

## *The Great Gatsby*

### Chapter 6 – Significant Quotations

**Language is rarely meant to be taken in a literal sense for we speak figuratively to a large degree. Examine each of the following quotations from chapter 6, and explore the significance and symbolism behind them.**

1. “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.”
2. “He knew women early, and since they spoiled him he became contemptuous of them, of young virgins because they were ignorant, of others because they were hysterical about things which in his overwhelming self-absorption he took for granted.”
3. “But his heart was in a constant, turbulent riot. The most grotesque and fantastic conceits haunted him in his bed at night. A universe of ineffable gaudiness spun itself out in his brain while the clock ticked on the washstand and the moon soaked with wet light his tangled clothes upon the floor. Each night he added to the pattern of his fancies until drowsiness closed down upon some vivid scene with an oblivious embrace. For awhile these reveries provided an outlet for his imagination; they were a satisfactory hint of the unreality of reality, a promise that the rock of the world was founded securely on a fairy’s wing.”
4. “She was appalled by West Egg, this unprecedented ‘place’ that Broadway had begotten upon a Long Island fishing village—appalled by its raw vigor that chafed under the old euphemisms and by the too obtrusive fate that herded its inhabitants along a short cut from nothing to nothing. She saw something awful in the very simplicity she failed to understand.”
5. “Daisy began to sing with the music in a husky, rhythmic whisper, bringing out a meaning in each word that it had never had before and would never have again. When the melody rose, her voice broke up sweetly, following it, in a way contralto voices have, and each change tipped out a little of her warm human magic upon the air.”
6. ‘ “I wouldn’t ask too much of her,” I ventured. ‘You can’t repeat the past.’ ‘ “Can’t repeat the past?” he cried incredulously. ‘Why of course you can!’”
7. “He talked a lot about the past, and I gathered that he wanted to recover something, some idea of himself perhaps, that had gone into loving Daisy. His life had been confused and disordered since then, but if he could once return to a certain starting place and go over it all slowly, he could find out what that thing was...”
8. “Through all he said, even through his appalling sentimentality, I was reminded of something—an elusive rhythm, a fragment of lost words, that I had heard somewhere a long time ago. For a moment a phrase tried to take shape in my mouth and my lips parted like a dumb man’s, as though there was more struggling upon them than a wisp of startled air. But they made no sound, and what I had almost remembered was incommunicable forever.”