



creates and connects scenes that hold our attention, rather like a film director who cleverly keeps us watching.

The party in this chapter is part of Gatsby's attempt to impress Daisy. There is plenty of action on the surface: people coming and going, chance meetings, high spirits and drunken behaviour. In itself much of this action is going nowhere, in terms of the development of the story, but as we watch it unfold we are drawn deeper into the heart of Gatsby's obsession.

### **Nick is part of the story:**

After describing one of Gatsby's parties at some length, Nick Carraway steps back to examine his telling of the story so far. In doing so, he reminds us of fact that he is a writer as well as our narrator. Events which seem so immediate when we are caught up in the dialogue and description have actually been filtered through his remembering and reconstruction of them. Nick is part of the story in a fundamental way. We are learning about Nick as he tells us about Gatsby.

### **Nick in love:**

Nick seems to give us a valuable insight into his emotional life when he refers to 'romantic women' (p. 57), whom he chases after, but only in his imagination. Love affairs seem to attract Nick as an idea, but in reality he seems to find it difficult to become fully involved with a woman. He seems to worry that people might find out about his love affairs and disapprove of them. Yet towards the end of the next chapter, Nick puts his arm around Jordan Baker's 'golden shoulder' (p. 77), draws her close to him and invites her to dinner. There seems to be inconsistency here.

As well as his involvement with Jordan, Nick is still in touch with a girl in the Midwest. He tells us: 'I'd been writing letters once a week and signing them: "Love Nick", and he adds,

‘there was a vague understanding that had to be tactfully off before I was free’ (p. 59). Is Nick being entirely honest with when he writes of his involvement with women? If not, can we trust his version of event in general?

\*The ‘violent confusion’ (p. 59) of the comic scene in which a car has crashed into a ditch after leaving the drive of Gatsby’s mansion can be seen to foreshadow the accident that results in Myrtle Wilson’s tragic death. Owl Eyes is here accused of being ‘a bad driver’ (p. 55), but he reveals that another man was actually driving. Later, Gatsby takes responsibility for Myrtle’s death, even though Daisy was driving. Details in this narrative are intricately patterned and intertwined.