously about..."(169)

In describing Gatsby's moment before death, Fitzgerald expresses his theme of lost dreams and realization through symbolism and imagery. In the pool, Gatsby undergoes a type of transformation, or renewal from the "old warm world", a place where his dream existed, to the "new world" where everything he believes in is lifeless. Before death, Gatsby realizes that his "single dream" is gone, and everything is now "unfamiliar", for his whole purpose in life was fulfilling this dream. In this new world, "poor ghosts" just as the dead Gatsby, survive only on passing dreams. Without Daisy, the only reason for living, Gatsby's life - his mansion, his parties, his cars, his friends, and his books are just materials with no substance. His possessions, all there for the sole purpose of luring Daisy, are now just "material without being real." Before death, Gatsby realizes that he will never obtain his dream, and in a way, is metaphorically dead, just as the "frightening leaves" will soon be. This truth or "sunlight" is too much for him to bear, for this realization is only newly, "scarcely created grass" in Gatsby's mind. Gatsby's dream, symbolized through the rose, is truly "grotesque" up close. For when Daisy was just a mere green light, intangible, she was a beautiful rose. The dream began to form, and before it could fully mature, it began to wilt. In Gatsby's attempt to maintain this youthful beauty and love, it inevitably dies with time. Before death, Gatsby knows Daisy will not return to him, and thus realizes how ugly a dream can be, how easily it can ruin a man. There lays significance in the fact that the last sentence is fragmented. Even more important is that each fragment is staccato. Just as the fragments are disconnected and cut short, so its Gatsby's life and dream.