Tender Is the Night

INTRODUCTION

BRIEF BIOGRAPHY OF F. SCOTT FITZGERALD

Fitzgerald was the son of Edward Fitzgerald, a respectable businessman from a gentile family, and Mollie McQuillan, the descendent of Irish immigrants. Fitzgerald loved writing throughout his childhood, but it wasn't until he attended Catholic school in 1911 that a priest recognized his talent. Encouraged to pursue his literary ambitions, Fitzgerald went to Princeton in 1913. Fitzgerald's writing thrived in the university environment, but while he was busy creating prose, poetry, and musical comedies, his grades suffered. He left Princeton in 1917, without a degree, to join the army. Fitzgerald never fought in World War I, however, because his battalion had not yet left for Europe when the armistice was agreed. Having fallen madly in love with a young woman named Zelda Sayre while training in the army, Fitzgerald now focused his ambitions on making enough money to marry. He dabbled in advertising for a while but didn't meet his success until 1920, when his first publication, *This Side of Paradise*, threw him into the spotlight. Fitzgerald and Zelda married and enjoyed his literary success throughout the 1920s, during which they wrote, traveled through Europe, and had a daughter, Scottie. Fitzgerald received great literary acclaim for his work, namely for *The Great Gatsby* (1925), and the couple moved in fashionable and artistic circles. Towards the end of the decade, however, their lives began to unravel; Fitzgerald's alcoholism made him increasingly volatile, and the stress of Zelda's ballet dancing career led to her mental breakdown in 1930. Moving back to America, and haunted by ill health, Fitzgerald found it almost impossible to work during the 1930s, and his writing career suffered. After a brief stint working in Hollywood and writing in magazines, Fitzgerald died in 1940 of a heart attack.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Although many European countries suffered financially in the years after World War I, the United States experienced a vast economic boom throughout the 1920s. This meant that Americans could travel easily to Europe, supporting lavish lifestyles there with the wealth they had accrued back home. Furthermore, while prohibition laws in the United States banned the sale of alcohol, drinks poured freely in Europe, another motivating factor for the wave of emigration from America to Europe. There was a large artistic scene in Paris during the interwar period, and many British and American writers and artists formed a strong expatriate community there during the 1920s. Fitzgerald belonged to what writer Gertrude Stein famously referred to as the "Lost Generation"—a generation haunted by the horrors of the war, who languished in Paris, lacking any real purpose or direction. In contrast, Fitzgerald coined the term "The Jazz Age" to refer to the same period, choosing to capture the opulence and optimism of the decade rather than draw attention to the dark undercurrent that lay beneath the glittering parties. Society underwent much social change during the Jazz Age, largely because of the rise of jazz music, which brought African American musicians and dancers into mainstream culture for the first time. Other changes included the arrival of more progressive attitudes to women's dress and sexuality, and the figure of the flapper woman—a slender and fashionable young woman dancing in a flamboyant and revealing dress—symbolized the loosening of some gender norms.

RELATED LITERARY WORKS

In *Tender is the Night*, Fitzgerald explores many of the same themes and concepts present in his renowned novel, *The Great Gatsby*. Both stories depict the lives of wealthy Americans during the 1920s, a decade of great economic prosperity. The stories' respective protagonists—Dick Diver and Jay Gatsby—are also intriguingly similar. Both men embody charm, promise, and the American dream, throw reckless and decadent parties, and possess a powerful magnetism that draws others towards them. *Tender is the Night* and *The Great Gatsby* are complex romance stories that reveal the illusionary nature of the Jazz Age—an era that promised magnificent opportunities, but ultimately led to the destruction of downfall of many American men. Ernest Hemmingway, a friend of Fitzgerald's, wrote *The Sun Also Rises* in 1926. It, too, is a romance story about expatriates living in Paris during the 1920s and depicts the tragedy of a generation destroyed by their own reckless decadence. Zelda Sayre Fitzgerald's novel *Save me the Waltz* also captures both the glittering essence of the Jazz Age and the trauma that haunted it. Finally, although very distinct stylistically, parallels can be drawn between *Tender is the Night* and Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* due to their portrayals of troubling love affairs between older men and much younger girls. While the exploitation is much more disturbing and pronounced in *Lolita*—the girl is only 12 years old, and her stepfather is the abuser—Fitzgerald's romanticization of Dick and Rosemary's relationship is also unsettling for a modern audience.

KEY FACTS

- **Full Title:** *Tender is the Night*
- **When Written:** 1922-1931
- **Where Written:** Fitzgerald started writing the novel in

Europe and finished it upon moving back to America in 1931.

- **When Published:** 1934
- **Literary Period:** Modernism, The Jazz Age, The Roaring Twenties
- **Genre:** Modernism, Literary Fiction, Jazz Age Literature, Novel, Romance
- **Setting:** The novel is set in various locations across Europe between 1917-1930, namely Paris, the French Riviera, Zurich, and Rome.
- **Climax:** In a fit of rage, Nicole intentionally crashes the car with Dick and the children inside.
- **Antagonist:** Although there is no clear antagonist in the story, Nicole's madness is positioned as the reason that Dick Diver doesn't fulfill his marvelous potential.
- **Point of View:** The omniscient third-person narrator moves between Dick, Rosemary, and Nicole.

EXTRA CREDIT

Round Two. A second version of *Tender is the Night* was published in 1948. Following notes that Fitzgerald had written before he died, literary critic Malcolm Cowley reorganized the story to unfold in chronological order.

Passion Project. Fitzgerald worked on *Tender is the Night* for nine years and he was devastated when it didn't do very well in terms of sales or critical acclaim.

PLOT SUMMARY

Book 1 begins in 1925 on a beach resort on the French Riviera, where Mrs. Speers and her young daughter, Rosemary Hoyt, arrive on holiday. Almost 18 years old, Rosemary is astonishingly beautiful and attracts the attention of the others on the beach— some of whom recognize her from her starring role in the Hollywood movie *Daddy's Girl*. She quickly makes friends with an attractive and fashionable group of Americans: Dick and Nicole Diver, Abe and Mary North, and their friend Tommy Barban. Encouraged by her mother, the young actress finds herself falling in love with Dick, who is charming and charismatic. Rosemary tells Dick so at a dinner party that the Divers host for an eclectic group of people staying in the resort. The evening is called short when one of the guests, Violet McKisco—a woman whom Rosemary considers vulgar—sees Nicole doing something shocking in the bathroom. This secret causes a great deal of drama and culminates in two of the guests—Mr. McKisco and Tommy Barban—having a duel the next morning.

Rosemary travels with the Divers and the Norths to Paris, where she is initiated into their surreal world of lavish parties, indulgent spending, and excessive drinking. Within a very short time, Rosemary witnesses Abe ruin himself in drink, sees a woman named Maria Wallis shoot a man with a pistol in broad daylight, and finds a "negro" man—Jules Peterson—dead in her hotel room. All of these events, however, have little impact on Rosemary in comparison to her love affair with Dick. Catching secret kisses in corridors and sharing breathless moments in the back of taxis, the two fall dangerously in love. One day, however, Rosemary witnesses Nicole in a fit of madness in her hotel suite. Realizing with horror the content of Violet McKisco's secret from the Divers' dinner party, Rosemary turns her attentions away from Dick, welcoming interest from another suitor, Collis Clay, instead.

Book 2 takes the reader back to 1917, when Dick—avoiding the war—first moved to Zurich as an ambitious and promising doctor. It is here that Dick comes to meet 16-year-old Nicole Warren, a beautiful young woman and psychiatric patient. Visiting his good friend Franz Gregorovious, who works as the resident pathologist at Doctor Dohmler's **clinic**, Dick learns that Nicole was raped by her father as a child, and has since suffered with schizophrenia. Agreeing to lend his medical expertise to help Nicole's recovery, Dick spends more and more time with the patient and, despite warnings from Franz, falls in love with her. To the initial disapproval of Baby Warren, Nicole's sister, Dick and Nicole get married. Although they are madly in love, the first years of their marriage are strained by Nicole's occasional manic episodes, which make it impossible for Dick to work. Dick often feels stifled and emasculated by the security of Nicole's family wealth, and Nicole struggles psychologically after the birth of her two children, Lanier and Topsy.

Back in Paris, 1925, Dick's affair with Rosemary ends abruptly after Nicole's breakdown in the hotel bathroom. He decides to move back to Zurich with Nicole and the children to open a clinic with Franz. Nicole's condition stabilizes while living beside the clinic, and for a short while the Diver family enjoys the success of Dick's business and the beauty of the natural landscape there.

One day, however, upon receiving a letter that accuses Dick of being inappropriate with a former patient's daughter, Nicole flies into a fit of rage. Unable to calm down, she grabs the steering wheel of their car while Dick is driving, sending it crashing off the side of the road, with the children inside. Deeply saddened, and slipping steadily into the grips of alcoholism, Dick decides to go away for a while.

Learning that both Abe and his father have died, Dick takes a short trip back to America, deciding it's no longer home, and that he probably won't return again. Afterwards, with hopes of seeing Rosemary, Dick heads to Rome. Some three years after their initial affair, Dick finds her to be a confident and successful young actress. He is jealous of her relationship with co-actor Nicotera, but Rosemary assures Dick she will always love him. The two try to rekindle their affair but—after having sex for the first time—realize that too much has changed.

Disappointed and bitter, Dick ignores his plans with Rosemary

that night to get horrifically drunk with Collis Clay instead. He gets into a fight with a group of Italian taxi drivers and ends up at the police station, where he is beaten and jailed. Hearing the news, Baby Warren—entitled and enraged—goes to great lengths to get Dick released.

Finally, Book 3 traces the disintegration of Dick and Nicole's marriage. As Dick's alcoholism becomes increasingly problematic, and leads to his dismissal from the clinic, the Divers move back to the French Riviera. Here, Nicole initiates an affair with Tommy Barban, whom she eventually marries. Dick's desperate decline is crystalized when Rosemary pays a visit to the Divers, and Dick is forced to accept the loss of both his loves. The story ends with a tragic portrayal of Dick—who moves back to The States after his separation from Nicole—living a quiet, lonesome life as a failed doctor in some small American town.

CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Dick Diver – The story's protagonist is a charismatic American expatriate living in France with his wife, Nicole, and their two children, Lanier and Topsy. Dick is attractive and charming, and his magnetism draws interesting and unusual people towards him. He is known for throwing wild parties and possesses a wonderful gift for making those around him feel special and understood. Dick left the United States during World War I, moving to Zurich in 1917 to pursue a career is psychiatry. As a young man, Dick was ambitious and promising, embodying the American dream itself. His career suffered, however, after marrying Nicole Warren, a psychiatric patient troubled by schizophrenia. Her medical condition confines Dick to the role of doctor and caregiver, and he struggles to achieve any professional success. Hopelessly attracted to youth and beauty, Dick engages in a brief love affair with Rosemary Hoyt, a young actress whom he meets by chance on the French Riviera. After years of excessive drinking, Dick struggles to juggle his feelings for Rosemary with his commitments to Nicole, and his health suffers. Dick's steady decline, and his deterioration into the clutches of depression and alcoholism, symbolize the failure of the American dream. Unable to reach his professional potential, or sustain his romantic relationships with either Rosemary or Nicole, Dick is forced to return to America—failed, alone, and relatively poor.

Rosemary Hoyt – The young Hollywood film actress is incredibly beautiful and symbolizes the hope and innocence of the younger generation. She is completely devoted to her mother, Mrs. Speers, who has raised Rosemary to be independent and ambitious. At the beginning of the novel, Rosemary is a little precocious—having only been famous and successful for six months—and she desires constant excitement. She is charmed, therefore, when falling in with a fashionable crowd of American expatriates when holidaying with her mother on the French Riviera: Dick and Nicole Diver and Abe and Mary North. Rosemary adores the Divers, admiring Nicole for her beauty and wisdom and falling madly in love with Dick within a matter of minutes. She is initiated into the adult world, beyond her mother's meticulous care, when traveling with them to Paris. It is here that she experiences their world of lavish parties and excessive drinking. Determined to seduce Dick, Rosemary encapsulates a series of contradictions—she is both pure and sexual, reckless and calculated, confident and self-conscious. Ever the actress, Rosemary approaches her whole life as if it were a film or show, throwing herself into her various performances, observing others closely and carefully curating her character depending on the situation. After her brief and wonderful romance with Dick—which he calls off after encountering a horrifying glimpse of Nicole's illness—Rosemary gradually grows successful in the world of Hollywood.

Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren) – Nicole Diver is the "granddaughter of a self-made American capitalist," and she uses her family wealth to provide for her children and husband, Dick. At 24 years old, Nicole is classically and mesmerizingly beautiful. She is tanned and elegant and enjoys spending her enormous inheritance on sustaining her extravagant lifestyle. Nicole is charming to those she likes—almost every man she meets falls in love with her—but snobbish to those she doesn't. She has an ambiguous relationship with Rosemary, whom Nicole is friends with, but probably also knows is romantically involved with her husband. Although she is well known, Nicole often falls out of fashionable circles on the expatriate scene due to periods of ill health, which make her withdrawn and solitary. Nicole's father, Mr. Warren, raped her as a child, and the trauma of this abuse haunts her throughout her life. Nicole met Dick when she was 16, while being treated for schizophrenia in an expensive **psychiatric clinic** in Zurich. Nicole suffers intermittently from dark, depressive episodes and mental breakdowns—for example after the birth of her second child, Topsy—and her volatile temperament puts a real strain on her marriage. The tension between Dick and Nicole climaxes when, in a fit of anger, Nicole crashes the car with the children inside. Nobody is hurt, but after this event, Dick decides that he needs space from Nicole. As Dick's alcoholism worsens, making him unbearable to be around, Nicole initiates a love affair with Tommy Barban, who has always loved her. She remarries with him at the end of the novel, staying in her house on the French Riviera with him and her children.

Abe North – Abe is an exquisite musician and composer, but after enormous success early in life, has since failed to compose anything new. He is a great friend of the Divers', and his presence at the beginning of the novel serves to foreshadow Dick's later decline. Rosemary meets Abe at the beginning of

the story on the beach outside Gausse's hotel. Her first impressions indicate that he is friendly, fun, and respectable, but it soon becomes apparent that he has a terrible drinking problem, which his wife, Mary, finds very difficult to manage. After abandoning his plans to return to America, Abe causes a great deal of trouble in Paris when falsely accusing a man of theft. The confusion leads to the false imprisonment of a black man named Freeman, and the murder of Jules Peterson, an innocent shoe polish maker. Abe's alcoholism makes him increasingly unpleasant to be around, and his failures serve as a warning against excess and self-indulgence. Dick learns much later, long after they have lost contact, that Abe died after being beaten up in a bar in New York.

Mary North – Mary, a young, tanned, American woman is Abe's wife. She comes from a working-class family but now moves in fashionable circles in Europe. She is extremely patient with Abe, who always ignores her when she suggests that he stop drinking or get an early night. When Abe makes his plans to return to America, Mary moves to Munich to work on her singing. After they separate, she remarries with Hosain, the Conte di Minghetti, and moves into his impressive and palatial house in Northern Italy. Mary loses touch with Dick and Nicole Diver after they come to visit her and her new husband; Dick gets drunk and offends Hosain and his sister, who Dick mistakes for the servant.

Mrs. Elsie Speers – Rosemary's mother, twice widowed, is quite accustomed to hardship. Relatively poor after the death of her second husband, Mrs. Speers industriously seizes upon her young daughter's blooming good looks, deciding to put Rosemary to work in the movie industry. The mother and daughter are extremely close, and Rosemary tells her mother everything. When Rosemary confesses that she's in love with Dick, for example, Mrs. Speers encourages her to explore her feelings, even though she knows that Dick is already married to Nicole.

Beth (Baby) Warren – Nicole's older sister assumes a maternal role after the death of their mother. However, unaware of the abuse between Nicole and their father, Mr. Warren, Baby finds it difficult to empathize with her sister and her illness. Baby is also rich and spoiled and often expresses snobbish views towards those she considers beneath her. Although she does want what's best for Nicole, she wishes that some wealthy, successful man might marry and take care of her. Baby is a little disappointed, therefore, when Nicole marries Dick, who is by no means rich. Baby and Dick have a strained relationship throughout the story and often disagree about how to best care for Nicole during periods of illness. When Dick gets into trouble with the police in Italy, however, Baby goes to great lengths to protect him and get him released from prison.

Tommy Barban – Tommy, "an unmistakably Latin young man," is a friend of Dick and Nicole Diver's. He is particularly fond of Nicole and goes to great lengths to protect her from gossip and rumors. Tommy is a soldier and insists that he has "no home" other than the battlefield. He claims to have fought in several different wars, and that his "business is to kill people." Defending Nicole when Violet McKisco discovers evidence of her mental illness, Tommy gets into a frenzied argument with Violet's husband, Mr. McKisco. Enraged and desperate for conflict, Tommy challenges his opponent to a duel, which both men survive. Much later in the story, Tommy and Nicole become romantically involved. Although Dick is initially jealous of their love affair, when Tommy insists that he and Nicole should be together, Dick hardly fights it. On the day that Dick leaves for America at the end of the story, he sees Nicole and Tommy—happily married—playing on the beach with his children.

Lanier and Topsy Diver – Dick and Nicole's children. The Divers don't spend all that much time with the children; a full-time staff cares for Lanier and Topsy, an arrangement that was quite normal for wealthy society at the time. Nicole suffered from a dark period of mental ill health after Topsy, her second child and only daughter, was born. Nicole has a detached relationship with the children, who are far closer with Dick. Lanier is an inquisitive and precocious young boy. He causes a great deal of trouble when the Divers go to visit Mary and her new husband, Hosain. Lanier claims to have been bathed in dirty bath water, contaminated by one of Hosain's children, who is sick. Mary insists that this is impossible but Lanier, spoiled and entitled, continues to pursue his line of argument.

Collis Clay – A young man from the American South. He is introduced in the story as Rosemary's "young man," but his romantic interest in her is seemingly unrequited. He accompanies Rosemary, Nicole and Dick Diver, and Mary and Abe North to watch a screening of Rosemary's film, *Daddy's Girl*, in Paris. Later, sensing that something might be going on between Rosemary and Dick, he warns him that she might not be entirely innocent after all, recounting some scandalous story of her and Hillis fooling around in the locked cabin of a train with the **blinds** down.

Mr. McKisco – Violet's husband, Mr. McKisco, is a writer and considers himself a real intellectual. He is a hateful man and often undermines and belittles his wife. McKisco repulses Rosemary on the morning of his duel with Tommy Barban, as he drinks himself stupid and tries to put his sad affairs in order. When Dick runs into McKisco much later in the story, on the boat back from America, Dick discovers that McKisco has become a real literary success.

Violet McKisco – Mr. McKisco's wife and a tactless gossip. She envies Dick and Nicole Diver and their fashionable circle, but often says unkind things about them. Upon meeting Violet, Rosemary is immediately irritated by her and her lack of social decorum, and is glad to be able to escape Violet and her friends, Mrs. Abrams, Luis Campion, and Mr. Humphry.

Franz Gregorovious – Dick's friend and Kaethe's husband. Franz is a successful psychiatrist at Doctor Dohmler's **psychiatric clinic** in Zurich. Visiting Franz to assist him with a complex case, Dick learns about Nicole—a patient at the clinic—and that her father, Mr. Warren, raped her when she was a child. Franz is concerned, therefore, when Dick becomes romantically involved with the 17-year-old patient. Nonetheless, Franz and Dick open their own clinic together several years later, which for a short while is very successful. When Kaethe insists that Dick's alcoholism is undermining his professional capabilities, Franz is forced to dismiss Dick from the clinic.

Jules Peterson – Mr. Peterson is a "small, respectable" black man from Stockholm. Embroiled in Abe's blunder with the police—acting as a key witness for him when he falsely accuses a black man of theft—Peterson fears for his life as several of the other men entangled in the affair seek revenge. He is an honest and hardworking man, proud of his shoe polish invention, and hopes that Dick and Abe will help him. Fairly unconcerned with Peterson's fate, however, Dick next encounters him when Rosemary finds his dead body in her hotel room.

Mr. Devereux Warren – Nicole and Beth's father. Mr. Warren is a charming and handsome American man. When he delivers Nicole to Doctor Dohmler's **clinic** in Zurich, he tells Franz that she has a nervous condition and is afraid of men. It later transpires, however, that Mr. Warren raped Nicole as a child, and her ill health is the result of this trauma.

Maria Wallis – Laura's sister and a wealthy American woman in France. Dick, Nicole, Rosemary and Mary witness her shoot a man in the train station in Paris as they wave goodbye to Abe, who is headed for America. Maria is arrested immediately, and Nicole phones Laura to tell her what happened. Dick, Nicole, and Rosemary are all quite shaken by the "echoes of violence" they witness that morning, and the shooting is an important turning point in Dick and Rosemary's romance.

Hosain, the Conte di Minghetti – Mary marries Hosain after separating from Abe. Hosain attended an English private school and made his large fortune through business ventures in South East Asia. It is not clear exactly where Hosain is from, but this is of little importance to Dick, who perceives Hosain's dark skin as an invitation to tease and patronize him with "preposterous tales" of America. Hosain is extremely offended when Dick mistakes one of his sisters for a servant, ordering her to bathe Lanier in only clean bath water.

Lady Caroline Sibly Biers – An unbearably snobby British woman and a close friend of Mary's. She and Dick have an argument at a dinner party after he insults the English over dinner. Later, when Lady Caroline and Mary are arrested for misbehaving in public, she is ghastly and disdainful when Dick tries to help her.

Luis Campion – An "effeminate" man who is portrayed as a wimp and is implied to have had a love affair with Mr. Humphry. Most scholars agree that Fitzgerald probably intended for Campion to be gay; at the time of the novel's publication, homosexuality was illegal in America and in many parts of Europe, and it was considered an illness, curable through clinical intervention. Rosemary echoes this attitude, as she is quite repulsed by him, considering him very unmanly as they watch the duel between Tommy and McKisco together.

MINOR CHARACTERS

Frau Kaethe Gregorovious – Franz's wife is opinionated but diplomatic, choosing carefully the correct moment to advise him that Dick needs to be dismissed from their clinic due to his alcoholism. While living at the clinic, Nicole takes pains to avoid Kaethe, considering her smelly and provincial.

Nicotera – Rosemary's Italian lover and co-star in a movie that they are filming in Rome. When Dick meets Rosemary three years after their initial love affair, he is vehemently jealous of Nicotera, calling him a racial slur out of malice.

Hillis – A friend of Collis Clay's. According to Clay, Rosemary was entangled in a scandal when she was caught with Hillis in a locked train compartment with the **blinds** drawn. Clay recounts this story to Dick, insinuating that Rosemary might not be so pure and innocent after all.

Mrs. Abrams – A friend of Violet and Mr. McKisco's. Rosemary meets her on the beach on her first day at Gausse's hotel.

Earl Brady – A film producer working from his studio in France. He is attracted to Rosemary and, although she feels some chemistry between them, decides that he pales in comparison to Dick.

Professor Dohmler – A renowned psychiatry expert in Zurich. It is at his **clinic** that he, Dick, and Franz discuss a course of action for Nicole's treatment.

Gausse – A French man who owns an impressive, pink hotel on the beach of the French Riviera. Dick, Nicole, and their set frequent the hotel, and Abe claims that it was the Divers who made the coastal resort popular.

Laura Wallis – Maria's sister. When Nicole calls her to tell her that Maria has been arrested for shooting a man in the station, Laura admits that she had sensed that something bad might happen.

Freeman – A black man and "prominent [...] restaurateur" who is falsely arrested and put in jail when Abe alerts the police that he has been robbed.

Ed Elkins – Elkins is Dick's roommate when he's studying in Switzerland during the war. Dick is perturbed by the notion that he might actually be quite similar to Elkins, who Dick considers basic and simple.

Conte di Marmora — Marmora is Baby and Nicole's cousin.

Baby sends him to accompany Nicole on a trip when she has some vacation time from **the clinic**. He seems to be interested in Nicole and tries to flatter her in Dick's presence.

The Consul An Italian man who works at the Consulate in Rome. He encounters Baby Warren when she storms into his office, demanding that he help her save Dick from Italian prison. He detests the spoiled and petulant attitude of Americans in Europe.

Swanson – Swanson is the Vice-Consul working with the Consulate in Rome.

Doctor Dangeu — Dick meets Doctor Dangeu when he is treating Mr. Warren on his sick bed. Dr. Dangeu is professional but seems overly concerned with ensuring he has good business.

Doctor Lladislau — One of Franz and Dick's colleagues and employees at the clinic in Zurich. Dick doesn't like him, believing him to have weak character. Dick tries, and fails, to frame Lladislau so that he'll get the blame for an angry client instead of Dick.

Mr. McKibben — Friends with Tommy Barban. Dick meets Mr. McKibben in Germany when he is traveling around Europe and hears about how he and Tommy evaded the Russian army.

Von Cohn Morris — An alcoholic patient at Dick and Franz's **clinic**.

Mr. Morris — Von Cohn Morris's father. He makes a big scene when taking his son out of Dick and Franz's **clinic**, claiming that Dick has an alcohol problem himself and has been neglectful of his son's recovery.

T.F. Golding A former lover of Baby's. Dick and Nicole attend a disastrous party on his boat.

Augustine The Diver's cook.

Francisco A teenage boy or young man whom Dick briefly treats in an effort to "cure" him of his homosexuality.

Señor Pardo y Cuidad Real A Chilean man who wants Dick to "cure" his son of homosexuality.

Mr. Dumphry – A friend of Violet and Mr. McKisco's. It is implied that he has had some sort of love affair with Luis Campion, who is heartbroken and forlorn when his feelings are not reciprocated.

THEMES

In LitCharts literature guides, each theme gets its own color-coded icon. These icons make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. If you don't have a color printer, you can still use the icons to track themes in black and white.

EXCESS, DESTRUCTION, AND THE FAILED AMERICAN DREAM

Set in the 1920s, *Tender is the Night* depicts a group of wealthy American expatriates traveling around Europe during the Roaring Twenties. This period—between the end of World War I and the Wall Street crash of 1929—was a time of great prosperity in America and Western Europe. Fitzgerald himself coined the term "the Jazz Age" to describe the glamor and decadence of the era. In *Tender is the Night*, Dick Diver, the ambitious son of a humble minister, embodies the American dream. His charisma and aspirations stand to bring him much success in life, but after years of excessive drinking, decadent parties, and irresponsible decisions, Dick finds himself poor and alone, having destroyed all the relationships that he once valued. Dick's story thus reveals the central message of *Tender is the Night*: excess and vice inevitably lead to destruction and downfall.

At the beginning of Book One, Dick is the perfect picture of a modern American man; charming, attractive, and popular, he epitomizes the excitement and possibility of the Jazz Age. Dick's extraordinary magnetism draws others towards him. Upon arriving to the beach on the French Riviera, Rosemary, a fellow guest at Gausse's hotel, notices immediately that "whatever [Dick] said released a burst of laughter. Even those who, like herself, were too far away to hear, sent out antennae of attention." Dick is "kind and charming" and promises "an endless succession of magnificent possibilities." Through Dick and his wife, Nicole Diver, Fitzgerald brings to life the excess and decadence that characterized the Jazz Age. The Divers "were fashionable people" and "seemed to have a very good time." Their wealthy expatriate circle spends the first chapters of the book throwing lavish parties and romping around Europe with reckless abandon. However, Fitzgerald reveals fleeting glimpses into the dark side of their sparkling scene through Abe North, who suffers from alcoholism as a result of their immoderate lifestyle. Abe's self-destruction should serve as a warning to the other characters, but they pay no heed.

Ultimately, Dick's indulgent and unrelenting pursuit of pleasure costs him his profession, health, popularity, and romantic relationships. There is not one turning point to mark the beginning of Dick's decline, but there are plenty of warning signs. Finding it difficult to juggle the demands of his marriage with Nicole and his love affair with Rosemary, for example, Dick realizes that he is losing control over both. Dick reflects that Rosemary, as young and immature as she is, is managing their relationship more "authoritatively than he." Dick experiences another shock when he witnesses Maria Wallis, a vague acquaintance from their expatriate scene, shoot an Englishman in the train station for no apparent reason: "the shots had entered into all their lives: echoes of violence followed them out onto the pavement." Regardless of the exact moment, by Chapter 20, Dick's emotional deterioration is well

underway—"he was profoundly unhappy" but blind to "what was going on round about him."

By the end of Book Two, the reader has witnessed the slow and gradual disintegration of Dick's marriage, characterized by cold silences but punctuated with frenzied arguments. After a violent quarrel that culminates in Nicole trying to drive their car off the road, Dick decides to "go away alone." While traveling, Dick runs into an old friend, Tommy Barban, who remarks that Dick doesn't look "so jaunty" as he used to. The night after learning that Abe has died, Dick wakes to a procession of war veterans outside, marching mournfully "with a sort of swagger for a lost magnificence." This image reminds Dick of his own wasted potential, and symbolizes the loss and sorrow that now characterizes his life: "Dick's lungs burst for a moment with regret for Abe's death and his own youth of ten years ago." Disheveled and saddened, Dick visits Rosemary in Rome, but much has changed between them in the three years since they were romantically involved with one another. After a jealous and angry outburst upon learning about her relationship with her new lover, Nicotera, he admits: "I'm the Black Death [...] I don't seem to bring people happiness any more."

The chaos and destruction that surrounds Dick climaxes when he gets drunk with his acquaintance Collis Clay that night. Following a row with a musician in the bar, Dick attempts to get a taxi back to the hotel. During a drunken quarrel over prices, however, he is overcome by a "savage" rage and instigates a bloody fight with the driver. When he wakes from unconsciousness, Dick finds himself alone in an Italian prison cell in a "bloody haze, choking and sobbing." Having lost his job at the **clinic**—due to his negligence and drinking problem—Dick returns to France with Nicole. They try once more to salvage their broken marriage, but Dick is a shell of his former self and is incapable of loving Nicole and the children with the "inexhaustible energy" he had once personified.

Through the story's tragic ending, Fitzgerald draws parallels between Dick's personal ruin and the calamitous end to American prosperity that shook the nation with the financial crash of 1929. The penultimate chapter of the book depicts Dick's last moments in Europe. He is without "nice thoughts and dreams to have about himself," as he says goodbye to his children. Indeed, returning to America devoid of the bright ambitions that defined him as a young man, Dick symbolizes the failed American dream. Living in a small American town, far from his family, and without professional prospects, Dick is haunted by the consequences of his own greed and excess. Ultimately, Dick's sad story becomes a metaphor for the 1920s; reckless hedonism comes at a high cost.

GENDER, MENTAL ILLNESS, AND PSYCHIATRY

In *Tender is the Night*, Fitzgerald captures the cultural anxieties of the 1920s through the lens of the modern psychiatric clinic. Here, the doctors in the story treat alcoholism, homosexuality (at the time widely considered something that could and *should* be treated with conversion therapy), and various nervous disorders. Written at a time when society was still grappling with the aftermath and trauma of World War I, Fitzgerald chooses to explore these cultural anxieties through Nicole Warren, who suffers with schizophrenia as the result of childhood trauma. This choice may have been informed by Fitzgerald's personal life; his wife, Zelda Sayre, was hospitalized after being diagnosed with schizophrenia in 1930. In order to cover his wife's medical expenses, Fitzgerald had to put aside his novel writing to produce more lucrative short stories. Similarly, in *Tender is the Night*, the reader sees a promising young psychiatrist, Dick, abandon his career in order to care of his mentally unwell wife, Nicole. Fitzgerald thus positions Nicole as a burden, the sole factor preventing Dick from really fulfilling his potential. With this, Fitzgerald paints a complicated picture of gender and mental illness: on the one hand, Fitzgerald elicits sympathy for Nicole by depicting her troubled and lonely life, and on the other, Nicole is wrought monstrous—a neglectful mother, and a drain on her husband.

Fitzgerald explores contemporary attitudes to madness through Nicole, who suffers from mental illness as the result of abuse and trauma. Nicole arrives at Professor Dohmler's **sanitarium** when she is just 16 years old. Her father, Mr. Devereux Warren, complains that she "isn't right in the head," presenting her as a troublesome burden that he can no longer cope with. When Dohmler investigates further, however, Nicole's father admits to raping her as a child, which immediately explains her nervous condition and fear of men. Mr. Warren never faces any legal "consequences" for the sexual abuse of his daughter, and instead pays a great deal of money to have her permanently admitted to the sanitarium. By revealing her troubled and isolated childhood in Book 2 of the story, Fitzgerald elicits sympathy for Nicole, who is presented as a victim of her past. Nicole is haunted by her childhood trauma throughout her life. Fitzgerald reveals Nicole's troubled internal world by revisiting a scene from the beginning of the novel during Book 2. From Rosemary's original perspective, Nicole was glamorous and beautiful the first day they first met, flicking casually "through a recipe book for Chicken Maryland." Fitzgerald presents Nicole's version of the same day, however, through her first person stream of consciousness. Her internal monologue is fragmented and frantic, like her state of mind: "everything is all right—if I can finish translating this damn recipe for Chicken a la Maryland into French. My toes feel warm in the sand." The few pages that trace Nicole's innermost

thoughts and feelings are punctuated with ellipsis and dashes, capturing how distressed and anxious she is, despite her "exterior harmony and charm."

Dick and Nicole's problematic doctor-patient, husband-wife relationship speaks to a long history of male medical professionals asserting power and control over their female patients, and reveals the sexism woven into the social fabric of the 1920s. Apart from a few short sequences, Nicole's voice remains largely absent throughout the story, and the reader predominantly learns about her madness through other characters. Whether it's heated discussions between Dick and Baby Warren, Nicole's sister, about how best to care for her, or conversations between Mr. Warren and Nicole's psychiatrists, Nicole's illness is positioned as a burden and a trouble for those around her. The most extreme manifestation of this is the suggestion that Nicole's illness is to blame for Dick's failure to become a brilliant and successful medical man. Fitzgerald depicts Dick's inability to fulfill his professional ambitions as a great tragedy, caused largely by his duties to care for Nicole: "his work became confused with Nicole's problems; in addition, her income had increased so fast of late that it seemed to belittle his work." Dick is both distracted by Nicole's periods of illness, and emasculated by her wealth, which serves to undermine his masculine pursuits. This interpretation, however, overlooks the fact that it is *Nicole* who is trapped within a controlling and toxic marriage, manipulated by a man who abused his professional powers as a psychiatrist when becoming romantically involved with a 16-year-old patient. Indeed, throughout the story Nicole is "deprived of any subsistence except Dick," and she is emotionally dependent on him and his approval.

Nicole's madness comes to climax after she receives a letter accusing Dick of "having seduced" a patient's daughter. It *is* true that he kissed the "flirtatious little brunette," but he denies the accusation, saying "this letter is deranged [...] I had no relations of any kind with that girl." When Nicole subsequently runs away, Dick is patronizing and manipulative as he tries to calm her down: "this business about a girl is a delusion, do you understand that word?" When Nicole replies saying, "it's always a delusion when I see what you don't want me to," it becomes clear Nicole has been confined in their marriage, trapped in the roles of patient and child. Perhaps unintentionally, the novel's treatment of Nicole reveals the dark side of psychiatry in the 1920s, as it becomes clear that psychiatric diagnoses are used as instruments of patriarchal power, wielded by men in the story to control and oppress their wives, daughters, and patients.

THE PURSUIT OF YOUTH AND INNOCENCE

The prosperity of the Jazz Age brought new possibilities for young Americans, who often traveled to Europe to escape the United States' puritanical moral codes and the prohibition. While the younger generations drank and smoked more, wore more revealing clothes, and expressed more sexually liberated behaviors, a moral panic increased among older generations, who feared for the loss of innocence in society. Capturing this tension, Fitzgerald's characters in *Tender is the Night* are obsessed with the power and beauty of youth, which for them symbolizes innocence, possibility, promise, and hope. Fitzgerald shows, however, how youthful innocence is often vulnerable to exploitation, and how the pursuit of youth inevitably results in destruction and misery.

Fitzgerald introduces the theme of innocence through Rosemary Hoyt, who epitomizes all the promise of youth—beauty, purity, and possibility. Rosemary's beauty and charm are inherently tied to her youth and innocence. When she arrives at the beach on the French Riviera, her cheeks are flushed from "the strong pump of her young heart," her "magic" is likened to the "flush of children after their cold baths," and her "body hovered delicately on the last edge of childhood—she was almost eighteen, nearly complete, but the dew was still on her." Similarly, Rosemary's character in the Hollywood movie *Daddy's Girl* is "*so* young and innocent." She was cast for the role precisely because she radiates an image of sweetness, virtue, and goodness. It is Rosemary's liminal position between childhood and adulthood that makes her so appealing to Dick and the rest of his party—she no longer behaves like a child, but she has not yet been corrupted by the adult world. Too young to have been touched directly by the horrors of World War I, Rosemary symbolizes hope and purity.

As wealthy, hedonistic expatriates, Fitzgerald's characters harbor the illusion that they are somehow capable of capturing the beauty and vitality of youth forever. For Nicole, the pursuit of youth means tanning, dieting, and shopping—hallmarks of modern femininity. She also frequently compares herself to Rosemary, who is six years younger: "Rosemary was beautiful—her youth was a shock to Nicole, who rejoiced, however, that the young girl was less slender by a hairline than herself."

For Dick, however, clinging to his youth means seducing young, beautiful women. It is impossible to ignore Dick's troubling sexual attraction to youth and innocence. After kissing Nicole for the first time, when she is only 16 years old, he remembers "that nothing had ever felt so young as her lips." Similarly, after his first kiss with Rosemary on her 18th birthday, Dick continues to draw attention to her age, infantilizing and patronizing her. He calls her "a lovely child" and assumes a "paternal attitude" towards her. Dick loves Nicole, who is both young and beautiful, but arguably he pursues Rosemary because she represents an innocence that Nicole never possessed. When Dick met Nicole—although childlike in her madness—the incestuous rape she experienced as a child at the

hands of her father, Mr. Warren, meant Dick couldn't see her as truly pure or innocent. For a short while, Dick's romantic relationship with Rosemary does allow him to possess the power of youth and innocence—or at least the illusion of it. Just a day after distancing himself from Rosemary, citing her age as one of the reasons they can't be together, Dick changes his mind. They kiss "ravenously" in a taxi, intoxicated by the feeling of "an extraordinary innocence" between them.

Fitzgerald presents how Dick's destructive pursuit of youth and innocence is both exploitative and impossible to achieve. Dick's desire for Rosemary presents him with an impossible paradox: to pursue a sexual relationship with her would be to sully and destroy her innocence and virtue, the characteristics he so desperately wants to conquer and possess. When Dick meets Rosemary in Italy, three years after their original infatuation, he is desperate to know whether she is still a virgin. When Rosemary realizes "she did not want him to be like other men, yet here were the same exigent demands, as if he wanted to take some of herself away," it becomes clear that Dick's interest in Rosemary is about control and exploitation. He desires her young body, her immaturity, her impressionability, and her virginity, because he enjoys the power that her youth gives him.

As Dick loses control over his career, his health, and his relationships with Nicole and Rosemary, he becomes preoccupied with demonstrating his own youthful vitality. Back in the Riviera, he remembers a trick he used to perform on the aquaplane. Meanwhile, Nicole realizes that "the closeness of Rosemary's exciting youth" has prompted Dick's desire to show off his physical strength, but even proximity to Rosemary can't give Dick the vivacity he longs for. After failing to execute his trick in front of Rosemary and her young friends, "Nicole saw Dick floating exhausted and expressionless, alone with the water and the sky." Lonesome and defeated, Dick is forced to finally accept his powerlessness in the world. Compared to the "water and sky," he is nothing; even Dick Diver can't hold back the hands of time.

RACISM AND OTHERNESS

Despite some progress in terms of mainstream attitudes to race and racial difference, the interwar period was nevertheless haunted by unequivocally racist attitudes—as evident in the works of writers like Fitzgerald and his white contemporaries. Trivial or insignificant ethnic minority characters form the backdrop to the European experience that the white expatriate community enjoys in *Tender is the Night*. As Dick and Nicole Diver and their set move effortlessly between various cities—partying frivolously thanks to the wealth their ancestors accrued from the exploitation of colonized peoples around the globe—the novel's non-white characters are consigned to minor roles, as exotic lovers, greedy musicians, or troublesome criminals. As a modern reader, it is impossible to ignore the racial slurs and discriminatory caricatures littered throughout *Tender is the Night*, or that the novel is a textbook example of the widespread racism of the 1920s.

The presence of widespread racial discrimination during the interwar period is evident in *Tender is the Night* through Fitzgerald's distinctly racist depictions of black characters. Four innocent black men become entangled in "a race riot" in Paris when Abe North—drunk and careless—falsely accuses a black man of stealing a "thousand-franc note" from him. The disposable nature of black lives is exemplified when Abe continues drinking at the bar, knowing full well that an innocent man, Freeman, remains in jail because of his mistake. Later, when Jules Peterson—the "small, respectable" black man who acted as a key witness for Abe—arrives at the hotel, he is prohibited from entering the bar, which is reserved for white clients only. The narrator depicts him in caricatured terms, with "insincere eyes, that, from time to time, rolled white semicircles of panic into view," and a voice of "distorted intonation peculiar to colonial countries." Peterson is thus depicted as a burden and a menace, desperate, unintelligent, and frightening. When Rosemary finds Peterson murdered—"she saw that a dead Negro was stretched upon her bed"—the narrator fails to identify Peterson by name, thus stripping him of his personhood, and defining him first by his blackness. The presence of a black body in Rosemary's hotel room is intended to illicit shock and horror, rather than grief or sorrow. Indeed, as Dick carelessly discards of Peterson's dead body in the corridor, he tries to reassure Rosemary that it's not worth being upset about a black man's death, referring to Peterson by the n-word. The use of such debasing and racist language reveals that Peterson's life is perceived as worthless to the white characters. Dick also overlooks how Abe is entirely responsible for the whole affair, thus reinforcing stereotypes about black criminality and barbarism, while masking Abe's own culpability.

In contrast to the white American characters—who are confident that they belong in Europe despite their own particular foreignness—the novel's non-white characters are constructed as outsiders and foreign "others." Throughout the story, Fitzgerald portrays Dick's fraught attempts to police the parameters of whiteness, and preserve his position of racial superiority in the world. Dick arbitrarily uses the racist insult "spic," for example, to refer pejoratively to those he perceives as *not-white-enough*. In a jealous outburst, he directs the slur towards Rosemary's Italian lover, Nicotera. While European, Nicotera is probably dark skinned, and although Dick has become tanned in the Mediterranean sun himself, he uses the slur to racialize and "other" Nicotera when it suits him, positioning himself as whiter, and therefore superior, to his rival in love.

The politics of whiteness are complicated further when Dick meets Mary's new husband, the Conte di Minghetti. Hosain is

of nondescript "Asiatic" heritage, but his wealth and British education afford him various privileges in Europe and enable him to marry a white woman. Feeling resentful and threatened by the idea of foreign men marrying white American women, Dick refers to their union disparagingly: "Abe educated her, and now she's married to a Buddha." Later he disrespectfully confuses Hosain's sister for a "native servant" because of the color of her skin. After dinner with Mary and Hosain, Nicole chastises Dick for being drunk and bigoted, saying "Why so many highballs? Why did you use your word spic in front of him?" Nicole's reprimand reveals that the Divers understand full well that it is no longer socially acceptable to be openly racist—at least in the company of wealthy ethnic minorities. Indeed, Dick perceives himself as innately superior to those he deems as the "other," and struggles to adapt to the societal shift in traditional race relations underway during the 1920s. As Dick becomes increasingly troubled by alcoholism, he becomes prone to bigoted outbursts: "he would suddenly unroll a long scroll of contempt for some person, race, class, way of life, way of thinking." Thus, as Dick loses control over his health, marriage, and profession, he becomes increasingly intolerant of foreign "others," whom he perceives as a threat to the power and superiority he has been accustomed to his whole life.

SYMBOLS

Symbols appear in **teal text** throughout the Summary and Analysis sections of this LitChart.

THE BLINDS IN THE TRAIN

The closed blinds in the train symbolize Rosemary's rumored sexual promiscuity, obscuring the "light" of her supposed innocence and purity. Dick is haunted by the image of Rosemary in a locked train carriage with another man, imagining Hillis asking Rosemary, "Do you mind if I pull down the curtain?" so that they might have some privacy. In this wretched vision, Dick hears Rosemary reply, "Please do. It's too light in here." Here then, lightness symbolizes purity, innocence, and virginity, and when Rosemary grants permission for Hillis to pull down the blind and block out the light, she welcomes a sort of sordid darkness.

While Collis Clay is rather unconcerned with the revelation, describing it in passing, Dick cannot put the image out of his mind, and his imaginary dialogue between Hillis and Rosemary reoccurs several times in the novel. Dick's attraction to Rosemary lies in her supposed innocence; she embodies youth and beauty, characteristics that Dick longs to control and possess. His romantic affair with her makes him feel younger, freer, and more powerful, as he relishes the feeling of holding back time. When he learns from Clay, then, that Rosemary might not be as pure as she seems, Dick's life begins to unravel. Dick is conflicted; the figure of Rosemary as a delicate, naïve, young "Daddy's Girl" (the title of the movie she's in) can no longer be sustained, but he somehow wants her more than ever. On the one hand, Dick is excited by his desire for Rosemary—whom he can now perceive as a sexual being—but he is also fundamentally disappointed because she was supposed to represent the hope and goodness of the younger generation, unspoiled by the horrors of World War I. Rosemary's ambiguous sexuality, therefore, and the discussion around it, represents both the loosening of traditional and puritanical moral codes during the Jazz Age *and* the feared loss of innocence felt by society in the aftermath of the war.

THE SANITARIUM

The modern psychiatric clinic functions as a symbol of society's cultural anxieties at the time that Fitzgerald was writing. In the novel, patients are admitted for treatment for a whole host of illnesses and nervous conditions, reflecting how the psychiatric industry boomed and flourished in the post-war years. Dick is hired, for example, to cure a young man of his homosexuality, which at the time was considered a disease that needed curing. Fitzgerald also reveals the immense power afforded to psychiatrists to make profound decisions about other people's lives, and suggests that this is fundamentally irresponsible. Not without irony, Fitzgerald depicts how Dick is entrusted with the task of curing a man of his drinking problem, while suffering with alcoholism himself. Nicole's father, Mr. Devereux Warren, also presents an interesting case. In the wake of World War I, the figure of the American man symbolized goodness, morality, and heroism. On the surface, Mr. Warren is an attractive, respectable businessman that aligns with this ideal, and no one would suspect him of having raped his own daughter when she was a child. While others might perceive Nicole as mad, sick, or unwell because of her schizophrenia, which stemmed from this traumatic rape, Mr. Warren walks freely among society, never paying a price for the abuse of his daughter. The psychiatrists protect his sordid secret, and thus the sanitarium exists in a space outside of the law, where doctors like Dick and Franz are able to decide who is well and who is mad; who is good, and who is evil.

THE BLOODY BED SHEETS

The bloody bed sheets, stained with Jules Peterson's blood, symbolize the disposable nature of black lives in *Tender is the Night*. After Abe carelessly accuses an innocent black man of a crime he didn't commit, Rosemary discovers Jules, a black man, murdered on her hotel bed. She rushes to find Dick and they quickly discover that the bed sheets are stained with his blood. Dick begins immediately to remove the covers and swap them for fresh ones, thus

protecting Rosemary from any involvement in the horrid affair. Dick is unconcerned with Peterson's fate and disposes of the man's dead body uncaringly in the hotel corridor.

For Nicole, however, the bloody bed sheets carry much more significance. The sight of them in her bathroom triggers a new mental breakdown, and she screams with "verbal inhumanity" at Dick for his callousness. Throughout Book One, it remains ambivalent as to whether Nicole knows of Dick's affair with Rosemary or not, but here it is possible that she perceives Rosemary's bloody bed sheets as a symbol of her lost virginity. By dumping Rosemary's sullied bed covers in Nicole's bathroom, therefore, Dick can be seen to choose the young starlet over his wife, hence throwing Nicole into an uncontrollable fit. Ultimately, the bed covers epitomize the carelessness of Jazz Age expatriates like Abe and Dick. Both men continue to hurt those around them through their reckless lifestyles, facing little to no consequences for the pain they cause others in the process.

QUOTES

Note: all page numbers for the quotes below refer to the Scribner edition of *Tender Is the Night* published in 1995.

Book 1, Chapter 1 Quotes

Her eyes were bright, big, clear, wet, and shining, the color of her cheeks was real, breaking close to the surface from the strong young pump of her heart. Her body hovered delicately on the last edge of childhood—she was almost eighteen, nearly complete, but the dew was still on her.

Related Characters: Rosemary Hoyt

Related Themes:

Page Number: 4

Explanation and Analysis

The narrator's description of Rosemary when she first arrives at Gausse's beach emphasizes her youthful femininity. Her body is still distinctly childlike—with flushed cheeks, and bright eyes—but she has the sex appeal of an adult. The reference to "the dew" still clinging to her body compares her to a garden flower, fresh and bright in the morning. Indeed, throughout the novel Rosemary is compared to a flower several times: "blooming," "a white carnation," "a bud," "a flower." This motif symbolizes Rosemary's virginity, and therefore her innocence and purity. The "strong pump of her heart" represents both her youthful vitality and how romantic and hopeful she is.

Fitzgerald's description of Rosemary's "bright, big, clear, wet" eyes is echoed later in the text with another description of a young Nicole, when Dick first kisses her: "he was thankful to have an existence at all, if only as a reflection in her wet eyes." Again, "wet eyes" connotes a wide-eyed look of innocence. Through this imagery, Fitzgerald highlights how Dick's attraction to Rosemary is inherently linked to her youthfulness.

Book 1, Chapter 4 Quotes

Her naïveté responded whole-heartedly to the expensive simplicity of the Divers, unaware of its complexity and its lack of innocence, unaware that it was all a selection of quality rather than quantity from the run of the world's bazaar; and that the simplicity of behavior also, the nursery-like peace and good will, the emphasis on the simpler virtues, was part of a desperate bargain with the gods and had been attained through struggles she could not have guessed at.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver, Rosemary Hoyt

Related Themes:

Page Number: 26

Explanation and Analysis

Getting to know the Divers on the beach at Gausse's, Rosemary delights in their silliness and fun. The Divers enchant Rosemary—she is completely deceived by their carefully-constructed social performance. They appear elegant, sophisticated, innocent, virtuous, and "simple" all at once. However, Rosemary's "naïveté" prevents her from seeing that the Divers' life is in fact an illusion, designed to conceal the dark secrets and trauma that lie beneath the surface. With his reference to "the world's bazaar," Fitzgerald suggests that Nicole's wealth affords the Divers the opportunity to purchase themselves a certain image and lifestyle, which again serve to mask the corruption and complexity of their lives. Both Dick and Nicole have suffered various struggles—Nicole's experience of incestuous sexual abuse, her resulting mental illness, and the sacrifices Dick has made to be with Nicole—and, to a certain extent, they are able to conceal and forget these struggles by being charming and fun.

Book 1, Chapter 6 Quotes

"I want to give a really *bad* party. I mean it. I want to give a party where there's a brawl and seductions and people going home with their feelings hurt and women passed out in the cabinet de toilette. You wait and see."

Related Characters: Dick Diver (speaker), Mrs. Abrams, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 34

Explanation and Analysis

In their villa in Tarmes, on the French Riviera, Dick speaks to his wife, Nicole, through a megaphone, telling her that he's invited Mrs. Abrams and her crowd to dinner. Dick's guests are an unsavory group of unsophisticated social climbers staying at Gausse's hotel. Fitzgerald captures the attitude and essence of the 1920s expatriate scene in Europe through his depiction of Dick—a supposedly serious medical man—planning to host "a really *bad* party." Dick is not only excited by the idea of hosting a raucous and debauched party, but he actively welcomes fighting, destruction, and hurt feelings.

Here, then, Fitzgerald presents the excessive and reckless nature of wealthy American living in Europe in the 1920s. Further, Dick's invitations are inherently snobbish, and almost cruel, because he doesn't actually want to spend time with Mrs. Abrams and her crowd. Instead, he intends to use these guests as playthings, or an entertaining experiment.

He sometimes looked back with awe at the carnivals of affection he had given, as a general might gaze upon a massacre he had ordered to satisfy an impersonal blood lust [...] But to be included in Dick Diver's world for a while was a remarkable experience [...] He won everyone quickly with an exquisite consideration and a politeness that moved so fast and intuitively that it could be examined only in its effect. Then, without caution, lest the first bloom of the relation wither, he opened the gate to his amusing world. So long as they subscribed to it completely, their happiness was his preoccupation, but at the first flicker of doubt as to its all-inclusiveness he evaporated before their eyes, leaving little communicable memory of what he had said or done.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Page Number: 35

Explanation and Analysis

This passage, detailing Dick's powerful magnetism and unique social gift, is somewhat reminiscent of Fitzgerald's descriptions of the protagonist Jay Gatsby from his earlier novel, *The Great Gatsby*. Both Gatsby and Dick are characterized by a dualism, whereby they possess both an alluring and exquisite charm alongside a deeper and concealed darkness. Here, the narrator depicts how Dick has a gift for making those around him feel truly seen and understood, but that he requires people to commit fully to his performance if he is to grant them access to his world of glittering parties and childish fun.

With the allusion to the war general, the narrator captures the aftermath of Dick's charismatic spells, detailing how he expends too much energy attending to the needs of others, leaving himself tired and empty, with only the evidence of destruction and waste left behind after the party. The words "massacre" and "impersonal blood lust," for example, highlight the destructive, excessive, and reckless nature of Dick's moments of affection.

Book 1, Chapter 9 Quotes

"You were brought up to work—not especially to marry. Now you've found your first nut to crack and it's a good nut—go ahead and put whatever happens down to experience. Wound yourself or him—whatever happens it can't spoil you because economically you're a boy, not a girl."

Related Characters: Mrs. Elsie Speers (speaker), Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver, Rosemary Hoyt

Related Themes:

Page Number: 51

Explanation and Analysis

As Rosemary lies awake in her hotel room after the Divers' dinner party, she remembers something her mother had said to her about her love for Dick. Mrs. Speers had expressed her approval for Rosemary to pursue a romantic relationship with him, citing her financial security as a reason to throw caution to the wind. Explaining how Rosemary was not "especially" raised "to marry," and knowing that Dick is taken anyhow, it becomes apparent here that Mrs. Speers is encouraging Rosemary to pursue a

romantic or sexual affair. Mrs. Speers' lack of consideration for Dick or Nicole, as well as her encouragement of her young daughter to essentially let herself be taken advantage of by a much-older man, is careless and callous.

On one hand, Fitzgerald reflects the shift in gender roles and expectations underway during the 1920s, whereby society began to recognize and embrace women's sexuality for the first time. On the other hand, Rosemary is only afforded this freedom because "economically" she's like "a boy." That is, she doesn't need to rely on marrying a wealthy man in order to guarantee her security in life, but rather, because she is able to earn money herself—through her acting career—she can behave more like a man in romantic relationships too. Further, when Mrs. Speers says confidently "it can't spoil you," she suggests that Rosemary's wealth will protect her from any social disgrace she might experience as a result of an affair.

Book 1, Chapter 12 Quotes

❝ Nicole was the product of much ingenuity and toil. For her sake trains began their run at Chicago and traversed the round belly of the continent to California; chicle factories fumed and link belts grew link by link in factories; men mixed toothpaste in vats and drew mouthwash out of copper hogsheads; girls canned tomatoes quickly in August or worked rudely at the Five-and-Tens on Christmas Eve; half-breed Indians toiled on Brazilian coffee plantations and dreamers were muscled out of patent rights in new tractors—these were some of the people who gave a tithe to Nicole, and as the whole system swayed and thundered onward it lent a feverish bloom to such processes of hers as wholesale buying, like the flush of a fireman's face holding his post before a spreading blaze. She illustrated very simple principles, containing in herself her own doom, but illustrated them so accurately that there was grace in the procedure."

Related Characters: Rosemary Hoyt, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 89

Explanation and Analysis

When Nicole takes Rosemary shopping, she watches in awe as Nicole spends an immense amount of money on a vast number of items. Nicole represents American capitalism, and her attitude to money is symptomatic of the post-World War I economic boom. American expatriates found that their wealth went a great deal further in Europe, and they could easily live in splendor and luxury while abroad. The narrator explains that "Nicole was the product of much ingenuity and toil," suggesting both that she was born into a capitalist family who made their fortune through exploiting workers and natural resources, and also that Nicole's distinctly modern femininity has been achieved through subscribing to the latest fashions and commercial trends. In both ways she is essentially a "product" of capitalism.

In other ways, though, Nicole is also the *cause* of much "toil" and exploitation. The narrator includes a long list of the various different work forces that are exploited in order to bring Nicole, and other women like her, the latest products from around the world. Additionally, the fact that Nicole's principles are shaped by both grace and "doom" reflects her childhood and family experiences. Nicole's family is elegant and sophisticated, but also corrupt and sinful. The reader has not yet encountered Nicole's mental breakdown brought upon by her childhood trauma, and so this quote serves to hint at Nicole's dark secrets, which will be revealed later.

Book 1, Chapter 17 Quotes

❝ They were full of brave illusions about each other, tremendous illusions, so that the communion of self with self seemed to be on a plane where no other human relations mattered. They both seemed to have arrived there with an extraordinary innocence as though a series of pure accidents had driven them together, so many accidents that at last they were forced to conclude that they were for each other. They had arrived with clean hands, or so it seemed, after no traffic with the merely curious and clandestine.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Mrs. Elsie Speers, Rosemary Hoyt, Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Page Number: 95

Explanation and Analysis

While Rosemary and Dick kiss in a taxi on the way back to the hotel, relishing their new romance, the narrator reveals that their love is founded on "illusions." One of these illusions is that the universe had brought them together without either of them actively making it happen. Of course, this is far from the truth—Rosemary and her mother carefully planned and plotted this romance. In addition, the reader learns later that this behavior is not unusual for Dick, who often pursues women much younger than him.

Another of the illusions in Dick and Rosemary's relationship is Dick's delusion surrounding Rosemary's innocence. His attraction to her is founded almost solely on her supposed purity, but he will learn shortly that Rosemary had been found with a man inside a locked train carriage, presumably engaging in a sexual act.

A third illusions is that "They had arrived with clean hands," suggesting that Dick and Rosemary's romance has not caused any harm or damage. In fact, Nicole perceived a connection between Rosemary and Dick long ago, when they first met on the beach. Indeed, this may have been what caused Nicole's breakdown or episode in the bathroom in Tarmes. The reader will discover that this romance will be the catalyst for Dick's deterioration and ultimately cause the destruction of Dick's marriage and much pain to Rosemary, Dick, and Nicole.

Book 1, Chapter 19 Quotes

❝ They stood in an uncomfortable little group weighted down by Abe's gigantic presence: he lay athwart them like the wreck of a galleon, dominating with his presence his own weakness and self-indulgence, his narrowness and bitterness. All of them were conscious of the solemn dignity that flowed from him, of his achievement, fragmentary, suggestive and surpassed. But they were frightened at his survivant will, once a will to live, now become a will to die.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Rosemary Hoyt, Mary North, Abe North

Related Themes:

Page Number: 105

Explanation and Analysis

Mary, Rosemary, and Nicole observe Abe sadly. They have come to the train station to wish him farewell, but it is obvious to the whole group that his plans to return to America to continue writing music are optimistic. Abe is an alcoholic and has wasted his youthful years in a drunken stupor. He used to be a fantastic composer, and his past achievements bestow him with a degree of remaining "dignity." However, it is clear that his self-worth is almost completely shattered, broken, and overcome by his strong "will to die." Abe's grim decline should serve as a warning to Dick and the others: excess and indulgence comes at a cost. Dick does not pay attention, however, to moral lesson, and Abe's fate foreshadows Dick's own later destruction.

❝ However, everything had happened—Abe's departure and Mary's impending departure for Salzburg this afternoon had ended the time in Paris. Or perhaps the shots, the concussions that had finished God knew what dark matter, had terminated it. The shots had entered into all their lives: echoes of violence followed them out onto the pavement where two porters held a post-mortem beside them as they waited for a taxi.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Rosemary Hoyt, Mary North, Abe North, Maria Wallis, Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Page Number: 109

Explanation and Analysis

This passage marks a significant turning point in the novel: the end of the Divers' sparkling parties and illusions, and the beginning of Dick's downfall. After they wave goodbye to Abe in the train station, the party witness Maria Wallis—an acquaintance from the Parisian party scene—shoot an unnamed man. Maria's shots are a catalyst for the beginning of a new chapter for the Divers, who will be haunted by pain, violence, and destruction for the rest of the story. These "echoes of violence," right at the end of their stay in Paris, symbolize a distinct change of mood and signal a disruption in the carefully constructed illusion of contentedness, light-heartedness, and affluence that the Divers put on for other people. After this point, the Divers' pristine performance begins to show signs of wear, and even they are no longer able to subscribe to their optimistic illusions.

Book 1, Chapter 20 Quotes

❝ Only the image of a third person, even a vanished one, entering into his relation with Rosemary was needed to throw him off his balance and send through him waves of pain, misery, desire, desperation. The vividly pictured hand on Rosemary's cheek, the quicker breath, the white excitement of the event viewed from outside, the inviolable secret warmth within.

—Do you mind if I pull down the curtain?

—Please do. It's too light in here.

Related Characters: Collis Clay, Hillis, Rosemary Hoyt, Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 113

Explanation and Analysis

Dick is overcome with "pain, misery, desire, [and] desperation" when Collis Clay tells him that Rosemary is known to have gotten into trouble after being found in a locked train compartment with a young suitor, Hillis. Dick pictures Rosemary with Hillis—seeing them together and feeling the passion between them—and hears an imaginary conversation between them. Dick imagines Rosemary agreeing to Hillis pulling down the curtain in their train compartment, citing that it's "too light." Light has connotations of virginity, purity, goodness, and virtue. Thus, when Rosemary consents to blocking out the light, she welcomes the loss of her innocence.

This news exposes the inherently contradictory nature of Dick's desire for Rosemary. He desires her youth and innocence, but fears admitting this because it is inappropriate and troubling. Further, if he were to act on his desires and impulses and have sex with Rosemary, she would inevitably no longer embody the innocence ad purity that attracts him to her. This conflict thus causes Dick "pain" and "desire" simultaneously. Indeed, the juxtaposition between the "pain" and "desire" that Dick feels highlights the perverse nature of his attraction to Rosemary—he is both miserable to learn that Rosemary might not be as innocent as he had believed, and also aroused by the thought of her acting in an overtly sexual way.

Book 1, Chapter 21 Quotes

"Look, I'm in an extraordinary condition about you. When a child can disturb a middle-aged gent—things get difficult."

"You're not middle-aged, Dick—you're the youngest person in the world."

Related Characters: Rosemary Hoyt, Dick Diver (speaker)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 119

Explanation and Analysis

When Dick calls Rosemary at her hotel room after learning about her experience with Hillis, Dick admits that he's completely consumed by his desire for her. He refers to the troubling age gap between them, acknowledging that she is just "a child." The choice of the word "disturb" here is interesting, because for a modern audience, Dick's relationship with Rosemary is certainly disturbing. Dick is disturbed, however, because Rosemary seems to have a great deal of power over him, and his life is unravelling around him. Notably, Dick is unable to finish the word "gentleman," interrupting himself at "gent." Perhaps this is because the connotations of the word "gentleman" are honour, virtue, and goodness, and Dick knows that his desires for Rosemary are inappropriate, and perverse.

Rosemary's reply is equally important. By suggesting that Dick is "not middle-aged," and is more like "the youngest person in the world," Rosemary speaks to Dick's the fact that Dick gives the impression of youth and vitality. This implies that Rosemary would not be interested in Dick if he did act "middle-aged," but because he is energetic, handsome, and enigmatic, Rosemary feels like his peer.

Book 1, Chapter 25 Quotes

"Look here, you mustn't get upset over this—it's only some nigger scrap."

Related Characters: Dick Diver (speaker), Abe North, Jules Peterson, Rosemary Hoyt

Related Themes:

Page Number: 141

Explanation and Analysis

After Rosemary finds Jules Peterson dead on her hotel bed, Dick tries to reassure and comfort her. Not only is the sentiment of Dick's speech extremely racist—Dick suggests that Peterson isn't worth getting upset over because he's black—but the pejorative slur is racist and offensive. Further, Dick is categorically wrong in suggesting that Peterson's death is the result of a "scrap" between black people; his dear friend, Abe North, is actually responsible for the conflict that led to Peterson's murder.

The language Dick uses here is indicative of the racism littered throughout the novel. Black and ethnic minority characters are frequently used as a side show to the story's central plot, which revolves around white, wealthy characters. Peterson's death doesn't elicit any sympathy or sadness because his life is so valueless that it's hardly recognized as a loss. Rather, Peterson's death is intended to be shocking because of the way it impacts the white characters around him—Rosemary's reputation could be threatened if she were associated with such a scandal. Thus, the characters' treatment of Peterson is reflective of the

deep-rooted racism in entrenched in 1920s society.

Book 2, Chapter 5 Quotes

Nicole took advantage of this to stand up and the impression of her youth and beauty grew on Dick until it welled up inside him in a compact paroxysm of emotion. She smiled, a moving childish smile that was like all the lost youth in the world.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 174

Explanation and Analysis

Dick visits Nicole in the psychiatric clinic. He is utterly overwhelmed by her youthful beauty to the point of "paroxysm," suggesting that he is completely disarmed by Nicole. Nicole intentionally and consciously summons her "youth ad beauty" and displays it to Dick when standing up. In other words, Nicole—a young psychiatric patient—is able to exercise control over Dick—a logical, scientific man—because of the potency of her youth.

Indeed, throughout the story, Dick is drawn to youth because it symbolizes for him a powerful vitality and optimism. Indeed, Nicole's "childish smile" is compared to "all the lost youth in the world," which speaks to a moral panic surrounding the immorality of the younger generation. Post-World War I culture was characterized by a sense that civilization had been corrupted by the violence of the war. Society turned to the young as an emblem of hope and promise for the future. Societal and economic developments, however, meant that younger generations were more amoral than ever before, wearing revealing clothing, drinking alcohol, and displaying sexually liberated behavior. Thus, when Nicole smiles at Dick, he sees an innocence that offers hope, not just for himself, but also for the world.

Dick is initially attracted to Nicole's smile, here described as "childish." This is significant because, later in the story, Dick is able to judge and measure Nicole's wellbeing by observing her mouth and smile. He often observes a strange smile stretched across Nicole's mouth, for example, just moments before she sinks into an episode of ill mental health. Nicole's beautiful smile, then, becomes a sort of illusion, concealing the underlying trauma that haunts her.

Book 2, Chapter 8 Quotes

"But I will carry you down in my arms," Marmora protested intensely. "I will roller-skate you—or I will throw you and you will fall slowly like a feather."

The delight in Nicole's face—to be a feather again instead of a plummet, to float and not to drag. She was a carnival to watch—at times primly coy, posing, grimacing and gesturing—sometimes the shadow fell and the dignity of old suffering flowed down into her fingertips.

Related Characters: Conte di Marmora (speaker), Dick Diver, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 193

Explanation and Analysis

When Dick bumps into Nicole and Marmora on the funicular, Nicole jokes with Dick coquettishly, asking him to ride with her on the handlebars of his bike. Feeling left out, Marmora interjects, offering to "carry," "roller-skate," or "throw" Nicole down the mountain. By comparing Nicole to "a feather," he suggests that she is light, breezy, and fresh. Nicole is pleased with this appraisal because she is accustomed to feeling like a weight and "a plummet" to those around her. Indeed, throughout the story, Fitzgerald depicts Nicole—and her mental illness—as a burden, particularly to Dick. Nicole's condition is positioned as the primary barrier between Dick and his professional success. Again and again, Dick feels like his caring responsibilities to Nicole have dragged and weighed him down, occupying all his time and requiring all his energy.

The description of Nicole as "a carnival to watch," speaks to her performative and changeable nature, as she flits between different aspects of her character. Dick perceives, however, how Nicole is sometimes unable to maintain her performance, and how "a shadow [...] of suffering " falls across her. This suggests that Nicole is never able to fully escape her childhood traumas and dark past, as they frequently comes back to haunt her. Fitzgerald describes the "dignity" of Nicole's suffering, through which he draws parallels between her and The Gold Star Mothers in Book 1, Chapter 22, and the procession of veterans in Book 2, Chapter 17. These two groups are dignified because of the

honorable nature of their wartime suffering. Thus, Nicole's suffering is also depicted as heroic and brave.

Book 2, Chapter 10 Quotes

❝ Dick, why did you register Mr. and Mrs. Diver instead of Doctor and Mrs. Diver? I just wondered—it just floated through my mind.—You've taught me that work is everything and I believe you. You used to say a man knows things and when he stops knowing things he's like anybody else, and the thing is to get power before he stops knowing things. If you want to turn things topsy-turvy, all right, but must your Nicole follow you walking on her hands, darling?

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren) (speaker), Lanier and Topsy Diver, Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 209

Explanation and Analysis

The majority of Chapter 10 is told from Nicole's first-person perspective. The narration is disjointed and jumbled, reflecting the bewildering nature of her condition. In this section, Nicole is addressing Dick, but it's not clear whether she's actually speaking to him or talking to herself. Despite Nicole's ill mental state, here she is clearly able to identify a contradiction in Dick's values because, having told Nicole "that work is everything," he's used the name "Mr. Diver" instead of Doctor Diver. Thus, Nicole inverts the parent-child, carer-patient dynamic between her and her husband by lecturing Dick for once. Indeed, inversions are an important motif in this passage. Nicole accuses Dick of turning things "topsy-turvy." This adjective is reminiscent of the name of the Divers' second child, Topsy, particularly because Nicole has just explained in this chapter that she had a relapse after Topsy's birth. Nicole's daughter, then, also turned Nicole's life "topsy-turvy."

Fitzgerald may have also intended to reference Topsy Turvy dolls, which were an extremely popular toy during the 1920s. Topsy Turvy dolls had two figures attached at the hip, one depicting a white girl, and the other depicting a black girl. It is widely accepted that these dolls helped reinforces racist power dynamics in American households, with white girls, and their black slaves, playing with these dolls together. Indeed, just before this passage, Nicole said "You tell me my baby is black—that's farcical," which might also be a reference to Topsy Turvy dolls. This passage, then, serves to illustrate how confused and disoriented Nicole is during her illness, but also suggests that Nicole's family—Dick and her children—exacerbate her condition.

Book 2, Chapter 11 Quotes

❝ As an indifference cherished, or left to atrophy, becomes an emptiness, to this extent he had learned to become empty of Nicole, serving her against his will with negations and emotional neglect.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 218

Explanation and Analysis

Reflecting on Nicole's recent episode in Tarmes, and then her subsequent mental breakdown in Paris, Dick wonders whether Nicole is about to relapse again. Dick, being both Nicole's husband and doctor, has had to develop a professional distance from Nicole, in order to protect his own feelings. This professional measure has, however, turned into a hardness and coldness, and Dick realizes that he has emotionally neglected Nicole, who is wholly dependent on him.

Further, the narrator suggests that Dick might have even "cherished" his coldness from Nicole. It has certainly made him more powerful "to become empty" of her. This passage therefore speaks to the sexist nature of psychiatry and medicine, whereby Dick has deliberately starved Nicole of love and affection at the expense of her recovery. Considering that Dick was well aware of Nicole's condition when he chose to marry her, his treatment of her seems cruel and manipulative.

Book 2, Chapter 12 Quotes

❝ His work became confused with Nicole's problems; in addition, her income had increased so fast of late that it seemed to belittle his work.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Page Number: 241

Explanation and Analysis

In the villa in Tarmes, Dick reflects on his life with Nicole and their increasingly stifling domestic routine. He mourns the fact that he has not become a successful or famous doctor, a failure that he blames wholeheartedly on Nicole. Again, Nicole is depicted as a burden or a bad omen that has cursed Dick, leading to his downfall.

Dick even blames Nicole's wealth—which offers him a great deal of privilege and protection—for his lack of professional success. Her income is so large that it seems to shadow his efforts to earn money in ways that he perceives are more honorable, through writing papers and publishing medical journals. No doubt the shame that Dick feels surrounding his income is inherently gendered—he feels emasculated by the fact that he can't financially provide for his family. But also, Dick feels emasculated because he detests the idea that he's been manipulated and controlled by the Warren family and their enormous wealth.

Book 2, Chapter 13 Quotes

"We must think it over carefully—" and the unsaid lines back of that: "We own you, and you'll admit it sooner or later. It is absurd to keep up the pretence of independence."

Related Characters: Beth (Baby) Warren (speaker), Franz Gregorovious, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 230

Explanation and Analysis

Baby and Dick have had a tense and strained relationship ever since she initially resisted the marriage between Dick and Nicole, citing that he might have been trying to exploit her sister for money. Here, Baby inserts herself into a conversation between Franz and Dick about a business opportunity to open a sanitarium in Zurich. When she announces, "We must think it over," Baby indicates that Dick has no power or autonomy to make financial decisions without her.

Further, Dick imagines her mocking him, saying "We own you." On one hand, this might reflect Dick's bitterness and insecurities surrounding Nicole's wealth, and his comparative lack of it. However, when Baby later helps Dick in Rome—in Book 2, Chapter 23—she has the "satisfaction" of knowing "they now possessed a moral superiority" over Dick. Therefore, it is quite possible that the "unsaid lines" Dick imagines are truly reflective of his situation. Dick feels great disgust and remorse about the fact that the Warren family holds any power over him. He perceives them, and their wealth, as the product of dirty money and a corrupt capitalism, ideas that stand in direct opposition to the humble American values passed down to him from his religious father..

Book 2, Chapter 15 Quotes

She was laughing hilariously, unashamed, unafraid, unconcerned. No one coming on the scene would have imagined that she had caused it; she laughed as after some mild escape of childhood.

Related Characters: Mr. Devereux Warren, Lanier and Topsy Diver, Dick Diver, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren)

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 249

Explanation and Analysis

Forming the novel's climax, this passage recounts how, while in the car with Dick and the children, Nicole intentionally steers the car off course, causing it to crash into a tree. Her anger was roused when she received a letter from an ex-patient of Dick's warning her that her husband had kissed a young female patient.

The description of Nicole "laughing hilariously, unashamed, unafraid, unconcerned," depicts the height of her madness—she is completely out of control, and also blissfully unaware of the horror and violence of her own actions. In fact, the crash offers Nicole a degree of relief and respite—laughing uncontrollably, she is able to forget the memories of her childhood, and the incestuous sexual abuse she experienced at the hands of her father. It is possible that, in trying to kill her own children—who could have easily lost their lives in the crash—Nicole was attempting to free herself of her own childhood and the painful memories from this time. Fitzgerald's wife, Zelda, suffered from mental illness herself and it is possible that his depiction of Nicole's madness was influenced by his own experiences

with Zelda.

Book 2, Chapter 20 Quotes

❝ For three years Dick had been the ideal by which Rosemary measured other men and inevitably his stature had increased to heroic size. She did not want him to be like other men, yet here were the same exigent demands, as if he wanted to take some of herself away, carry it off in his pocket.

Related Characters: Dick Diver, Rosemary Hoyt

Related Themes:

Page Number: 274

Explanation and Analysis

When Rosemary meets Dick again in Rome, three years after she had fallen in love with him on the beach at Gausse's, he and his "demands" disappoint her. As a younger girl, Rosemary had placed Dick upon a pedestal and idealized him as the perfect man and an example of perfect masculinity. However, when she sees him again, he looks tired and much older. After Dick tries to determine how sexually experienced Rosemary is, she becomes frustrated at his failure to live up to her expectations of him; she had thought he was different, but he has the same preoccupation with sex and virginity as all the other men she's met.

Rosemary feels that Dick "wanted to take some of herself away, carry it off in his pocket," which perhaps refers to her innocence and virginity. On the other hand, it might refer to her youth and beauty, which Dick tries to possess and embody through proximity to Rosemary, and other young girls. Either way, Rosemary feels used by Dick, a man who she thought wanted to protect her.

Book 3, Chapter 7 Quotes

❝ For what might occur thereafter she had no anxiety—she suspected that that would be the lifting of a burden, an unblinding of eyes. Nicole had been designed for change, for flight, with money as fins and wings. The new state of things would be no more than if a racing chassis, concealed for years under the body of a family limousine, should be stripped to its original self. Nicole could feel the fresh breeze already—the wrench it was she feared, and the dark manner of its coming.

Related Characters: Rosemary Hoyt, Dick Diver, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren)

Related Themes:

Page Number: 357

Explanation and Analysis

On her way to meet Rosemary at the beach, Nicole reflects upon Dick's deterioration and the end of their marriage. Here, Dick is described as "a burden." This subverts the couple's dynamics because, throughout the majority of the story, Nicole has been presented as a burden for Dick. It becomes clear then, that Dick's drinking problem has inverted their previous parent-child, doctor-patient relationship, giving Nicole the power and control over their relationship.

Nicole has accepted that they will separate and, after years of living in Dick's shadow, she welcomes the change. Nicole's large inheritance has equipped her "for flight," and made her infinitely adaptable—a privilege that Dick doesn't have. Fitzgerald compares her wealth to "fins and wings," suggesting that she has the freedom of a bird or a fish. Fitzgerald compares her time with Dick to a family car: reliable, practical and steady. Nicole's next chapter, however, will be more like "a racing chassis" that is fast, impulsive, and exciting. Perhaps this comparison is intended to concern the reader, who might wonder whether Nicole will survive a life without Dick's steady, consistent guidance. Nicole, however, can "feel the fresh breeze" of change already, and which is liberating for her.

Book 3, Chapter 8 Quotes

❝ A little later, riding toward Nice, she thought: So I have white crook's eyes, have I? Very well then, better a sane crook than a mad puritan.

Related Characters: Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren) (speaker), Tommy Barban, Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Page Number: 373

Explanation and Analysis

Embracing her love affair with Tommy Barban, Nicole rides with him in the car towards Nice, leaving the children with the nanny. She reflects on something Tommy has said to her—about how her eyes look like "white crook's eyes"—and she embraces the term that she had initially found insulting. White usually symbolizes purity and virtue, but juxtaposed with the word "crook," Fitzgerald complicates this reading.

Perhaps the juxtaposition is intended to represent Nicole's deceptive nature—she *seems* sweet and innocent but is actually damaged by her childhood trauma and corrupted by greed and jealousy. It could also represent the immorality of the affair Nicole is about to engage in with Tommy.

Deciding that it's better to be "a sane crook than a mad puritan," Nicole seems to draw the conclusion that her life with Tommy, as a "sane crook," will be better than her life with Dick. Here Nicole might be referring to the fact that Dick was attracted to the idea of innocence and goodness until it drove him "mad." She also suggests that she believes her relationship with Tommy will cure her and make her "sane."

Book 3, Chapter 10 Quotes

❝ On an almost parallel occasion, back in Dohmler's clinic on the Zürichsee, realizing this power, he had made his choice, chosen Ophelia, chosen the sweet poison and drunk it. Wanting above all to be brave and kind, he had wanted, even more than that, to be loved. So it had been.

Related Characters: Lady Caroline Sibly Biers, Professor Dohmler, Mary North, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Related Symbols:

Page Number: 384

Explanation and Analysis

Dick receives a phone call in the middle of the night. Mary North and Lady Caroline are in a fix and need Dick's help getting them out of prison. Dick decides to go and help, not because he wants to, or particularly cares, but because he has—and has always had—a strong desire to be loved and needed.

Fitzgerald likens this moment to when Dick fell in love with Nicole all those years ago. Dick chose a life with her partly because of his ambitions to "be brave and kind." Mostly though, he had wanted to be loved. On one hand, Nicole is the "sweet poison," contaminating Dick and making him sick. On the other hand, "the sweet poison" might actually be Dick's need for love in itself. It is this that led him to Nicole—and later to Rosemary—and the reason he expends such a great deal of energy and affection on those around him.

The comparison between Nicole and Ophelia is a complex one. Most obviously, Ophelia—a character in Shakespeare's "Hamlet"—is mad, and Nicole is mentally ill. Ophelia is also defined and controlled by the men in her life, just like Nicole, who is shaped by her experiences with her abusive father, the male psychiatrists at the sanitarium, and later by Dick. The phrase "he had made his choice, chosen Ophelia," suggests that Dick was well aware of the complex life he would have with Nicole, but he chose it anyway—he chose a bitter, difficult, intoxicating love, and this was the catalyst for his downfall.

Book 3, Chapter 13 Quotes

❝ Perhaps, so she liked to think, his career was biding its time, again like Grant's in Galena; his latest note was postmarked from Hornell, New York, which is some distance from Geneva and a very small town; in any case he is almost certainly in that section of the country, in one town or another.

Related Characters: Tommy Barban, Nicole Diver (Nicole Warren), Dick Diver

Related Themes:

Page Number: 402

Explanation and Analysis

The story's close is sad and quiet. Dick has moved back to America, while Nicole stays in Tarmes with Tommy, having remarried. Keen to stay in contact with Dick, and full of fond memories of him, Nicole tries to determine where he's living in the U.S. Every time she receives a letter from him, however, it has a different postal stamp, suggesting that he's continuously on the move, each time to a smaller, unknown town. It is unlikely that he's been able to set up a clinic in a rural, non-descript American town. Having moved to Europe as a young man full of the hopes of his American professors, and his own ambitious dreams, Dick returns to America as an older man—bitter, unaccomplished, and alone. His unceremonious return to the States symbolizes his personal failures, as well as the broader American dream of happiness and success that he failed to attain.

Significantly, there is a change in tense at the end of this passage—from the past tense to the present tense—signaling a shift in narrative perspective. Indeed, it is possible that the last clause of the story is Nicole's voice, as she thinks fondly of Dick, and tries to dismiss any worries she might have about him. Nicole compares Dick to Ulysses S. Grant, who lived poorly and humbly in Galena before becoming a Civil War hero, and later the U.S. president. This allusion, then, reveals that Nicole still cherishes hope for

Dick, and believes that his professional success is yet to come. By giving Nicole the last line of the novel—rather than Dick—Fitzgerald emphasizes the fact that Dick is living in lonely obscurity, while Nicole is better than ever.

SUMMARY AND ANALYSIS

The color-coded icons under each analysis entry make it easy to track where the themes occur most prominently throughout the work. Each icon corresponds to one of the themes explained in the Themes section of this LitChart.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 1

In 1935 on the French Riviera, a "dazzling beach" stretches out in front of Gausse's hotel, an impressive pink building on the coast somewhere between Marseilles and Italy. In recent years, the resort has become an increasingly popular summer destination among "notable and fashionable people."

Fitzgerald begins the story with a "dazzling" image of the natural beauty and splendor of the French Riviera. This coastline was a fashionable holiday destination for wealthy American expatriates like Fitzgerald and his artistic friends throughout the 1920s.

The story that is about to unfold, however, begins 10 years earlier, in 1925, when the shore surrounding Gausse's was derelict and "almost deserted." Alone in the quiet summer morning, a single hotel guest takes a swim, "grunting" and floundering in the cool water.

With his opening—which shifts from 1935 back to 1925 within a matter of lines—Fitzgerald warns the audience that this is a story concerned with time passing. The novel about to unfold will straddle both the 1920s and 1930s, two vastly distinct periods of American history due to the financial crash of 1929.

It's a June morning and a woman of "fading prettiness" and her astonishingly beautiful daughter arrive at Gausse's Hotel. The girl exudes a magical youthfulness and a lovely brightness, "like the thrilling flush of children after their cold baths." The girl's body clings to "the last edge of childhood," as she is nearly 18 years old.

Introducing these two female characters, Fitzgerald reduces them both to their physical appearance, suggesting that this is what they will be valued for by the other characters in the story. Disturbingly, Rosemary's beauty is inherently linked, not just to youthfulness, but her relationship with childhood. This description forebodes the story's preoccupation with youth and innocence.

The mother and daughter crave "high excitement," and they sense that they're not going to enjoy their stay. The mother announces that they will return home after three days, and they book themselves into the hotel.

The beach resort is not yet fashionable or popular and this leaves Rosemary and her mother feeling dissatisfied. Fitzgerald highlights how wealthy American expatriates treated Europe like a playground during the Jazz Age; they were accustomed to ceaseless distractions and became easily bored if not constantly entertained.

Moving with the grace of a ballet dancer, the daughter walks out into the bright sun, noticing the attention directed towards her from strangers on the beach. Heading into the sea to swim, she is surprised by how shallow the water is and turns her gaze towards those on the beach.

Rosemary's beauty, elegance, and traditional femininity make her captivating to others. She is not yet entirely self-confident, however, or sure of how to behave under the gaze of others. Throughout the novel, men will be drawn to this interplay of mature beauty with youthful self-consciousness.

As Rosemary walks slowly through the water, she sees "a bald" and hairy man watching her through a monocle. She swims joyously towards the raft, where she finds "a tanned woman with very white teeth." Back on the shore, the man with the monocle warns Rosemary—in a "slow Oxford drawl"—about sharks, before walking away to pour himself a drink.

Rosemary is seemingly unaffected by the gaze of the odd man observing her from the beach, suggesting that she may be quite accustomed to strangers watching her despite being a bit unsure of herself. Through his portrayal of Gausse's beach, and its guests, Fitzgerald captures the eclectic nature of the crowd who really frequented the French Riviera during the 1920s.

Slightly self-conscious, Rosemary scans the beach for a place to sit among the different families. Lying on her bathrobe, she begins to tune into the different voices around her, overhearing snippets of their conversations. She observes a group close to her who she believes might be American; there is a young woman wearing pearls with a "lovely and pitiful" face, "a fine man in a jockey cap," the tanned woman from before, a man with a "leonine head," and an "unmistakably Latin young man." She watches the man in the jockey cap entertain his party, drawing attention from others on the beach, who are also enraptured by his funny "little performance."

The reader is introduced to this new cast of characters through Rosemary's observations. By introducing new characters predominantly through descriptions of their physical traits, then, Fitzgerald reflects and captures Rosemary's shallow obsession with outward appearances. The description of Tommy as "Latin" is a reference to his complexion, and implies that he is not white, like the others. This is the first indication of the widespread racist views commonly held in the 1920s.

Just then, the man with the monocle interrupts Rosemary, complimenting her on her swimming. He introduces himself as Campion, and invites her to join his party, who he says are keen to meet her. Rosemary reluctantly moves towards the "untanned people," who Campion introduces as Mrs. Abrams, Mrs. McKisco, Mr. McKisco, and Mr. Dumphry. One of the women announces that she needn't be introduced to Rosemary Hoyt because she already recognizes her from the last film she starred in. The group fusses over Rosemary, warning her not to get sun burned, and admitting that they might have acted improperly by calling her over.

Rosemary, concerned with appearances and social standing, is reluctant to join a party that she snobbishly considers to be vulgar and unfashionable. The group, equally concerned with seeming fashionable, pay lip service to social codes and manners yet chose to ignore them entirely. They fret, for example, that they shouldn't have beckoned Rosemary to join them without a proper introduction but, of course, have already done it anyway.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 2

Rosemary does not like the company she finds herself in and is uncomfortable with their jokes. She would rather be with the man in the jockey cap and his party, and longs for her mother—who has a "social gift"—that would help her get out of the situation. Rosemary has been a movie star and celebrity for only six months and is not yet confident with her social capabilities.

Rosemary is drawn to the man in the jockey cap partly because of his confidence and charisma. These are qualities that young Rosemary is still developing herself, having spent most of her life relying on her mother for guidance and support in this area.

Mr. McKisco, "a scrawny, freckle-and-red man," attempts to make conversation with Rosemary, but when his wife, Violet, cracks a joke he doesn't like, Mr. McKisco snaps at her furiously before heading for the water. Rosemary seizes her opportunity to escape the loathsome group and follows him and Violet to the shallows. They swim towards the raft, where they meet Abe North briefly, before he dives into the water. Mr. and Mrs. McKisco resent Abe and agree, "he's a rotten musician."

Fitzgerald presents the group negatively—they are unscrupulous social climbers and gossips. Mr. McKisco has a short temper and exercises cruel authority over his wife, but Rosemary doesn't seem to feel very sorry for her—she feels superior to the whole crowd and longs to be among more elegant types.

Noticing the woman with the pearls once more, Rosemary asks after her. Violet explains that she's called Mrs. Diver, but her and her family aren't staying at the hotel. Leaving Violet and Mr. McKisco in another argument, Rosemary swims back to the beach, where she lies in the sun and watches the man with the jockey cap enjoying himself. She is sure that he is responsible for the lively excitement radiating from their group.

Rosemary is drawn toward Dick once more. This time, she notices his wife, Nicole, as well. Nicole is wearing pearls on the beach, which indicates that she is wealthy and elegant. Like Rosemary, the couple exudes a wonderful energy that draws others towards them. It seems that Rosemary is destined to be friends with the Divers.

Waking up, Rosemary finds herself drenched in sweat and almost alone on the beach. The man in the jockey cap is gathering up the last of his items, and they share a brief exchange about avoiding sunburn. Dick Diver looks at her for a moment as he collects his beach umbrella, and she feels profoundly moved while gazing back into "the bright blue worlds of his eyes, eagerly and confidently."

Fitzgerald foreshadows a potential romance between Dick and Rosemary when she looks into his deep, blue eyes. Just one glance from Dick is enough to leave Rosemary feeling alive and invigorated—he wields a charming power to make those around him feel special and seen.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 3

When Rosemary and her mother, Mrs. Speers, seat themselves in the dining room, the former announces that she "fell in love on the beach." Seemingly unsurprised, Rosemary's mother listens to how her daughter fell in love with a whole group of "nice" looking people, and then later with one man in particular—"very handsome. With reddish hair [...] married." Mrs. Speers is an optimistic and generous woman who has carefully and deliberately raised Rosemary to be "hard," "mature," and idealistic, all at once. Although she is content with Rosemary's development—and her success starring in the film *Daddy's Girl*—she is keen for Rosemary to become more independent, but less focused on herself.

Mrs. Speers has carefully and deliberately developed various skills in Rosemary, as if her daughter were a project or an investment. Indeed, the two live off the money Rosemary has earned in the movie business. Nonetheless, she is a supportive and caring mother and listens patiently while Rosemary tells her childish story about falling in love with Dick. Through the title of Rosemary's film, "Daddy's Girl," Fitzgerald reveals a societal obsession with both youth and innocence in the wake of World War I. People looked to the younger generation, untouched by the horrors of war, as a symbol of hope and goodness.

With no "stimuli" to entertain them after lunch, the women become easily bored, and Rosemary confirms they should only stay three days. When her mother enquires after the man she claims to have fallen in love with, Rosemary replies saying, "I don't love anybody but you, Mother, darling."

Fitzgerald highlights the petulant childishness of the Jazz Age crowd when portraying how Rosemary and Mrs. Speers become easily tired of their surroundings when not provided with distractions.

Rosemary travels to Cannes by herself. She is "embarrassed" by the silence in the bus, and later, upon arriving in the sleepy town, Rosemary feels self-conscious about being there out of season, which she considers unfashionable. Rosemary sees Mrs. Diver cross the street and observes her "lovely face" and "brave" eyes. Reading the newspaper in a café, Rosemary concludes that her time in France is "empty and stale"—she longs for excitement.

Again, Rosemary is so preoccupied with appearing fashionable, that she doesn't enjoy the natural beauty surrounding her, or the charm of the French town, Cannes. She is young and her desire for new, exciting opportunities dominates her thoughts. Rosemary perceptively observes, however, that there is more to Nicole than meets the eye—her "brave" eyes suggest that she has experienced some hardship in life.


The next day, Mrs. Speers and Rosemary hire a car and a chauffeur and enjoy a pleasant drive along the Riviera. Hearing some music in the distance, Rosemary is inspired to make the most of her last two days and resolves to avoid the people she had met on the beach the day before for the rest of her stay.

Fitzgerald captures the relaxed opulence of expatriate life when portraying Mrs. Speers and Rosemary's lifestyle on the French Riviera. Their American wealth goes far in Europe, where they can easily pay for a local driver.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 4

The following morning, Dick Diver approaches Rosemary on the beach. He asks where she was the previous day, adding, "We worried about you." He invites Rosemary to join him and his group for lunch. Rosemary finds him "kind and charming" and senses that he will "open up whole new worlds" and "magnificent possibilities" for her.

At last Rosemary receives the invitation she has been hoping for. It seems that Rosemary's absence was enough to secure Dick's interest in her. Although Rosemary is the actual celebrity, she is star-struck by Dick's magnetism and Fitzgerald forebodes the adventures that the two will share together.

Once Rosemary has joined the group, Abe North explains affectionately that Dick and Nicole Diver were the ones responsible for "inventing" the beach resort. After they discuss the beach's growing popularity, joking lightheartedly about the different visitors, Rosemary utilizes a quiet a moment to observe the group around her. She admires Nicole for her beauty but finds her quiet. She finds Barban—"the young man of Latin aspect"—to be restless, "uncivilized," and "skeptical." Abe is shy, and Rosemary distrusts his "desperate humor." With his bright blue eyes and melodic voice, on the other hand, Dick is completely enchanting. Nicole notices Rosemary's infatuation with him, hearing her "little sigh at the fact he was already possessed."

Accepted into the Divers' inner circle, Rosemary learns that the beach's growing popularity is thanks to them. It seems that the Divers enchant people wherever they go, and Rosemary is grateful to bask in their warmth and magnetism. Nicole astutely observes, right away, that Rosemary is infatuated with Dick, which suggests that this is not the first time a young, beautiful woman has fallen in love with her husband. The reference to Tommy as "uncivilized" reflects to a long, racist, colonial legacy of associating people of color with barbarism, backwardness, and inferiority.

Rosemary's new friends share disparaging remarks about Violet and Mr. McKisco and their party, whom they consider to be distasteful. Rosemary decides that she wouldn't like Nicole "as an enemy." When Dick threatens to invite the unsavory group to dinner, Nicole laughs, dismissing her husband's suggestion immediately. Rosemary is delighted by their company, and giggles wholeheartedly when Nicole hands Dick a novelty pair of black, lace swimming trunks to wear in the sea.

Fitzgerald captures the class snobbery of the era when depicting how Nicole—who is very wealthy—considers herself superior to the McKisco's and their friends. Although the majority of American expatriates in Europe had a great deal of wealth in the 1920s due to the economic boom, old-fashioned class divides still existed.

Dick looks at Rosemary, telling her, "you're the only girl I've seen for a long time that actually did look like something blooming." Later, Rosemary cries in her mother's arms, feeling hopelessly in love with Dick, but knowing that he's married and that she can't have him. When Mrs. Speers tells Rosemary that being in love ought to make her happy, she stops crying and laughs—"Her mother always had a great influence on her."

By comparing Rosemary to a "blooming" flower, Dick refers to the fact that Rosemary is on the cusp of adulthood. She appeals to him because she is no longer quite a child, but still exudes the virginal innocence of a young girl. Indeed, Rosemary is naïve; she hardly knows how to behave without the guidance of her mother.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 5

That afternoon Rosemary travels to Monte Carlo to visit Earl Brady at his film studio. Sensing almost immediately that he desires her, Rosemary compares him with Dick. Although she doesn't admire Brady nearly as much, she does feel a "click" between them, and something about him appeals to her "virginal emotions." Walking around the different sets, Rosemary feels "a spell" upon her; she warms to Europe knowing now that is contains a little corner of Hollywood magic.

Rosemary is inexperienced but she is aware of her own sex appeal and the power it gives her. Fitzgerald thus highlights the irony of society's obsession with youth and innocence through Rosemary's performance in the Hollywood movie Daddy's Girl. *In it, she plays the role of an utterly innocent and naive young girl, when she herself is a young woman on the cusp of her own sexual awakening.*

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 6

Nicole walks around her garden at the villa she and Dick have had built in Tarmes, a village up the hill from the beach at Gausse's. She is 24 years old and her face is stern but lovely. As Nicole gazes out at the sea view, Dick appears from the house with a megaphone in hand. He announces to Nicole that he has, in fact, invited Mrs. Abrams for dinner; he wishes to throw "a really *bad* party"—"a party where there's a brawl and seductions and people going home with their feelings hurt and women passed out in the cabinet de toilette."

Once more Fitzgerald draws attention to a certain hardness in Nicole's beauty, suggesting that she has experienced some difficulties during her life. Dick's eccentricity is revealed when he calls to Nicole through a megaphone across the garden. The reader sees an image of a man so at ease in his indulgent and luxurious lifestyle that he won't even walk across the garden to speak to his wife. Fitzgerald reveals a glimpse into the raucous and careless party scene of the 1920s through Dick's description of fights, "seductions," and hurt feelings.

Nicole senses that Dick is in one of his moods, exuding "the excitement that swept everyone up into it and was inevitably followed by his own form of melancholy." Dick has an irresistible charm, whereby he holds the power to sweep everybody up into his own exciting, peculiar world, so long as they subscribe "to it completely."

The reader learns through Nicole's thoughts that, despite Dick's convincing charm, even he isn't immune to the "melancholy" that inevitably follows excessive partying and socializing. Nicole's astute observation forebodes the melancholy that will grip Dick later in life.

Rosemary and Mrs. Speers are the first dinner guests to arrive at the villa, and Dick welcomes them graciously. At Earl Brady's request, the two Diver children, Lanier and Topsy, sing a sweet French song, prompting Rosemary to feel that Villa Diana is "the center of the world." She is shocked when Violet and Mr. McKisco, Mrs. Abrams, Mr. Dumphry, and Mr. Campion arrive, believing them to be "incongruous" guests. Dick's cool confidence and ease, however, soon convinces Rosemary that everything is quite perfect.

Rosemary is completely compelled by the magical loveliness of the Divers' beautiful life, house, and children. Nicole forbids Dick from inviting the McKiscos and their set to the dinner party, but he has done it anyway, suggesting that Nicole has little sway in the face of her husband's impulsivity and desires.

Rosemary finds Tommy Barban's talk of war glum and repulsive and is glad to escape him and find Dick beside her instead. She is a romantic and feels the glow of his brightness around her. Sensing her mother's approval to "go as far as" possible with Dick, she declares, "I fell in love with you the first time I saw you," but Dick pretends not to hear.

Tommy represents a particular kind of traditional masculinity and is positioned in contrast to Dick's. Where Dick embodies careful manners and American values, Tommy is an "uncivilized" warrior—he lacks restraint and represents physical strength. Fitzgerald highlights a moral decline during the Jazz Age through Mrs. Speers who, sensing an opportunity to teach her daughter something, encourages Rosemary to pursue a romantic relationship with Dick, despite their significant age difference and his marriage and family.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 7

With the dinner party in full swing, the guests prattle away merrily about various nonsenses. Unable to contribute anything interesting, Mr. McKisco devotes himself to drinking champagne, while the others enjoy themselves and the friendly atmosphere. Enchanted by Dick and Nicole's warm glow, Rosemary senses their whole table rise "a little toward the sky," like magic.

Champagne, an expensive French wine, flows freely at the Divers' party, symbolizing their decadent lifestyle. With nothing to serious to contribute, McKisco drinks indulgently and Rosemary witnesses serious men dissolve into nonsenses under the influence of alcohol.

Rosemary notices that Nicole and Dick have disappeared. In that moment, Violet McKisco accosts Rosemary to accompany her to the bathroom. Rosemary refuses, busy longing for Dick to return as she listens to McKisco and Tommy argue about socialism. When Violet appears again, it is clear that she is eager to share some gossip. Just before she divulges what she's seen upstairs, however, Tommy interrupts her, saying, "it's inadvisable to comment on what goes on in this house."

Both Tommy and Rosemary, out of loyalty to Dick and Nicole, choose not to indulge Violet's gossiping. Violet's secret—about what she has seen in the Divers' bathroom—is the first indication that Nicole is unwell. It is some months before Rosemary realizes what really happened at the dinner party that night, but this event foreshadows Nicole's future struggles with mental health.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 8

Presently, Dick returns to his guests and relieves the tension in the group by indulging McKisco in a conversation about literature. When at last Dick leads Rosemary through the garden, leaving the others behind, she feels strongly that she has deserved this time alone with him. As they look out upon the sea, Dick invites Rosemary to join him and Nicole in Paris. Delighted by the invitation, but wary that he is "passing her along slowly toward Nicole," Rosemary boldly reiterates her position, declaring her love for him once more.

After their stay on the French Riviera, the Divers' next destination is Paris. Their lifestyle reflects Fitzgerald's own experiences during the 1920s, when he and his wife, Zelda, traveled extensively throughout Europe. Quite confidently, and quite in control, Rosemary assertively declares her love for Dick; it appears that she might be less naïve than initially expected.

Although Rosemary has a tempting appeal, and Dick doesn't want to shut her out forever, he feels the need to deliver her back to Nicole at the house. The guests plan how they will get home in two separate cars—"There would be Tommy Barban [...] with Mrs. Abrams, Violet McKisco, Mr. McKisco and Campion" in one car, and Early Brady, Rosemary, Mrs. Speers, and Dumphry in the other. As Rosemary leaves, she wonders what Violet saw in the bathroom.

Dick desires Rosemary and her youth and beauty but he's distracted by Nicole's recent behavior in the bathroom, which the reader later learns was the beginning of a psychotic relapse. Not wanting to act on his feelings for Rosemary now, but careful to preserve the possibility of exploring this opportunity at a later date, Dick carefully leads her back to the house. Dick is a master manipulator and he is accustomed to getting his way.


BOOK 1, CHAPTER 9

As Brady's car passes the one with Tommy Barban and the others, Rosemary and her mother hear a "blur of voices" and see Dick and Nicole's chauffeur smiling from their car.

The chauffeur—who is most likely a French local—smiles during the commotion in the car. His smile reveals a tension between European natives and the wealthy Americans romping around Europe during the 1920s—the chauffeur is most likely amused by the arrogance and childishness of the party in his car.

Back at the hotel, Rosemary is restless and overcome with erotic thoughts about Dick. She wonders how she should approach the situation, exhausting all possibilities as she lies awake through the night. Throughout her childhood, Rosemary has been taught by her mother to work hard and become financially independent. However, that night Mrs. Speers had given Rosemary her blessing when it came to pursuing Dick: "go ahead and put whatever happens down to experience. Wound yourself or him—whatever happens it can't spoil you because economically you're a boy, not a girl."

Through reference to Rosemary's erotic dreams, Fitzgerald reveals the inherent contradiction in her innocence. It is precisely her youthful innocence that makes her so sexually appealing to men like Brady and Dick, but, of course, it would be impossible to embody both sexuality and innocence simultaneously—their expectations of her are unrealistic. In addition, Fitzgerald's allusion to Rosemary sexuality reflects a shift in the social and moral codes surrounding womanhood and femininity in the early 20th century, whereby puritanical, Victorian attitudes to women's sexuality had begun to loosen.

Disturbed by her mother's position—which felt like the "final severance of the umbilical cord"—and unable to sleep, Rosemary walks onto the terrace to find Luis Campion weeping, "shaking in the same parts as a weeping woman." When Rosemary asks what's the matter, Campion mutters something about the pain of being in love. Rosemary finds his face "repulsive," and although she doesn't show her "sudden disgust with whatever it was," Campion senses it and changes the subject. He tells Rosemary that Abe North is nearby. Rosemary is surprised, because he's meant to be staying at Dick and Nicole's house.

The image of an umbilical cord being cut symbolizes the violence of Rosemary's transition into adulthood, whereby she she feels forcibly removed from the safety of her mother's watchful eye. Meanwhile, Campion is portrayed as effeminate and emotional, and it is likely that Fitzgerald intended Campion to be gay. Rosemary's repulsion in response to Campion's lack of traditional masculinity reflects the rampant homophobia during the era in which Fitzgerald was writing.

Campion tells his "extraordinary story" about how Violet and Tommy had had an argument in the car about whatever it was that Violet had seen in Dick and Nicole's house. Coming to Violet's defense, Mr. McKisco got involved with the argument too. As a result, Mr. McKisco and Tommy are due to have a duel at 5 a.m. that morning.

Once more Fitzgerald captures the extraordinary recklessness of the expatriate circle who, due to their excessive drinking and expansive disposable incomes, can afford to behave like children. Having only just been exposed to this crowd, Rosemary is equally excited and overwhelmed by the events of the past 24 hours.

A voice from a room above instructs them to be quiet, so Rosemary stifles her laugh when Abe arrives and asks her why she's up so early. Abe calls Campion a "sewing-circle member" and ask Rosemary what she knows of the commotion.

Abe's insult—that Campion is a "sewing-circle member"—is a reference to his effeminate nature and his tendency to gossip. Here, Campion's masculinity is undermined through a comparison to a traditionally feminine pursuit— sewing—which is devalued and made ridiculous.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 10

Abe—who is very loyal to Dick and Nicole—tells his version of events to Rosemary, recounting how Violet, McKisco, and Tommy had argued in the car and arranged the resulting duel. Tommy "is a watchdog about the Divers" and was angered by Violet's attempts to spill a secret about them.

Both Abe and Tommy are very loyal to the Divers. The word "watchdog" to describe Tommy, for example, suggests that he is guarding something, perhaps a secret, and offering his protection to the Divers. The reader learns later that this is due to Nicole's history of ill mental health.

Abe heads upstairs to check on McKisco, bringing Rosemary with him. McKisco has been drinking all night and looks "puny and cross and white" as he frets about leaving the world without finishing his book or getting his affairs in order. He and Abe discuss the logistics of the duel, and Rosemary asserts that they should call it off, but Mr. McKisco is keen to continue with the dreadful affair in order to impress his wife, Violet.

Fitzgerald explores gender roles here through the depiction of McKisco—a sad, pathetic man—self-indulgently worrying about the legacy he'll leave behind in the world, should he be killed. In addition, the fact that McKisco intends to carry on with the duel merely to show off for his wife, and to assert a particular kind of physical manhood, reveals how fragile his masculinity is. That is, the same man who just days before violently snapped at his wife, mocking Violet and bossing her around, now worries that he'll appear a coward to her if he doesn't attend the duel.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 11

Campion invites Rosemary to ride with him in the hotel car to watch the duel. She is reluctant but when she asks him why he can't take Mr. Dumphry, he replies that he never wants "to see him again."

Again, Fitzgerald alludes to Campion's sexuality here by suggesting that he has had a love affair with Mr. Dumphry, which has now turned sour. Homosexuality was still considered a disease that could be cured when Fitzgerald was writing in the 1920s, and sodomy laws made gay relationships illegal.

Returning to her bedroom, Rosemary tells her mother what has happened. Mrs. Speers instructs Rosemary to go and watch the duel—she likes her daughter to experience new things without her. Rosemary obeys. Pulling up secretly at the golf course in the hotel car, Campion and Rosemary hide in the woods to watch the duel. The opponents shoot but miss each other, and after some firm arbitration from Abe, they agree to call and end to the conflict.

The peculiarity of Tommy and McKisco's duel highlights the reckless abandon with which expatriates behaved during this period. The fight is one motivated by traditional concepts of masculinity and honor, and the two men are willing to risk their lives in order to prove their manliness.

"Gasping" with excitement and shock, Campion is "the only casualty of the duel." Rosemary laughs at him as her thoughts turn to meeting Dick on the beach later.

Again, Campion is presented as weak, ridiculous, and feminine. Fitzgerald's homophobic portrayal, while offensive to modern audiences, would likely have been socially acceptable to his contemporaries.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 12

At a restaurant in Paris, Dick, Abe, Mary, Rosemary, and two musicians make a game of observing men at different tables, watching to see how frequently they fidget and fiddle. Dick declares confidently that he is the only American man to possess true "repose." Both the game and the company delight Rosemary, who has been with the Divers in Paris for two days.

Dick is the perfect picture of masculinity. He is calm, polished, and utterly charming. For Dick and his party, this "repose" is more European than American, and Dick shows off arrogantly that he is able to possess and finesse this foreign characteristic. Here Fitzgerald demonstrates how American expatriates often romanticized Europe, believing it to be classier and more elegant than their home country.

Nicole arrives wearing a "sky-blue suit like a stray segment of the weather outside." The three women at the table—Mary, Rosemary, and Nicole—symbolize different faces of American life. Nicole "was the granddaughter of a self-made American capitalist," Mary was the daughter of a working-class tradesman and "a descendent of President Tyler," and Rosemary was a Hollywood actress from "the middle of the middle class." Although the women are very different, their shared ability to live happily "in a man's world" offers them a common ground.

Fitzgerald portrays how the economic boom in America after World War I made possible a sort of smudging and blurring of the class divides that had defined America more strictly before the war. Class boundaries no longer apply to the three women at lunch—Nicole, Mary, and Rosemary—who have become wealthy respectively through business, marriage, and Hollywood celebrity. Fitzgerald also highlights how, despite their wealth, none of these women possess any real power in the world, but that they are able to exist happily within the patriarchal structure due to the comfortable lifestyle that money affords them.

While in a phone booth at the back of the restaurant, Rosemary overhears Dick and Nicole talking in hushed voices. Rosemary doesn't understand what Dick means when he says, "I want you terribly—let's go to the hotel now," but the tone of his voice leaves Rosemary "breathless."

Despite her innocent naivety, Rosemary feels a strong desire for Dick when she hears him trying to seduce Nicole. Rosemary's sexual awakening has begun, and she is determined, more than ever, to have her way with Dick.

Rosemary sees Nicole in a new light while shopping with her after lunch; she is beautiful, elusive, and impulsive. Nicole buys a large number of items, spending her money with ease, feeding the capitalist machine with her near endless frenzy of consumption.

In many ways, Nicole symbolizes American capitalism: she is the granddaughter of a capitalist and therefore benefits from the exploitation that helped make him rich. Shopping is a pastime for Nicole, and she passes her days buying mass-produced products that she doesn't need, reflecting the broader Western trend of consumption during this time.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 13

While visiting a memorial at a World War I battlefield in Somme, northern France, Dick leads Rosemary around, teaching her things about the war. Abe and Dick disagree about whether there could ever be another World War, with the latter declaring "no Europeans will ever do that again in this generation." Dick mourns that "all my beautiful safe world blew itself up here with a great gust of high-explosive love." Rosemary sobs in front of one memorial—"Like most women she liked to be told how she should feel," and she enjoys when Dick tells her "which things were ludicrous and which things were sad."

When Fitzgerald finished writing Tender is the Night *in 1934, it would have been impossible for him to know that a second war was soon to devastate the world once again. Perhaps Fitzgerald intended for Dick's hopeful optimism—that "no Europeans will ever do that again in this generation"—to be inspiring and assuring. Certainly the post-war generation wanted to believe that World War I had been the "war to end all wars," and many would have taken comfort in Dick's confident innocence. This passage is drenched in sexist gender dynamics, with men associated with war and heroism, while women are reduced to helpless emotional hysterics and need to be directed by men.*

Before leaving, they spot a girl they'd met earlier on the train, and she's still carrying a wreath. Unable to find her brother's grave, she follows Dick's advice to just place the wreath on a random grave. Rosemary cries at the woman's story as they all drive together to Amiens.

Once again, Dick's calm confidence and firm assuredness are gifts to those around him, particularly the women. He is an emblem of American values and good manners.

The party explores Amiens together, a town that's "still sad from the war." Surrounded by "smoke and chatter and music" they clap along to a live band, before catching the train back to Paris. Nicole frets restlessly while reading guidebooks about the battlefield. In contrast, Dick oversimplifies the war "until it [bears] a faint resemblance to one of his own parties."

Fitzgerald juxtaposes the cheerful spirit and optimism of the Jazz Age with the dark mood of war that still hung over Europe at this time. The post-war generation, haunted by the horrors of World War I, searched for ways to forget the past and look forward to a brighter future. Here, the live band in Amiens, a town "still sad from the war," vividly symbolizes the murky transition between wartime and peacetime.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 14

Rosemary is relieved when Nicole decides not to join them all at an art show that evening in Paris. Rosemary finds her to be unpredictable and is "somewhat afraid" of Nicole.

While, initially, Rosemary had claimed to be in love with both Dick and Nicole, Rosemary's feelings here suggest the beginning of a conflict or rivalry between the two women. Rosemary's fear of Nicole indicates that Nicole possesses more power in their relationship, but that her instability and "unpredictable" nature undermine her authority.

Sitting by the river with Dick and Abe and Mary North, Rosemary takes note of how much they drink, particularly Abe. She decides to have a glass of champagne, hoping it will impress Dick, before announcing that she turned 18 yesterday. Dick assures her that they will throw a party for her the following night.

After several days traveling with the Divers and Norths, Rosemary begins to understand the extent of their drinking habit. Correlating alcohol with maturity, Rosemary believes that she can impress Dick by drinking a glass of champagne. Of course, Rosemary misdirects her energies, for it is her innocence and youth that Dick is attracted to, not her maturity.

Abe is due to head back to America shortly and talks proudly of his plans to take the music world by storm. Despite Mary's request that they have an early night, Abe continues to order more drinks. Although Dick loves Abe fondly, "he had long lost hope" for him, and so when Abe tries to pour Rosemary another drink, Dick decides it's time for him and Rosemary to leave. Before he does, he makes a joke about abandoning his medical career. Mary is "shocked" by this and exclaims "Oh, Dick!" She is a "brave, hopeful woman" who has spent many years of her life following her husband around the world, "changing herself" for him, and getting little in return.

Abe has achieved almost nothing since his fluke success early in life as a composer. Having fritted away the past years drinking excessively and romping around Europe, he and Mary have decided it's high time they applied themselves to useful endeavors. Dick seems to understand them better than themselves, however, and his lack of hope for Abe's redemption forebodes his forthcoming downfall. Dick's joke about his career is the first indication that he, too, is unhappy. Again, Fitzgerald reveals the lack of power women hold in society when suggesting that Mary has dedicated her life to her husband's pursuits, rather than her own.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 15

In a taxi on the way back to the hotel, Rosemary turns her face towards Dick to be kissed. First, he looks at her gravely, calling her a "lovely child," but then he kisses her "breathlessly as if she were any age at all." He continues to kiss her, but "without enjoying it," feeling the chill of innocence on her lips. Rosemary reiterates her love for Dick saying, "Honestly—I love you and Nicole—I do." He has heard this before, "So many times […] even the formula was the same."

Despite not "enjoying it," Dick kisses Rosemary anyway, almost carelessly. Even though she is now 18, he reiterates that she is a "child." The word "gravely" has negative connotations and forebodes the difficulties to come in their relationship. The narrator reveals that this situation is not a new one for Dick, and the reader is left to wonder whether Dick has had other affairs with young girls before.

Once back at the hotel, Rosemary encourages Dick to join her in her room. Behind closed doors, she is as pale as "a white carnation" when she approaches Dick and whispers "take me," to his surprise. Throwing herself enthusiastically into her performance, as if she were acting in a role, she tries to seduce Dick, saying "I'm absolutely yours and I want to be."

The image of the white flower symbolizes purity, innocence, and virginity. It also suggests, however, that Rosemary is ready to bloom for Dick, in that she is eager to sacrifice her innocence for him.

Dick refuses Rosemary's advances and comforts her as she cries. As he leaves her room, Dick wishes her goodnight, calling her a "child." He tries to reassure her, reminding Rosemary that it would be nice if she met her true "first love" while she is "all intact, emotionally too." Even though Rosemary is overcome by desire for him, he leaves.

Patronizingly, Dick positions himself firmly in a paternal role, calling Rosemary a "child" once more. While this might appear caring and gentle at this stage in the text, it only serves to make his attraction to Rosemary all the more disturbing.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 16

Rosemary wakes feeling ashamed but is consoled as things return to normal when she accompanies Nicole for some dress fittings. Rosemary admires "Nicole for her beauty and her wisdom" but is jealous of her. This jealousy stems largely from her mother's hurtful remark that Nicole is "a great beauty," where Rosemary is not. While in a taxi together, the two women realize that they had both lived on the same, dingy street in Paris as children—Rue de Saints-Pères.

While Rosemary is a famous actress and an American sweetheart figure, Nicole is a classical beauty. Fitzgerald therefore contrasts their differing types of femininity; where Rosemary represents the modern glamour of Hollywood, Nicole symbolizes old-world European elegance. Their childhood experiences of Paris, however, unite the two women together. In addition, in English, the street name Rue de Saints-Pères translates to Holy Fathers Street. This is significant since, throughout the story, father figures play an important role in shaping the reader's understanding of both Nicole and Rosemary.


They meet the others and Rosemary's eyes find Dick's. She is "wildly happy" when realizing that "he was beginning to fall in love with her." Even though she hardly glances at Dick again, she feels confident that he is falling for her.

Once more, Fitzgerald reveals the illusory nature of Rosemary's innocence when describing how she carefully controls her behavior in order to seduce Dick.

An American man named Collis Clay, who Rosemary had held hands with last year, joins them to go to the cinema to watch Rosemary's latest film, *Daddy's Girl*. In it, Rosemary is "*so* young and innocent." Rosemary sits between Collis and Dick as they watch. Dick winces "for all the psychologists" at the "father complex" present in the plot line. After the film is over, Rosemary announces to the group that she's arranged for Dick to take a screen test. Dick is offended by the suggestion, believing film acting to be an unmanly pursuit.

Daddy's Girl *is seemingly about a sweet, innocent young girl who loses her father during the course of the narrative. Dick's reaction—to wince—at the story's resolution suggests that it contains some reference to a Freudian or psychoanalytical understanding of the Electra complex, whereby young girls become subconsciously sexually attracted to their fathers. By making this a theme in the hit Hollywood movie, Fitzgerald draws attention to a societal obsession with youth and innocence, as well as a tendency to sexualize young girls.*

In the taxi with Dick and Collis, Rosemary explains that she had planned to send Dick's screen test to Hollywood, hoping that he would be able to join her in a lead role. Collis tries to flatter Rosemary, but she is desperate for him to leave her and Dick alone. Dick gives the taxi driver an address and they stop outside an unfamiliar building. Dick warns her that she "won't like these people," and Rosemary imagines them to be dull, drunk, or distasteful, unfashionable types. She is completely unprepared for what is about to unfold.

Rosemary's plan for Dick to join her in Hollywood reveals her hopeful naivety and immaturity. Collis and Dick are both suitors to Rosemary, and Collis—being young and single—would be a much more appropriate match. Ultimately though, Rosemary chooses Dick. Fitzgerald creates tension at the end of this chapter with the suggestion that Rosemary is about to witness something shocking or distasteful in the building they're about to visit, perhaps shattering the very innocence to which Dick is drawn.

Dick tells Franz that he needs to go away on a trip without Nicole and asks him to "keep the peace" while he attends a psychiatry conference in Munich. Dick has no intention of actually attending the congress but heads for Germany the following week.

Dick feels drained by recent events with Nicole and needs some respite. There is a chance that Dick will be able to recover some of his former self with some space from Nicole. Although Franz is very understanding of the matter, Dick feels the need to lie about the congress to his business partner.

On the flight, Dick realizes how tired he feels after the recent dramas in his family. He dreams of European landscapes and the girls he might find there. Dick's mind has been shaped partly by the "tawdry souvenirs of his boyhood" but still maintains "the low painful fire of intelligence."

The narrator suggests that below the shallow illusion of Dick's promise and prestige, he has very simple desires and pleasures. He soon forgets his family, for example, when imagining the various women he'll be able to conquer across Europe.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 17

Dick and Rosemary enter a very historical looking house but find it to be very modern inside. Dick has to speak with the hostess about some matter, so Rosemary looks around at the 30 or so people lounging around there. Rosemary tries to make sense of her new surroundings, likening the atmosphere to that of a film set, when she overhears some women gossiping about the Divers. Making her way towards Dick, Rosemary looks towards the "three cobra women" "defiantly," showing them that she has overheard their unkind remarks as she says her goodbyes. As soon as they are outside the building, Dick apologizes to Rosemary as she bursts into tears.

Fitzgerald captures the extravagance of the expatriate Parisian party scene when describing the fashionable and beautiful people lounging and languishing in this grand house. Rosemary reacts strongly when overhearing the women gossiping about the Divers, becoming protective of them. It seems that, despite Dick's charm, the Divers have a bad a reputation in certain circles.

Inside the taxi, they fall "ravenously" into each other's arms, kissing and murmuring to one another. Dick declares that he loves Rosemary but admits that it's "not the best thing that could happen." For a short while they are overcome by the "innocence" of their blossoming love, or at least the illusion of it.

After comforting Rosemary as a parent might to a child, Dick gives into temptation and succumbs to his sexual desires for Rosemary, kissing her passionately. The description of Rosemary as both sexual and innocent reveals the illusory nature of their attraction—it is impossible for her to be both. Dick is attracted to her innocence because it symbolizes youth, hope, and possibility, but he is aware that this will cause problems for him.

Breaking the spell, Dick announces that "Nicole mustn't suffer." When he senses that Rosemary is not convinced about the love between him and Nicole, Dick states that his marriage is "complicated [...] it was responsible for that crazy duel." Dick explains Nicole is weaker than she looks and that he loves her very much. Back at the hotel, Dick and Rosemary kiss as they make their way up five flights of stairs. When they part, Rosemary runs to her room to write to Mrs. Speers, feeling guilty because she doesn't "miss her mother at all."

Remembering Nicole, Dick is firm when explaining that his desire for Rosemary doesn't negate his love for Nicole. The reader learns that the duel between Tommy and McKisco had been related to Nicole, but it is not yet clear how or why. The use of the word "crazy" is significant, however, because it hints that the duel is relate to Nicole's mental health. Meanwhile, Rosemary is growing more and more independent from her mother.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 18

Dick is known for throwing lavish parties, and tonight is no different. As the group romps around Paris, surrounded by an atmosphere of excitement, others join them "as if by magic." Somehow, Dick has managed to borrow the Shah of Persia's splendid car, and they take it in turns to drive it around the city.

Fitzgerald presents how the financial boom in the U.S. made Americans abroad extremely wealthy and enabled them to have decadent and hedonistic lifestyles in Europe during the inter-war period.

Even amid the chaos and excitement, Rosemary never stops thinking of Dick. The "enthusiasm, the selflessness behind the whole performance ravished her," and leads her to conclude that no other man quite compared to Dick. Dancing together, she felt the happiest she had ever been as "she felt her beauty sparkling bright against his tall, strong form."

Rosemary is swept up in the atmosphere of freedom, hedonism, and reckless abandon. Rather than interpreting Dick's wild party as wasteful or indulgent, however, she is completely spellbound by the excitement that follows him around.

Much later that night, Dick asks Rosemary to leave with him and Nicole, but she refuses "almost defiantly," explaining that she must help Mary get Abe to bed—he has to catch his boat train for America that morning. As the sun comes up, the last of the party still standing find themselves in a market wagon full of carrots. Rosemary is pleased to have experienced a "wild party," but feels that it's not as fun without Dick.

Rosemary, probably drunk, decides not to obey Dick and go home with him and Nicole. She is becoming independent and finding her own voice in these new surroundings. She can't help but long for Dick, however, as they travel back to the hotel in the early hours of the morning.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 19

When Abe arrives at the train station the next morning, he has to bury his hands in his pockets to hide the trembling. His eyes are sunken, and his skin is grey; he barely resembles the man Rosemary had met on the beach two weeks before. Before he has time to buy a drink, he spots Nicole across the station: "She was frowning, thinking of her children [...] merely animally counting them—a cat checking her cubs with a paw." When she notices Abe, she scolds him for saying "unpleasant" things about his summer with her and Dick, declaring, "when you get drunk you don't tear anything apart except yourself."

Abe has a serious drinking problem. In the light of day, it becomes painfully apparent that his lifestyle has become entirely unsustainable, and he is forced to face the consequences of years of excessive drinking and partying. In just two weeks, Rosemary has witnessed Abe deteriorate drastically. Further, the alcohol has begun to make Abe irritable and ill-tempered, causing him to push away all of the people in his life.

Rosemary and Mary join Nicole and Abe. The three women are saddened to detect Abe's "bitterness" and growing "will to die." They are therefore relieved when Dick arrives to ease the tension in the group, bringing with him "a fine glowing surface on which the three women sprang like monkeys [...] perching on his shoulders, on the beautiful crown of his hat."

Abe's deterioration foreshadows Dick's later downfall, but for now Dick's problems are undetectable. He still yields a wonderful power to enchant those around him and make everyone feel at ease.

Suddenly, they witness a young woman running through the station. She plunges "a frantic hand" into her bag to bring out her revolver, which she uses to shoot a man on the platform. Running towards the commotion to find out what has happened, Dick ascertains that the woman is Maria Wallis—an acquaintance of the Divers'. They cannot determine the identity of the man because Maria shot through his identification card.

Through this shocking incident, Fitzgerald juxtaposes Dick's "glowing" and calming presence from the passage before with a violence that shakes the characters to their core. The shooting punctures the calm mood that Dick brought with him and suggests that even under Dick's careful watch, the women cannot be shielded from the horrors of the world.

Disagreeing with Dick about how to handle the situation, Nicole takes control and rushes off to phone Maria's sister, Laura, who lives in Paris. Left alone, Rosemary and Dick feel their love for one another rushing back, and it swells between them for a brief while, until the mention of Rosemary's mother annoys Dick. He realizes, "not without panic," that he is losing control over their affair—"Rosemary had her hand on the lever more authoritatively than he."

Here, Dick is undermined by his wife, who ignores his advice and uses her initiative to handle the horrible situation herself. He also realizes, just moments later, that Rosemary has more control over their relationship than he had previously acknowledged. Maria's shooting incident, then, marks a turning point in Dick's narrative and the beginning of his eventual downfall as his life spins out of control around him.

Discussing the shocking scene they've just witnessed once Nicole returns, Dick asks, "will any of us ever see a train pulling out without hearing a few shots?" Rosemary and Nicole are "horrified" by the whole affair and wish, somewhat unconsciously, for Dick to tell them how to feel. The shots had shaken them all, and "echoes of violence followed them out" of the station. In French, two porters discuss what just happened, noting that the revolver was small but powerful, and that the victim's shirt was bloody as if he had been in a war.

With the reference to war, Fitzgerald evokes the horrors of World War I, highlighting how the post-war generation were never really able to escape the trauma of violence and loss. Nicole predicts that they will all suffer from a sort of PTSD as a result of the shots, just like soldiers on the battlefield.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 20

Nicole, Rosemary, and Dick feel suffocated by the city that morning. Dick is "profoundly unhappy," but his inflated ego prevents him from noticing a change in Rosemary, who feels weary and impatient. When she requests a favor from the Divers—that they pass a message onto Collis, should he arrive—Nicole rebukes her sharply.

The party is discontented and the magic and excitement of their recent adventures seems to have evaporated. Nicole scolds Rosemary, as if she were a child, suggesting not only that Rosemary is immature and spoilt, but also that that she has more authority than Rosemary.

Left alone with his wife, Dick notices a "flash of unhappiness on her mouth." Nicole is aware how people like Rosemary might interpret Dick's "interest and enthusiasm," but she also knows that he has never "spent a night apart from her since their marriage."

Fitzgerald implies that Nicole has a degree of understanding about what is happening between Rosemary and Dick, but she also acknowledges that Dick has been a good and loyal husband to her. Through the "flash of unhappiness on her mouth" Fitzgerald draws a parallel with Nicole's struggle with mental health, when Dick also detects her unhappiness on her mouth.

Collis Clay joins them at the restaurant, and Nicole leaves the men to talk. Dick likes Collis, especially because he is rather "post-war." Dick is startled, however when he realizes that Collis is confiding in him about Rosemary. He claims that Rosemary had gotten into trouble doing "some heavy stuff" behind a locked door of a train compartment, with **drawn curtains**, with "a boy named Hillis." Hearing this, Dick experiences "waves of pain, misery, desire, desperation."

Dick finds young Collis refreshing, particularly because he embodies the hope and optimism of the younger generation, who escaped the horrors of the war. Dick is drawn to innocence and youth because they offer an escape from the trauma and corruption of his generation, who were touched by the war. Dick feels physically sick when he learns that Rosemary might have been sexually involved with a man. He feels deceived and betrayed because his attraction to Rosemary lies in her supposed innocence and purity.

Dick twice pictures Rosemary in the compartment with Hillis, hearing an imaginary snippet of conversation between them: *"—Do you mind if I pull down* **the curtain***?*—Please do. It's too light in here." Collis seems unbothered by this anecdote and continues chattering about other things, but Dick again thinks about the blinds in the train being pulled down.

Dick tortures himself by imagining a possible conversation between Hillis and Rosemary. The image of the blinds being drawn to close out the light symbolizes the loss of Rosemary's innocence and purity. Virginity is often conceptualized in terms of whiteness and lightness. Therefore, when Rosemary consents to the light being shut out, she welcomes the loss of her lightness and purity. Dick is deeply disturbed by the possibility that Rosemary might no longer be a virgin.

Dick heads to the bank to cash a check. He pauses to think. He finds himself in an "unhappy predicament," and he is unsure which of the bank clerks will be least likely to ask questions. The check is authorized, and Dick leaves the bank, calling a taxi to the "Films Par Excellence Studio." Once more, Dick hears the echoes of Rosemary's imaginary conversation with Hillis—*"Do you mind if I pull down* **the curtain***?"*

It is not clear what Dick's financial conundrum is, but the narrator suggests that Dick might have engaged in something corrupt or questionable because he is embarrassed for the bank clerks to ask him questions. This passage provides yet more evidence that Dick might not be the charming American gentleman he presents himself to be. Dick is completely consumed by the imaginary conversation between Rosemary and Hillis—so much so that he decides to pay Rosemary an unorthodox visit at her studio.

Arriving at the studio to try and find Rosemary, Dick is "swayed and driven as an animal." He realizes that this is "a turning point in his life" and that his behavior is "out of line with everything that had preceded it."

Dick's composure begins to unravel as he is overcome with jealousy. Having learned that she might not be so innocent after all, Dick is motivated by animalistic, physical desire for Rosemary.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 21

After Dick has been waiting outside the studio for 45 minutes, a man approaches him to ask for a light. Dick is not in the mood to chat with anybody, but the man is friendly and starts to chat with Dick, who suspects the man might be plotting to rob him.

Dick is impatient to see Rosemary and the long wait only serves to increase his desire. He is irritated when a stranger interrupts his thoughts about her.

Deciding that Rosemary must have left already, Dick rings her hotel room from a café. "I'm in an extraordinary condition about you," Dick admits, "When a child can disturb a middle-aged gent—things get difficult." Rosemary encourages Dick, saying, "you're the youngest person in the world." Hearing the words "*Do you mind if I pull down* **the curtain**?" ring in his head again, Dick tells Rosemary he'd like to be in her hotel room.

Disturbingly, despite his sexual desire for her, Dick continues to refer to Rosemary as a child. Dick stops himself saying "gentleman," perhaps because he realizes that this sordid affair inevitably means he will no longer be a gentleman. Rosemary encourages Dick, downplaying the age difference between them by calling him "the youngest person in the world."

After she has hung up the phone, Rosemary finishes a letter to her mother. She tells her of a man she's recently met and fallen in love with, adding "Of course I Do Love Dick Best but you know what I mean." Meanwhile, Dick and Nicole dress up nicely and head out to watch a play together—a tradition of theirs. Dick is keen to go out because, he says, it's "better than brooding—" before realizing that "This was a blunder." He dismisses the comment, pretending that it referred to Maria Wallis.

It is not clear whether Rosemary has really met another man, or whether she simply wants to mislead her mother about Dick, now that their affair is so close to becoming sexual. Either way, it does appear that Rosemary has a great deal more control over the situation than Dick does, and that she has seemingly grown out of her childish infatuation for Dick. Dick takes Nicole out to the theatre because he is desperate to be distracted from thinking and worrying about Rosemary. Usually he has an incredible ability to say exactly the right thing, but his careless "blunder" here reveals that Dick is spiraling out of control.


BOOK 1, CHAPTER 22

Nicole wakes to an unexpected knock at the door of her hotel room. A police officer tells her that he's looking for Abe North—whom Nicole believes to have left for America—saying that he booked a room in Paris but is nowhere to be seen. The constable explains that Abe was robbed, filed a complaint with the police, and that they "are convinced we have at last arrested the correct Negro."

To her surprise, Nicole learns that Abe hasn't left for America as planned and has instead managed instead to entangle himself in a complicated mess with the police. Through Abe's dramatic run-in with the police, Fitzgerald reveals the inevitable negative consequences of excessive drinking and pleasure-seeking.

A call from the hotel lobby informs Nicole that a man—"*un nègre*"—wishes to speak to her, Dick, or Abe about a great "injustice" involving the false arrest of a black man named Freeman. Nicole hangs up the phone, dismisses the whole affair, and heads out to go shopping instead. She bumps into Rosemary and they have fun "spending money in the sunlight of the foreign city."

Nicole carelessly dismisses her good friend's problems and seems unmoved by the news of a false arrest. Her heartless reaction is no doubt symptomatic of the widespread racism of the era. At this point in the text, it is ambiguous as to whether Fitzgerald shares Nicole's racist views or if he is simply reflecting the mainstream attitudes of the day. When considered, however, with the events about to unfold in this sub-plot, it is impossible for a modern reader not to acknowledge the racism entrenched in this novel.

Returning to the hotel to find Dick—who looks fresh and bright—Rosemary and Nicole share "a moment of complete childish joy." Dick tells them of the unintelligible phone call he has just had with Abe and a whole host of strangers. It seems that Abe is responsible for falsely accusing a black man of theft and has subsequently "launched a riot race in Montmartre."

Rosemary and Nicole are both reduced to children in Dick's presence, particularly when he is able to summon the charm that they both fell in love with. Dick's ability to occupy a father figure for both Nicole and Rosemary is somewhat disturbing, especially when considering the power imbalance that it engenders. The reader learns that Abe is to blame for the false incarceration of the innocent black man, but none of the other characters seem too upset by this news.

Nicole recounts fondly all the fun they used to share with Abe, mourning the change in him. "Why is it just Americans who dissipate?" she asks, but Dick has "become intensely critical of her" and decides not to answer. He knows that Nicole is "the most attractive creature" he has ever seen, and that he gets everything from her that he should need, but he senses some trouble in their relationship looming ahead and feels the need to harden himself in preparation.

It is now clear that Abe has been completely ruined by his excessive drinking habit, and it has led to his downfall. Dick's prediction, that trouble lies ahead with Nicole, foreshadows her forthcoming breakdown. Fitzgerald's depiction of Nicole as being is valuable primarily for her appearance reflects the intense sexism of the era.

In the hotel restaurant, different groups of American expatriates surround Rosemary, Dick and Nicole. A party of Gold Star Mothers has lunch at a table beside them. While Rosemary weeps for them, Dick sees in them the dignity and "maturity of an older America." With effort, Dick turns back towards "his two women at the table and faced the whole new world in which he believed." Dick hears his imaginary conversation once more: "—Do you mind if I pull down the curtain?"

Fitzgerald alludes to a divide between an older generation who lived through the war, and the younger generation who remain pure and unspoiled from its corruption. The Gold Star Mothers—a group of women who lost their soldier sons during World War I—represent the heroism of war. Fitzgerald, like Dick, never saw the war firsthand, and therefore has a deep respect for those who were directly touched by it. In contrast, Nicole and Rosemary symbolize the hope and optimism of the younger generation.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 23

Abe is drunk in the Ritz bar, where he's been all morning. In between chatting with the waiters and calling Dick and Nicole, Abe's mind returns occasionally to Freeman—the man who has been falsely accused of stealing from him, and who remains in prison. He thinks that "he ought to go over and get Freeman out of jail," but Abe puts "the nightmare" out of his mind.

Again, the carelessness with which Fitzgerald's characters treat Freeman, a falsely-imprisoned black man, epitomizes the rampant racism of the 1920s. Abe is far more concerned with his immediate surroundings than the life or future of somebody he deems inferior to him.

Abe stays in the bar well into the afternoon, contented by the sensation of the past merging into present, and the present into future. A waiter announces that "a colored fellow of the name Jules Peterson" has arrived in search of Abe. Upon learning that Peterson is not allowed to enter, Abe drags himself out of the bar to meet him.

The fact that Peterson, a black man, is not allowed to enter the bar reflects the racist attitudes and policies of the era. Abe has drunk himself into a stupor, and it's only with Jules's arrival that Abe musters the strength to leave his bar stool.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 24

Dick leaves a note for Maria Wallis signed "Dicole"—a nickname he and Nicole had used "in the first days of love." Walking through the streets of Paris that dark, stormy afternoon, Dick feels "demoniac and frightened, the passions of many men inside him and nothing simple that he could see."

Fitzgerald contrasts the loving bliss of Dick and Nicole's early relationship with the darkness of his current situation. His decline and deterioration are now well under way as he struggles to come to terms with his desire for Rosemary and the sense that Nicole is on the verge of a relapse. The stormy weather mirrors Dick's troubled mood, further emphasizing the seriousness of Dick's troubles.

Rosemary—now a "little wild thing—is also full of intense emotions. She is "absorbed in playing around with the chaos" about her. When Dick arrives at her hotel door, she finds him "fixed and godlike as he had always been." Dick, on the other hand, is disappointed at the sight of Rosemary, who has carefully calculated her body language to appear both appealing and innocent at the same time.

While Dick unravels and loses his composure, Rosemary delights in the power she seems to possess over her grown-up lover. Dick is dissatisfied, however, with the realization that Rosemary has been carefully curating her performance all this time. With disappointment, Dick sees that Rosemary's innocence is an illusion.

Nonetheless, Dick invites Rosemary to sit on his lap on the bed. As they kiss, her "dazzling" skin astounds him. Just then, they hear a "persistent" knock at the door. Quickly straightening the sheets on the bed, they open the door to find Abe and a "frightened, concerned, colored man" called Mr. Peterson.

Dick's invitation for Rosemary to sit on his lap is troubling, as it reinforces the image of him as a paternal figure, and her as a child. It seems that Dick welcomes—and is attracted to—this dynamic.

Once in Dick's hotel room, the new arrivals explain that Abe has created quite the scandal in the French Latin Quarter, entangling four innocent black men in a criminal case. Fearing that the other men—who have suffered "betrayal" due to Abe's actions—might come after him, Mr. Peterson now hopes that Abe will offer him protection. Peterson is desperate and scared and, leaving his fate in their hands, offers to wait outside while Dick and Abe decide what to do with him.

Peterson puts his trust in Abe and Dick. He hopes that they'll understand his predicament and offer to help him, especially considering the whole scandal is Abe's fault in the first place. Peterson is polite and respectful, and not wanting to be a burden, steps outside. His trust turns out to be misplaced, because neither Dick nor Abe really give him a second thought, probably because they barely recognize Peterson's humanity and consider him inferior.

Rosemary finds the whole affair distasteful. Abe is so drunk he's "walking in a slow dream," and Dick insists he goes back to his room to sleep. Rosemary feels sorry for Abe when she notices his dirty hands—"there is something awe-inspiring in one who has lost all inhibitions." When Abe finally leaves, he is relieved to see that Peterson is no longer waiting in the corridor for him.

Rosemary is able to feel empathy for Abe, despite his self-inflicted stupor, but is unable to feel sorry for Peterson, who is faultless and vulnerable. Abe, meanwhile, is so careless that he's actually glad to see that Peterson has disappeared, and thinks of it no further.

BOOK 1, CHAPTER 25

Rosemary and Dick embrace before she makes an impressive exit, leaving him alone. Back in her room, she goes directly to her desk to put her watch back on, when she realizes suddenly that "she was not alone in the room." With horror she sees "that a dead Negro was stretched upon her bed."

Rosemary is alone when she sees Peterson dead on her hotel bed. The fact that Peterson remains unnamed, and defined solely by his race, emphasizes the racism present in the novel. It is not clear how Peterson died, but the reader is left to assume that he was murdered by one of the men implicated in Abe's "race riot."

Rosemary hurries to find Dick and they run together into her room. Dick discovers that Peterson has no pulse, and that his dead body is **bleeding onto Rosemary's bed sheets**. Acting fast and taking control of the situation, Dick orders Rosemary to fetch clean bed linen from his bedroom. He also tells her not to be upset—"it's only some nigger scrap."

Dick's complete disregard for Peterson's death is disrespectful and racially motivated. Dick's use of a racial slur to describe the scene is additionally offensive and would be unacceptable to a modern audience.

Hearing Nicole calling, and wanting to protect Rosemary's reputation, Dick leaves Peterson's lifeless body in a plausible position in the corridor. Dick rings reception to inform the hotel that he's come across "a dead Negro" in the corridor and that he wants his name kept out of it.

Dick acts quickly and calmly, thinking only of Rosemary and of protecting her reputation. He lies to the reception staff, concealing important information about the incident. He discards Peterson's body in the corridor, reflecting how black lives were considered disposable in this era.

Rosemary adores Dick for protecting her and she listens "in wild worship to his strong, sure, polite voice making it all right." Just then, however, her adoring thoughts are interrupted by the sound of Nicole's cries from the bathroom. Thinking that she might have fallen in the bath, Rosemary follows Dick towards "the verbal inhumanity." Dick blocks Rosemary's view so that she can't see his wife, and orders Nicole—"Control yourself!"—three times. Nicole, who is overcome in a fit of madness, screams her disjointed thoughts at Dick, saying finally, "I never expected you to love me […] only don't come in the bathroom […] dragging **spreads with red blood** on them and asking me to fix them."

The sight of the red, bloody sheets trigger Nicole to relapse into a fit of mental ill health. Rosemary witnesses glimpses of Nicole's sudden and shocking breakdown while Dick tries to protect both Nicole and Rosemary. It is possible that Nicole interpreted the bloody bed sheets as evidence of Rosemary's loss of virginity with Dick, which is why she refers to the fact that Dick doesn't love her.

Rosemary is completely shaken, realizing what Violet McKisco must have seen in Dick and Nicole's villa on the Riviera. Rosemary is glad, therefore, when Collis Clay calls her. She invites him up because she's too "afraid to go into her room alone."

Rosemary, and the reader, finally realize what happened during the Divers' dinner party—Violet had walked in and witnessed Nicole in a fit of distress and madness. After this incident, Rosemary makes a deliberate attempt to distance herself from the Divers.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 1

It's 1917 when Doctor Richard Diver, age 26, moves from America to Switzerland. Dick had been "too much of a capital investment" to be sent off to fight in World War I. Instead, he is to complete his medical studies in Zurich. Dick had already "seen around the edges of the war" during his time as an Oxford Rhodes Scholar; he had been in Vienna when it "was old with death." Nonetheless, the war had never really touched him directly. Later, Dick would reflect that these "war-time years in Europe had been the "favorite" and "heroic" period of his life.

As a young man, Dick epitomizes the American dream—he is intelligent, ambitious, and talented. He avoids being sent to join the war effort because, as a promising doctor, he is considered too valuable. Dick never experiences the horrors of war firsthand and he is therefore able to romanticize the heroism of that period.

Throughout 1917, it becomes more difficult for Dick to find coal, and he resorts to burning "almost a hundred textbooks" to stay warm, ensuring first that he has read and digested all the books' contents.

Dick's determination to learn everything within his books before destroying them to keep warm demonstrates his resourcefulness and ambition.

Sharing an apartment with Ed Elkins—"second secretary at the Embassy"—Dick is disturbed by the idea that "the quality of his mental processes" might not be all that different from Ed's, a man he considers simple. Dick ponders that "he must be less in tact" than all "these clever men." Dick's time in Zurich is founded on many illusions: "the illusions of eternal strength and health, and of the goodness of people—illusions of a nation."

Dick fears that he might not actually be as special or marvelous as people believe when he finds himself relating to a man whom he considers to be beneath him. The very fact that this notion troubles Dick reveals how self-absorbed he is, and how desperate he is to be wonderful and heroic.

After completing his degree, Dick receives orders to join the war effort by supporting a neurological unit in Bar-sur-Aube, France. He is disgusted, however, to find that his work is largely "executive rather than practical." Discharged in 1919, he returns to Zurich, having completed a short textbook. The narrator admits that it might be unsettling to encounter this unfamiliar representation of Dick in his youth and suggests to the reader that Dick Diver's "moment" is about to begin.

The narrator suggests that Dick is destined for greatness and warns the reader not to judge Dick based on this representation of his youthful years. Dick is young and full of promise but has not yet mastered the charming confidence that the reader has become familiar with during the first part of the novel.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 2

Switzerland is home to heavenly natural landscapes and "the toy and the funicular." It is appropriate, then, that Dick feels "like a toy-maker" as he pokes "delicately" at brains in the laboratory, with "infinite precision." He pays little attention to the "irony of the gigantic Christ in the entrance hall."

Dick enjoys the power he has as a doctor and feels almost god-like as he works in the laboratory.

Dick visits his friend Franz Gregorovious at Dohmler's **psychiatric clinic**—"a rich person's clinic." Franz is "proud, fiery, and sheeplike" and "would without doubt become a fine clinician." He asks Dick if he was "changed" by his experiences of the war, but Dick assures him that he "didn't see any of the war." Franz asks Dick frankly if he's come to visit him "or to see that girl."

Throughout the novel, the clinic symbolizes the boom in psychiatry during the early 20th century. Society was haunted by widespread psychological trauma in the post-war years and science surrounding mental health was developing quickly. For wealthy American families in Europe, it was easy to pay vast sums to send loved ones for treatment, out of the public eye.

It becomes apparent that Dick has been in contact with one of Franz's patients at **the clinic**, who is now "perfectly well." Dick recounts how he met "the young girl" by chance, last time he was visiting Franz at the clinic. Dick emphasizes that he hadn't realized she was a patient and she "was about the prettiest thing [he] ever saw." Franz reassures Dick, "dramatically," that this chance meeting "was the best thing that could have happened to her," but that he wants to talk with Dick about her in private before he can see the girl again.

The reader learns that Dick met a young girl—presumably Nicole—at a psychiatric clinic and that Dick has somehow, perhaps inadvertently, had a positive impact on her recovery. Dick is a brilliant psychiatrist and is well-regarded in his profession, hence why Franz, another doctor, has sent for Dick to consult on this case.

Pleasant pastures and "a fresh smell of health and cheer" surround Professor Dohmler's **clinic**. Ten years ago, it had been "the first modern clinic for mental illness." Waiting in Franz's office, Dick's thoughts return to the girl, who has written him dozens of letters over the past eight months. The first half of the letters he received from this girl were distinctly "pathological" in nature, but more recently, the letters have been "entirely normal." Bored by his executive work in Bar-sur-Aube, Dick looks forward to receiving these letters.

Fitzgerald portrays how modern, private clinics were tasteful and cheerful, a far cry from traditional mental asylums or facilities. The reader is presented with more information about this case, whereas a patient—who has been in contact with Dick— has mysteriously recovered.

Dick usually replied to these letters promptly, but if for any reason his letters were delayed, the girl would respond with a "fluttering burst of worry—like a worry of a lover." At one point during their correspondence, a "red-lipped" telephone girl—who was "known obscenely in the messes as 'The Switchboard'"—had distracted Dick from replying properly to the patient's letters. When Franz returns to his office, he shuffles through some papers and prepares to tell Dick the story of this girl.

Dick's correspondence with the patient was interrupted during his love affair with a girl he meets in France. The insult, "The Switchboard," refers crudely to the fact the woman has many lovers. The patient seems to be dependent on contact with Dick, almost like "a lover" herself, foreboding Dick and Nicole's future relationship.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 3

One day, a man called Mr. Devereux Warren had arrived at **the clinic** with his 16-year-old daughter, Nicole. He was "tall" and "handsome"—"a fine American type." He had told Doctor Dohmler, "my daughter isn't right in the head" and described how she had recently developed a fear of men attacking her. Since Nicole had been a charming and happy child, this change was a big shock to Mr. Warren and the family. He shed tears as he told this story, and asserted, "money is no object." His breath smelled of whiskey. Dohmler had sensed that Mr. Warren was lying about something. Franz and Dohmler diagnosed Nicole with schizophrenia, or "Divided Personality," but concluded that her fear of men was a symptom, rather than the cause, of her problems.

Franz tells Dick Dohmler's story about when Nicole first arrived at the clinic. This account is therefore not first-hand, and perhaps not reliable either. The reader learns that when Nicole's father brought her to the clinic, claiming that she was in need of treatment, he had seemed like a real American gentleman. In English, however, the French word véreux means "wormy," and therefore Mr. Warren's first name—"Devereux"—suggests that he is dirty or dishonest. Indeed, Dohmler recognized that there was something corrupt about him from their first meeting.

Having left his daughter at **the clinic**, Mr. Warren avoided returning to visit Nicole, saying, "But look here, Doctor, that's what you're for." When he did eventually return, Mr. Warren broke down within thirty minutes of arriving at the clinic. He recounted how he and Nicole had been very close after her mother had died, and how "all at once they were lovers." Mr. Warren had described how Nicole "seemed to freeze up right away," saying "never mind, Daddy. It doesn't matter. Never mind."

Dohmler quickly determined, upon meeting Mr. Warren a second time, that he had initially been deceitful about the cause of Nicole's mental illness. Mr. Warren confesses that he sexually abused Nicole as a child after Nicole's mother died, and this violation was the actual cause of Nicole's trauma and ill health. Mr. Warren used Nicole's madness as an opportunity to cover up his crimes, hoping that nobody would find out what he did.

At the time, Dohmler had indulged in a rare moment of judgment towards his client, inwardly calling Mr. Warren a "peasant," before suggesting that he move back to Chicago.

Dohmler is so disgusted with Mr. Warren and his deceitful performance that he finds himself internally insulting him. In many ways, it is Mr. Warren who really needs treatment, but his wealth and social standing offer him protection, while Nicole is admitted.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 4

Franz continues his story, recounting to Dick how Dohmler had agreed to take Nicole's case if Mr. Warren kept away from his daughter "indefinitely." Franz thanks Dick, explaining that Nicole's letter writing helped her recovery, because she was able to think about somebody outside **the clinic**, and this gave her hope. He warns Dick, however, that he should be careful when he meets Nicole again: "You are attractive to women, Dick."

Franz has called on Dick to help with Nicole's case, bit he is also wary about introducing Dick, a Lothario character, to a vulnerable, young woman. This tension foreshadows Dick and Nicole's later relationship.

Franz and Dick talk about their plans for the future and reminisce a little about their student experiences. Dick's only ambition is "to be a good psychologist—maybe to be the greatest one that ever lived," to which Franz remarks "That's very good—and very American."

Fitzgerald highlights a contrast between European and American values when Franz jokes that Dick is being "very American" in his arrogance and ambition to be the best psychologist. Here Franz represents old-world Europe, while Dick embodies the optimism of the new world, and the American dream.

Over dinner that evening with Franz and his wife, Kaethe Gregorovious, Dick makes an effort to make Kaethe "feel charming," despite finding her somewhat loathsome. Accustomed to post-war "American splendor," Dick feels "oppressed" by the lack of "grace and adventure" in Franz's simple and domestic life. Dick is at an important juncture in his youth, faced with the task of deciding what he does and doesn't believe in. Whereas he used to idealize becoming "good," "kind," "brave," and wise," he has found this to be "pretty difficult." He thinks that he "want[s] to be loved, too, if he could fit it in."

There is a tension between Dick's sense of duty to be good, manly, and heroic, and his desire to live a life of "splendor." Dick is the son of a humble priest, and is expected to live a good life, but he has already begun to be corrupted by the hedonistic and pleasure-seeking values of the younger post-war generation. He wants to be good, but he also wants to have fun.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 5

As Nicole walks to meet Dick, she brings the "last light" from the room with her. Nicole has difficulty "unfastening her eyes" from Dick's, "as though they had become entangled." After some light conversation between Dick, Nicole, and an unnamed "Señora"—whom neither Dick nor Nicole are interested in—Nicole suggests they go outside for a walk. Dick is enchanted by Nicole's "youth and beauty" to the point that he feels himself "well[ing] up" with emotion. Her angelic face excites and dazzles Dick, who begins to feel uncertain about the nature of their relationship.

The descriptions of Nicole here—the "childish smile" and the power of "her youth and beauty" are very reminiscent of Rosemary from Book 1. As a young girl, Nicole is completely enchanting, and Dick is immediately drawn to how beautiful and youthful she is. The reader witnesses Dick falling in love with Nicole just like he go on to be enchanted by Rosemary. Dick is so attracted to youth because it symbolizes the power, hope, and promise that he wants to possess.

When they meet the following week, Nicole is waiting for Dick outside. Listening to music on a phonograph, they feel as if they have been transported to America. Nicole starts to sing to Dick and he stands up abruptly upon seeing the "pure parting of her lips." Sensing an opportunity, Nicole gathers all of her loveliness into a smile and directs it towards Dick. Until now, Dick's experiences with women have been limited to "hot-cheeked girls in hot secret rooms," but now he is confronted with Nicole and "a profound promise of herself for so little."

Dick desires Nicole but he also longs for a different version of her—one that never experienced the sexual abuse that she did as a child. This is not only because he wishes that she could be free from her suffering and trauma. Rather, Dick selfishly wishes that Nicole were pure, clean, and uncomplicated. He wants her to be different from the "hot-cheeked girls"—who are sinful and spoiled—and be angelic and innocent instead.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 6

Dick next sees Nicole in May, and although he knows that his life plan stands in opposition to a relationship with her, he can't help but "take pleasure in her youthful vanities and delights." Nicole continues to grow in confidence, finding herself "beautiful and rich."

Nicole's wealth and beauty equip her with a sense of value and importance in the world. Meanwhile, Dick—a young, promising doctor—seems likely to throw away his ambitions and life plans for this young girl. Through this narrative, Fitzgerald characterizes Nicole as a burden and a liability to Dick's brilliant potential.

Back in Zurich, Franz is discouraging about Dick's plans to publish a book about psychiatry. The two men turn to the subject of Nicole. Dick admits that he likes her and is unsure about the proper way to proceed. They decide to speak with Dohmler, but Dick is dubious about whether this will "throw much light on the matter."

Franz is doubly disappointed in Dick—first for not heeding his advice about Nicole, and second because he believes his book project to be unrefined and beneath him.

Franz and Dick meet Dohmler in his office, where the latter's elegance and authority disarm Dick. Dohmler explains, quite calmly and assertively, that Dick's involvement with Nicole "must be terminated" immediately. Feeling the thunderous intensity of Dohmler's words, Dick spills everything: "I'm half in love with her—the question of marrying her has passed through my mind." Franz responds with disappointment and discouragement, warning Dick that to marry Nicole would be to shackle himself to a life of being "doctor and nurse and all." "Of course Franz is right," replies Dick.

The three doctors seem unconcerned by the notion that it would be both improper and inappropriate for Dick to marry a young patient and are instead preoccupied with the negative impact Nicole could have on Dick's prospects. In other words, the men who are supposed to be caring for and protecting Nicole perceive her first and foremost as a burden and a threat to Dick's future success.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 7

Eventually, the three psychiatrists agree that Dick must let Nicole down gently. However, he bumps into her immediately upon leaving Dohmler's office. She speaks happily of leaving **the clinic** soon with her sister, Beth, explaining that everyone calls her "Baby." Dick looks at Nicole in a new light, realizing just how breathtakingly beautiful she is. Gazing back at Dick, Nicole considers his two sides—the trained, considered Dick, and "his more masculine side."

Dick is under Nicole's spell, and he finds it very difficult to break up with her. Again, Fitzgerald reveals the two different elements of Dick's personality. There is the carefully constructed and finessed performance of a charming, young gentleman as well as the rawer, hedonistic Dick who pursues his desires. Despite Nicole's illness, she might be the first person to recognize this dualism in Dick.

Nicole prattles on about how her language skills have improved at **the clinic**, but it makes Dick "sad when she brought out her accomplishments for his approval." Dick encourages Nicole to think of life beyond the clinic, but when he instructs her to return to America and fall in love she replies, "I couldn't fall in love." Nicole's world falls "to pieces" as she realizes that Dick is distancing himself from her.

Dick has played a dangerous and cruel game with Nicole, leading on a vulnerable young patient just to let her down when it no longer suits him. He feels guilty about how he's treated Nicole, however, and tries to help her move on and think of the future. Nicole's life, meanwhile, is so miserable that the clinic is the only home she has.

Changing his mind that evening, Dick sends a message for Nicole, but she declines to join him for dinner. He feels "discontent," but supposes that her decision to stay away has "freed him." Surprised that Nicole hasn't reached out to him, Dick calls Franz. Franz assures him that Nicole has understood, and that "it was the best thing that could have happened." Dick wonders whether Nicole's feelings for him ever really ran deep.

Dick's ego is wounded by the idea that Nicole might have never really loved him that much anyway. Nonetheless, he recognizes that he has been "freed" from a life shackled to a psychiatric patient and supposes he should be glad. This notion that Dick is trapped, confined, and imprisoned with Nicole, is acutely sexist and undermines the fact that it was Dick who decided to pursue her and has the power in their relationship.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 8

A strong feeling of "dissatisfaction" overcomes Dick for weeks. He spots Nicole once, outside the Palace Hotel, and she looks back at him "in an expression of fright." Realizing the full extent of his feelings for her, Dick tries to distract himself with work and the telephone girl from France.

Dick feels wounded and almost jealous that Nicole seems to be doing just fine without him. In fact, she is frightened when she sees him, probably because his face reminds her of the rejection and suffering has caused her. Unable to have Nicole, Dick involves himself with another woman.

Cycling to Montreux, Dick notices how many groups of English people there are. Taking the Glion funicular, Dick marvels at its ingenuity and admires the scenery from the cable car. The passengers in the compartment are interrupted when a young man and woman, Nicole, scramble excitedly inside. Dick notices a difference in Nicole immediately: "she [is] the first morning in May and every taint of **the clinic** [is] departed."

Dick runs into Nicole by chance and is overwhelmed by the power of her beauty and her incredible recovery since leaving the clinic. There is a suggestion that the clinic wasn't helping Nicole, after all. The fact that she appears with another man probably makes Dick feel jealous.

Nicole introduces her companion as Conte di Marmora. When Nicole teases Dick, asking him to take her on his bike handlebars, Marmora protests saying, "I will roller-skate you—or I will throw you and you will fall slowly like a feather." Nicole delights in this compliment, overjoyed "to be a feather again instead of a plummet, to float and not to drag."

Nicole is overjoyed at Marmora's compliment because she is accustomed to feeling like a burden to those around her. Marmora's description makes Nicole seem light and untroubled, liberating her from the guilt and gloominess she usually feels.

Arriving in Glion, Nicole introduces Dick to her sister, Baby. He promises them that he'll drop by for dinner and as he leaves them behind, he feels her love "twist around inside him." He realizes that he has no memory "of the intervening ten minutes," and feels drunk on the thought of "how much he was loved."

Dick feels intoxicated by Nicole's beauty and love. It is as if she has an enchanting power over him—so potent that Dick, a logical, scientific man, seems to lose his bearings.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 9

When Dick arrives at the hotel that night, Baby, Nicole, and Marmora are waiting for him in anticipation. Marmora's parents join them at dinner, and Dick understands that they are very wealthy. Baby is intent on speaking with Dick and thanking him for the part he played in Nicole's recovery. Baby also implores him to explain how she's supposed to know when Nicole is slipping into craziness and when she's just being eccentric. Dick tries to reassure her, "Nothing is going to be crazy—Nicole is all fresh and happy, you needn't be afraid."

Baby seemingly has no idea that Nicole's illness was caused by their father's sexual abuse, and is therefore frustrated and confused by Nicole's spells of ill health. She is concerned about Nicole', to a certain extent, but also desires a simple solution and an easy fix. Dick is calm and reassuring, describing Nicole as "fresh," which again has connotations of renewal and lightness.

Baby continues by describing her future plans for Nicole. Baby hopes to move her sister back to Chicago where they can immerse her in the "stuffy" social scene there and find her "some good doctor" to marry. Dick can barely control his laughter—"the Warrens were going to buy Nicole a doctor." When Baby points out that Nicole has disappeared, citing this as an example of her peculiar behavior, Dick decides to go and look for her.

Dick is aghast at the suggestion that the Warrens—accustomed to throwing their vast wealth at problems—are actually considering offering a suitable young doctor wealth and security in exchange for marrying Nicole. In their tendency to buy their way out of problems, the Warrens represent new money, privilege, and power.

Dick finds Nicole outside, looking over the lake. She apologizes for being antisocial but explains that she's become accustomed to "living quietly." When Nicole asks Dick whether he might have been interested in being with her, had it not been for her illness, he evades the question, and then tells her he "couldn't fall in love." But Dick's rationality becomes futile when Nicole presses her body against his and demands him, in a low voice, to give her a chance. They kiss, and Dick feels as though they are "an indissoluble mixture, with atoms joined and inseparable."

Dick understands Nicole in a way that others haven't been able to; he recognizes that living in the clinic has isolated her and that social situations are now overwhelming for her. He tries to resist his desires for her, but Nicole seduces him.

As Dick and Nicole kiss in the darkness, it begins to rain. A storm booms overhead and they are forced to return to the others. Walking back to his hotel in a borrowed raincoat, Dick curses himself and the idea of marrying "a mental patient." Angered by the thought of Baby and her father buying some doctor for Nicole, Dick resolves not to be trapped in their scheme. That night, however, he is kept awake by the thought of Nicole and her breath-taking beauty—"nothing had ever felt so young as her lips."

The storm that interrupts Dick and Nicole kissing could be interpreted as a warning or emblem of danger and darkness ahead. Indeed, Dick is angry with himself for giving into his temptations and reduces Nicole to her illness when unkindly referring to her as some "mental patient." He is also sickened by the idea that he might become a victim of the Warren family's scheme to find Nicole a doctor husband. Thinking of Nicole and her youthful beauty, however, Dick finds it difficult to stay mad at her.

Upon returning to his hotel after a hike the next day, Dick finds two letters waiting for him. One is from Nicole, explaining that their kiss was "the nicest thing that ever happened to" her. The other is from Baby, asking Dick to travel with Nicole to Zurich and drop her back at **the clinic**. Dick is "furious," believing Baby's actions to be part of an elaborate plan to "throw [Dick and Nicole] together." In fact, Baby had no such intentions, and was merely using Dick "innocently as a convenience." Nonetheless, when Dick drops Nicole back to the clinic, he realizes that "her problem [is] one they ha[ve] together for good now."

Baby Warren has no intention of selecting Dick as a suitor for Nicole. No doubt she considers it inappropriate, because he was Nicole's doctor, but also because Baby is probably not impressed with Dick's lack of wealth or social standing. Nonetheless, Dick misinterprets her letter as part of a deliberate plan to make him fall in love with Nicole. Regardless of Baby's intentions, Dick finds himself in love with Nicole by the end of the train ride and resigns himself to the fact that her problems were now his. There is a sense that this might be his undoing, or the cause of his downfall.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 10

When Dick meets Baby in Zurich that September, she expresses her concerns about Dick's plans to marry Nicole, citing that her family don't know anything about him or his motives. Dick is irritated by Baby's disapproval and even considers abandoning the whole affair. The only thing that stops him from doing so is the arrival of Nicole at their table, "glowing away, white and fresh and new in the September afternoon."

Despite his better judgment, and warnings from his colleagues, Dick has decided to marry Nicole. It is perhaps because he considers himself superior to Nicole that he finds Baby's concerns particularly frustrating. This passage marks the beginning of a tension between Dick and Baby that is reflected throughout the novel. The repetition of the description of Nicole as "white and fresh" emphasizes the notion that Dick desires Nicole for her youth and innocence. Later, however, his affair with Rosemary indicates that Dick was never fully satisfied with Nicole's purity or innocence, which he sees as tainted and sullied because of her father's sexual abuse.

Nicole insists that she and Baby settle their financial affairs with the lawyer. She has inherited much more money from her family's estate than expected but plans to live a quiet life with Dick in Zurich and reassures her sister that she can be responsible with her inheritance. Some time later, talking with Dick, Nicole reflects that their life together is both "funny and lonely" and she worries that she loves "the most." Suddenly, Nicole is somewhere else, asking somebody to phone her husband, Dick. She mourns for an unnamed woman and her dead baby, saying "there are three of us now." Next, she's in a restaurant on vacation, imploring Dick to let them move to a bigger apartment and insisting that she'll pay.

Here, the narrative deteriorates into a series of disjointed thoughts and descriptions. Through the shift from third-person narration to Nicole's confused account, Fitzgerald reflects the period of ill health after her marriage to Dick. Nicole's perspective is distinctly sad and confused, thus eliciting sympathy for her from the reader. The issues of money reoccur several times through Nicole's account, highlighting how this creates a power dynamic between Dick and Nicole, with the former not wanting to spend any of her money.

Next, Dick and Nicole are singing nonsense to themselves from the deck of a boat in Italy. Strangers stare at them and Nicole senses that Dick has become tired of singing with her. Looking toward the sea, with the wind in her hair, Nicole feels like a carving of Pallas Athene on the front of a ship.

Here Nicole refers to herself as a representation of the Greek goddess, Athena, carved in the front of the boat. Athena, Zeus's daughter, is the goddess of arts, wisdom, and war, and she was also born from her father's head. The suggestion that Nicole has sprung from her father—compared here to a powerful sky god—suggests that Nicole may feel that Mr. Warren's sick and evil characteristics might have been passed onto her. On the other hand, in Greek mythology, Athena defeats her father, not through fighting him, but by learning from his strengths. Nicole's comparison to Athena, then, might suggest that the abuse she experienced has made her stronger, and that she is capable of overcoming her childhood trauma.

Nicole remembers all the countries she has visited with Dick She recalls that "I was gone again by that time [...] That is why he took me travelling." But after their second child, Topsy, was born, "everything got dark again."

The fragmented passages in this chapter distort the sense of time passing, and it is impossible for the reader to know when each of these memories took place. This reveals to the reader how disorienting it must be for Nicole to experience the world around her as a mentally ill person.

Nicole and Dick buy a house in a small village on the French Riviera and move there with their two children. Nicole wants Dick to have a place to work undisturbed and she is happy to have her friends, Mary and Tommy Barban, close by. Nicole recognizes that Tommy is in love with her—only "gently," but enough for him and Dick to disapprove of each other.

It appears that Nicole's health improves as a result of the stability provided by their new house in France, and by being surrounded by friends. Interestingly, Tommy Barban represents war, and bearing in mind that Nicole has recently described herself as Athena, goddess of war, this association foreshadows a potential relationship between Nicole and Tommy down the line.

Nicole is on the beach with her family, translating a recipe for Chicken à la Maryland into French. They spot Rosemary, who she doesn't recognize. Nicole thinks that Rosemary is "lovely," but that "there can be too many people."

This passage mirrors an earlier one in Book 1, where Rosemary observed Nicole copying out a recipe on the beach. Rosemary hadn't noticed that Nicole was unwell, but now the reader understands the event through Nicole's disorienting perspective. This chapter brings the reader back to the events at the beginning of Book 1.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 11

It's August when Dick and Mrs. Speers have coffee on the coast near Cannes to discuss the end of his affair with Rosemary. Mrs. Speers thanks him for looking after Rosemary in Paris and assures him kindly that he was the first man her daughter really loved. Dick is surprised to hear that "no provision had been made for him" when Mrs. Speers had originally encouraged her daughter "to go ahead" in pursuing him. Dick can't help blurting out that he's still in love with Rosemary. When he says his final goodbye to Mrs. Speers, he feels that he'll never be able to forget her.

The narration returns to 1925 after Dick and Nicole have left Paris and returned home to Tarmes. Rosemary has clearly distanced herself from the Divers after witnessing Nicole's breakdown in the bathroom, which Dick is upset and hurt about. He is also upset to learn that Mrs. Speers had encouraged Rosemary to pursue the affair all this time, and realizes that they had not considered his feelings, nor the consequences for his marriage, when they hatched their plan.

Back at the house in Tarmes, Dick riffles through his books and scientific work, feeling ashamed about the years he's wasted not publishing. The thought of seeing Nicole gives him "a leaden feeling"—he must always "keep up a perfect front" in order to protect Nicole, but the performance tires him.

Dick's emotional health is deteriorating. Looking after Nicole for all these years has taken its toll, and he almost resents her for having prevented him from working and achieving professional success.

Dick thinks back forlornly to when they had left Paris without even saying goodbye to Rosemary. He had sat in the train with Nicole, hoping that a nice lunch could help salvage their relationship, but waiting anxiously for the aftermath of their abrupt exit from the city. Discussing Rosemary, Nicole had said, "I can see how she'd be very attractive to men," causing Dick to feel sick with jealousy. He remembers the story of Hillis and Rosemary in the locked train compartment, and again imagines Hillis asking Rosemary if he can pull down **the train curtain**.

Dick is heavy-hearted about losing Rosemary, but also realizes that his main task now is to prevent Nicole from further relapse. He is forced to bury his feelings and push Rosemary out of his mind, otherwise he will destroy his other romantic relationship with Nicole. The repetition of the imaginary conversation between Rosemary and Hillis reveals that Dick is still consumed by jealous and passionate thoughts of Rosemary.

Dick contemplates his unique position as both Nicole's husband and doctor. Nicole's long psychotic episode after the birth of their second daughter, Topsy, had been agonizing for Dick, and had taught him to assume a professional detachment to her ill health. Dick "had learned to become empty of Nicole," but now his objectivity borders on emotional coldness and neglect toward his wife.

Dick's intentional distancing from Nicole has made him a callous husband. She relies upon him entirely, while he views her first and foremost as a sick patient. It is obvious that their marriage is beginning to break down.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 12

Finding Nicole in the garden, Dick tells her that he saw Mrs. Speers in Cannes. They joke briefly about starting rumors to prevent unsavory types coming to spend their summers on the Riviera, but Dick isn't in the mood for talking. Nicole can sense Dick's desire to brood and plan his work, and she hates him for drawing away from her. While playing the piano, Dick worries that Nicole will realize he's still yearning after Rosemary, and he stops playing immediately.

Although Dick and Nicole still share occasional jokes and moments of honesty, their relationship has become sour and strained. Dick resents Nicole for distracting him from his work, and she resents him for putting distance between them.

Dick feels suffocated by Nicole's wealth. At the beginning of their marriage he had gone to great lengths to live within his own means, but as time has passed, it has become impossible to support their luxurious lifestyle without using her vast inheritance. Dick believes that Nicole has encouraged any and all extravagances on his part, motivated by a desire "to own him." Nicole's income "seem[s] to belittle his work" since there is no need for him to financially support the family.

Nicole's inheritance emasculates Dick, who hates the notion of his wife financially supporting him. Relying on Nicole's wealth makes Dick feel unmanly and insecure, as if she has a power over him. It also belittles his profession, which could never earn him as much as Nicole receives from her inheritance.

Autumn on the French Riviera is dismal and "melancholy," but it allows Dick and Nicole to settle into their new domestic life and routine. They meet interesting people, dine at nice restaurants, and care for their children. By December, Nicole's health seems to have returned and they decide to spend Christmas in Switzerland.

Trying to forget Rosemary and the drama in Paris, Dick devotes himself in family life. It seems, at least for now, that he may be able to salvage his life and marriage.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 13

At a dance in Switzerland, Dick finds the two Warren sisters across the hall. Nicole's "snow-warm face" lights up when she sees him. At almost 30, Baby is tall and attractive, and has brought two Englishmen with her. Despite this, she has "certain spinsters' characteristics" about her. She is easily startled when touched, or example, and has a strange interest in death and catastrophe.

The Divers are vacationing again, using their vast wealth to travel around Europe attending fashionable parties. The narrative voice, closely reflecting Dick's viewpoint, portrays Baby in a negative way—she is snobbish, aloof, and intimidating. Dick dislikes her but feels better about himself when remembering that she is single and alone.

Nicole teases Dick, encouraging him to ask a young girl for a dance, but Dick is "self-conscious" and wary of seeming interested in "young maidens." He retorts that he's not interested in these young women—in fact, he hates them because, "When I dance with them, I feel as if I'm pushing a baby carriage."

This passage reveals that Nicole is acutely aware of Dick's attraction to other women—particularly to young, virginal ones. Dick becomes defensive when Nicole makes this accusation, launching into a rant about how much he actually despises "young maidens." The reference to the "baby carriage" suggests that Dick doesn't like to be positioned as a father figure to these young girls, but the reader knows from his previous paternal dynamic with Rosemary that this isn't the case. Dick's attraction to young girls is troubling—it's as if he needs to be in proximity to youth and innocence in order to feel powerful.

Dick steps outside to meet Franz, evading Baby's questions about how to invest Nicole's latest installment of inheritance money. Franz is unassuming and has chosen to align himself with a "humbler class, a choice typified by his selection of a wife." Nicole is a little afraid of Franz, and Baby, is disinterested entirely, finding him to be somewhat unrefined.

Franz is humble, modest, and hard-working—almost antithetical to Dick. Nonetheless, the two are great friends. Nicole—remembering Franz from her time in the clinic—is unsurprisingly "a little afraid" of him. Dick doesn't seem to consider this or the bad memories Franz's presence might raise for Nicole.

The group sledge down the slope to another party at a hotel with "an old-fashioned Swiss tap-room." The tap-room is filled with smoke, live music, food, and spiced wine. Dick relaxes a little in the "jolly" atmosphere and perceives "innocent expectation" of the night's "possibilities" in the faces of the young girls there. He is distracted briefly by the presence of a "special girl" but decides to apply himself to the task of ensuring his party has a splendid time.

In Dick's relentless quest to possess and control the power and beauty of youth, he has become almost addicted to the task of searching out young girls. He likes to be in close proximity to those he considers innocent because they embody exciting "possibilities" for him and make him feel alive.

Franz is desperate to tell Dick something: there is an exciting opportunity to buy **a clinic** near Zurich and go into business together. It soon becomes apparent that Franz needs Dick's investment to bring his plan to fruition. Dick assures Franz, however, that while Baby and Nicole are rich, he has no money of his own. However, Baby likes the idea of Nicole living beside a psychiatric clinic and encourages the idea.

It becomes apparent that Franz is not visiting the Divers for a holiday, but to present Dick with a business proposition. He believes that Dick will be able to provide the financial investment he needs to open his own clinic. Dick is vocally reluctant, perhaps just because he hopes Baby will interfere and offer the money, since Baby would feel more confident about Nicole's health if she were near a clinic.

Dick hates the fact that he feels owned by Baby and the Warren family's wealth, and a strong embittered feeling boils up inside him. Yearning for an opportunity to exercise his resentment, he gets into a disagreement with Baby and the Englishman about modern manners. Nicole leaves to go to bed and Dick thinks to himself that "Baby is a trivial, selfish woman."

The tension between Dick and Baby intensifies when Dick is made to feel like the Warrens can exert power over him due to their wealth. Dick's belligerent and retaliatory behavior towards Baby and her friend is one of the first indications that he is beginning to lose his social grace and decorum.

Feeling differently about **the clinic** two days later, Dick tells Franz that he wants to go ahead with the project. He cites Nicole as a primary reason, telling Franz that there is a "series of strains" that comes with living their lavish lifestyle, which Nicole can't handle.

Given Dick's recent callousness, it is hard to believe that his decision to go into business with Franz is entirely motivated by concern for Nicole. More likely, Dick is thinking of his professional career opportunities.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 14

Dick wakes from a dream of war. Hearing Nicole muttering to herself from the next room, he feels "sorry for whatever loneliness she was feeling in her sleep." Nicole survived her first illness "alive with new hopes," but she has since been "deprived of any subsistence except Dick, bringing up children she could only pretend gently to love." She has "led a lonely life owning Dick who did not want to be owned." Dick continues to leave Nicole "holding Nothing in her hands," waiting helplessly for him to return to her.

Dick dreams of war, even though he never personally fought in World War I. This could suggest that Dick thinks of himself as a brave and heroic figure, or it could foreshadow a conflict soon to come. Dick is aware that Nicole has led a sad and lonely life, and that he is partly to blame for that, having "deprived" her of anyone other than himself. Dick feels remorse for his mistreatment of her but doesn't seem to have the energy or emotional strength to make things right.

Since living beside **the clinic**, Lanier has developed a strong admiration for his father, Dick. Doctor Diver is 38 and his clinic—which he's been running for 18 months—is very successful. The buildings are beautiful, cheerful, and modern and give "strangers a momentary illusion that all was well, as in a kindergarten." Most of the patients are fond of Dick but others share the view that he's a poser, or that he neglects them.

Fitzgerald reveals the deceitful and illusory nature of the modern psychiatry when suggesting that the exterior appearance of Dick's clinic masks the reality of the facility. While Lanier holds deep admiration for his father, some of Dick's patients believe him to be shallow and inattentive, implying that Dick doesn't possess the exquisite social skills he used to.

Dick has a unique relationship with one patient, a woman with nervous eczema, whom he tries to soothe "almost sexually." Dick wants to "gather her up in his arms, as he so often had Nicole, and cherish even her mistakes." Instead, he kisses her on the forehead, reassuring her that everything will be all right.

Dick has an inappropriate relationship with one of his female patients, whom he flirts with when he's doing his rounds. He treats her like Nicole, which suggests that he enjoys—and is perhaps attracted to—the power he is able to wield over the vulnerable women in his life. By kissing the patient on the forehead, Dick assumes a paternal relationship with the woman, treating her at once sexually and like a child, much like he treated Rosemary.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 15

After lunch with the patients (a chore that Dick dislikes) he returns to the villa to find Nicole angry with him. She has received a letter from a recently discharged patient that accuses him of "having seduced her daughter." It is true that Dick once kissed the girl, "in an idle, almost indulgent way," but he denies any involvement with the girl, saying, "This letter is deranged." Nicole is upset but Dick tells her authoritatively to forget all about it.

In his youth, Dick had wanted to be a good, honest man, but here it's clear how lost he's become when he lies directly to Nicole's face about his involvement with the woman in question. He also accuses the patient of being "deranged," using her ill health as a reason to distrust her. Dick is extremely manipulative here, and he further exerts power over Nicole by commanding her to pay no attention.

In the car with their children and the nanny, Nicole's silence troubles Dick. When they arrive at their destination, the fairground, Nicole is slow to get out of the car. When Dick asks her to get out for a second time, a "sudden awful smile" stretches across her face. After ambling around the fairground for a short while with the children, Nicole runs away into the crowd very suddenly. Leaving the children at a stall, Dick chases after her, darting desperately through the tents and stalls. He finds her on a Ferris wheel laughing so hysterically that a crowd has gathered to watch her.

Again, Nicole's illness manifests itself on her mouth, which Dick recognizes immediately in her "awful smile." The reader witnesses another of Nicole's breakdowns here as she runs away from her family and breaks into uncontrollable laughter. With the image of a crowd watching Nicole as she descends into a fit of hysteria, Fitzgerald elicits sympathy for her.

Dick implores his wife to calm down, but she is furious about her husband's involvement with "a child, not more than fifteen," comparing him to the fictional character Svengali. At the suggestion of going home, Nicole shouts at Dick in a wavering and voice, "And sit and think that we're all rotting and the children's ashes are rotting in every box I open? That filth!" Dick is relieved to see that Nicole's outburst has calmed her down, and as Nicole's face softens, she begs Dick to help her.

With her reference to Svengali—a fictional character from the 1895 novel Trilby*—Nicole accuses Dick of seducing and exploiting young girls, citing this as the reason for her unhappiness and subsequent breakdown. Nicole screams about boxes of filth filled with children's ashes. Here she could be referring to the fact that her own childhood and innocence were robbed from her by her father's abuse, symbolizing the death of her childhood self. The words "rotting" and "filth" are reminiscent of her father's name, Devereux, which means "worm-ridden." Perhaps Nicole worries for her children, particularly Topsy, as a young pretty girl around Dick, who clearly has a perverse and disturbing attraction for young girls.*


While Dick searches for Lanier and Topsy, Nicole stands apart looking "evil-eyed," "resenting" and "denying the children." The Divers find their way to the car and begin to make their way home, the children looking "grave with disappointment."

Despite Dick's flaws, he is always very caring with the children. Nicole, on the other hand, distances herself from them, perhaps because they remind her of Dick or of herself as an abused and traumatized child.

On the car journey home, Dick feels the car swerve "violently" and realizes that Nicole has a "mad hand clutching the steering wheel." The car shoots off the road completely, coming to a stop upon hitting a tree. Dick rushes to lift the children out of the flipped car while Nicole laughs "hilariously, unashamed, unafraid, unconcerned." Seeing the children's frightened faces, Dick has an urge "to grind her grinning mask into jelly." Dick instructs the children to walk up to a nearby inn and ask for help; neither Lanier nor Topsy look at their mother as they leave.

This passage forms the story's climax: in a fit of rage, Nicole intentionally swerves the car off track, resulting in a dramatic crash. The sight of Nicole's mad, grinning smile once more triggers a spark of rage in Dick, and he feels the desire to beat her violently. The children don't turn to look at Nicole as they rush to safety, symbolizing their rejection of her.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 16

Dick tells Franz that he needs to go away on a trip without Nicole and asks him to "keep the peace" while he attends a psychiatry conference in Munich. Dick has no intention of actually attending the congress but heads for Germany the following week.

Dick feels drained by recent events with Nicole and needs some respite. There is a chance that Dick will be able to recover some of his former self with some space from Nicole. Although Franz is very understanding of the matter, Dick feels the need to lie about the congress to his business partner.

On the flight, Dick realizes how tired he feels after the recent dramas in his family. He dreams of European landscapes and the girls he might find there. Dick's mind has been shaped partly by the "tawdry souvenirs of his boyhood" but still maintains "the low painful fire of intelligence."

The narrator suggests that below the shallow illusion of Dick's promise and prestige, he has very simple desires and pleasures. He soon forgets his family, for example, when imagining the various women he'll be able to conquer across Europe.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 17

Dick bumps into Tommy Barban, a natural leader and "hero," playing cards in a café in Munich. Tommy is joking around with three men—Prince Chillicheff, Mr. McKibben, and Mr. Hannan—when he sees Dick and exclaims, "You don't look so—[…] jaunty as you used to."

Tommy immediately notices the marked difference in Dick—he looks sullen and fatigued and doesn't have his usually bouncy charm about him. Tommy, on the other hand, is as active and amiable as ever.

Chillicheff, McKibben, and Hannan go on to explain how they were imprisoned in Russia and tell a captivating story about their escape. When McKibben invites Dick to travel with him in the car to Innsbruck the following day, Dick quickly declines the invitation. Distracted for a moment by the unappealing thought of squeezing into a packed car with McKibben and his family, Dick realizes that the others are discussing Abe North. "Didn't you read The Herald this morning?" asks Tommy, "He's dead. He was beaten to death in a speakeasy in New York."

Abe's death was extremely undignified. The fact that he was beaten and left to die in a bar suggests that he was never able to overcome his drinking problem and continued to run into scuffs and problems after the Divers left him in Paris. Abe's fate is contrasted with Tommy's, who is portrayed as a brave and masculine warrior. Abe, then, becomes the image of an indulgent American who met his demise through excessive drinking and reckless behavior, while Tommy, the European, is cast as a sort of hero.

Dick decides to leave, but he is so shocked by the news of Abe's death that he is barely conscious of the journey back to his hotel. Tommy invites him to join them for dinner the following evening but Dick declines "hastily." That night Dick awakes to a possession of war veterans marching outside his window "with a sort of swagger for a lost magnificence, a past effort, a forgotten sorrow." Seeing the "mournful march," Dick is overcome with "regret for Abe's death, and his own youth of ten years ago."

The war procession outside of Dick's window remind him of all the hopes, dreams, and values he nurtured as a young man: to be honorable, manly, and heroic. Dick was spared from the war effort on the assumption that he would become a great medical man, but he has achieved little success in his life. The war veterans thus serve to remind Dick of his own failures.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 18

Dick arrives in Innsbruck with just enough time to explore the town before dark. He thinks of Nicole "with detachment" but remembers a time when she had come to him, asking him to always remember the love they shared at that moment. He can't determine the exact moment when it happened, but Dick knows that he has "lost himself" somewhere along the way, between meeting Nicole and Rosemary.

Although Dick harbors some nostalgia for his early days with Nicole, he finds it almost impossible to muster love for her these days. He is broken, tired, and lost as he travels around Europe alone.

Growing up the son of a humble parish priest, Dick had nurtured a "desire for money." But this desire had been unhealthy, for it had allowed him to be "swallowed up like a gigolo" when marrying Nicole.

Dick's dreams and ambitions for wealth and splendor ultimately led to his downfall. He sees now that he sold himself out to the Warren family—who have used him for many years—and now he has almost nothing left to show for himself.

Dick's musings are interrupted when he spots the figure of a pretty woman he had noticed earlier that evening. Lately, he seems to fall in love with "every pretty woman he s[ees]." He wonders whether he should approach her, feeling "inept" and out of practice. The decision is made for him, however, when she turns to return to the hotel.

It appears that Dick no longer possesses the smooth charm and charisma that he used to have with women. He is older now, tired looking, and feels used up by the Warrens—thus, he lacks his former confidence to approach and hit on young women.

The following morning, Dick sets off on a hike in the mountains with a guide and two other men. He is enjoying the fresh pastures and his own "anonymity" when the weather takes a turn for the worse and the four men are forced to return to the Innsbruck. Back at the hotel, he spots the pretty girl once more, but this time he detects "approval" in her face. Dick wonders why—after a lifetime of experiences with pretty women—he feels the need to pursue new desires now.

Like a true psychiatrist, Dick pathologizes his own impulses to meet and seduce new women but comes to no new conclusions. The reader is presented with a sad picture of a middle-aged man staying alone in a hotel and hitting on much younger women.

Upstairs in his hotel room, Dick continues to consider the implications of pursuing new, exciting love affairs when he notices a telegram he has ignored from Nicole. Opening it with a "sharp wince at the shock," he learns that his father has died. Dick reflects on some happy childhood memories, remembering all that his father had taught him growing up. His father had had "a good heart" and "been sure of who he was." Pacing up and down, Dick plans to take the boat back to America. He thinks of Nicole and regrets that "he had not always been as good as he had intended to be."

The news of his father's death comes at an interesting juncture in Dick's life. Dick's father, a humble priest, epitomized goodness, honor, and virtue, and Dick's memory him spurs a resolution to be a better man.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 19

Pulling into the harbor in New York, Dick is initially stunned by "the magnificent façade of [his] homeland." The feeling vanishes, however, as he travels to Buffalo and later to Virginia with his late father's body. Dick is glad that his father can be buried among relatives but feels that, with this last tie to America broken, he will not return again. Dick bids farewell to his homeland, saying, "Good-bye, my father—good-bye, all my fathers."

Dick's many years in Europe have left him feeling estranged and removed from America, his homeland. Besides, he no longer embodies the American dream, or any of the values he stood for as a younger man. Dick says his sorry goodbyes to his father, and bids farewell to the American founding fathers at the same time, both physically and emotionally departing from his familial and cultural roots.

Boarding the ship back to Europe, Dick feels as if the pier exists in a strange space between the past and the future. On the boat he bumps into Albert McKisco, who has become a very successful writer since Dick last saw him. McKisco's fame and accomplishment were due, in part, to his duel with Tommy, which gave him "a new self-respect." Indeed, Dick finds McKisco far less irritating than before, and even enjoys his company. Violet is changed too: happier, well dressed, and more charming than before.

While Dick has experienced physical and emotional decline, McKisco—who was once considered unfashionable and vulgar—has risen to fame. The McKiscos' new wealth has probably opened up new social circles for them, and Violet certainly looks the part now. Fitzgerald reflects the societal shifts underway with regard to classes during this period—money made previously fixed class-boundaries much more fluid.

Disembarking from the ship in Naples, Dick is overcome by a strong desire to feel admired and finds himself taking a lost mother and her two daughters under his wing on the train to Rome. He drinks too much in order to sustain the various illusions he has invented about them, but watches, "with pleasure," as they regain their confidence.

This passage is another example of Dick's father-complex and need to help and protect women around him. His self-worth is deeply connected to feeling needed and wanted.

Arriving at a hotel in Rome, Dick spots "the person he had come to see, the person for whom he had made the Mediterranean crossing." Rosemary, startled, hurries over immediately, telling Dick that she's in Rome to shoot a new movie. She is beautifully groomed, and Dick hopes that she won't notice his disheveled appearance.

The reader learns that Dick has made this trip for Rosemary. Several years have passed since he saw Rosemary—who is still beautiful—and he is keen to appear new, fresh, and charming for her despite his recent decline.

After he has slept, washed, and eaten, Dick turns his thoughts to Rosemary. He concedes that Rosemary is "young and magnetic, but so [is] Topsy." Longing gets the better of him, however, and he summons all he possesses that might attract her to him once more. He wants "to hold [Rosemary's] giving-of-herself in its precious shell till he enclosed it, till it no longer existed outside him." Preparing himself to meet Rosemary, Dick gets dressed and does a handstand in his hotel room "to limber himself up."

Disturbingly, Dick draws a comparison between his young daughter and Rosemary, describing them both as "young and magnetic." Dick has a strong and potent desire to take Rosemary's "giving-of-herself"—her virginity—and to make it his own. He wants to possess her, so that her virginity and innocence will be his forever. Perhaps, this way, he will be able to feel young and hopeful again.

On his way to meet Rosemary, Dick bumps into Collis Clay at the bar. Collis tells Dick that Rosemary is now "a woman of the world," insinuating that she has had her fair share of romantic experiences since Dick last saw her three years before. "Believe me," says Collis, "has she got some of these Roman boys tied up in bags!" Dick leaves to find Rosemary.

Collis suggests that Rosemary is not as innocent as she seems to be, implying that she has been a bit of a seductress, and perhaps that she is less valuable as a result. This depiction of Rosemary's is acutely sexist since it equates her worth as a person with her sexuality. Still, this no doubt this makes Dick jealous, and so he rushes to meet her.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 20

Wearing pajamas inside her hotel room, Rosemary is more beautiful than ever. She calls Dick "youngster" and tells him that she was "scared" by his unkempt appearance that morning, but glad that he looks "fine again" now. They share a smile, "as if they two together had managed to get rid of all the trouble in the world and were now at peace in their own heaven." They are interrupted twice by phone calls for Rosemary and, sensing Dick's restlessness, she lowers "the lights for love," and the two kiss "passionately" until they are breathless.

The "peace" and "heaven" that Dick feels when he is with Rosemary are exactly the reasons why he has come to visit her. Dick yearns to live once more in the bright energy of the young, to feel the revitalizing and optimistic power of their youth, innocence, and beauty around him. Rosemary flatters Dick, calling him "youngster" in an attempt to minimize the age difference between them.

Rosemary breaks away from Dick, leaving him lying on her hotel bed alone. "Are you actually a virgin?" he asks her. Evading the question, she teases him for asking. Dick is perplexed by her response, and wonders whether she is just trying to intensify his desire for her. For three years, Rosemary has held Dick up on a pedestal, casting him in the role of "ideal" man. Now, however, she realizes with disappointment Dick has the same "exigent demands" as all the other men, "as if he wanted to take some of herself away, carry it off in his pocket."

Rosemary is upset when realizing that Dick is just like all the other men who have tried to be with her—preoccupied with virginity, innocence, and the notion of possessing her. Dick is desperate to know if Rosemary is a virgin, because he deems it an important measure of her innocence and purity.

The next morning Dick wakes early to accompany Rosemary to the film set. As Dick is given a tour around the set, he notices Rosemary talking to an Italian actor named Nicotera on set. Later, Dick and Rosemary have lunch together in a "splendid" restaurant and afterwards, feeling "flushed and happy" they return to the hotel together. Once there, Rosemary desires "to be taken […] and what had begun as a childish infatuation on a beach was accomplished at last."

Visiting Rosemary's place of work, Dick is interested to observe Rosemary with the actor, Nicotera—no doubt Dick is jealous of him. Later, three years after their initial romance, Dick and Rosemary have sex, fulfilling Rosemary's longstanding desire to be intimate with Dick.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 21

Rosemary has dinner obligations with the film company, leaving Dick with some time to assess his present situation. While Rosemary is a "romantic memory" and "self-indulgence," he concludes that Nicole is really "his girl." Just then, he runs into Baby Warren, who is surprised to see Dick back in Europe so soon after his visit to America.

Shortly after having sex with Rosemary, after years of fantasizing about it, Dick's thoughts return to his wife. Now that he has taken what he wanted from Rosemary, she is no longer that important to him, and he decides that Nicole is really his true love.

Over dinner, Dick tells Baby his version of Nicole's recent breakdown. Baby encourages him to consider moving with Nicole to London, arguing that a normal life away from **the clinic** might be just what she needs, saying, "to leave her alone in an atmosphere like that—." Dick responds sharply to this accusation, reminding Baby that he went to America because of his father's death. At Baby's subsequent mention of the Warren family wealth, Dick imagines telling her the "rotted old truth" about what happened to Nicole.

Baby accuses Dick of neglecting Nicole, which Dick finds offensive considering that Baby has only ever thrown money at Nicole's problems, rather than showing real dedication. With the reminder that the Warrens have been using him like paid staff—a doctor or caregiver for Nicole—Dick feels spiteful and toys with the idea of telling Baby about Mr. Warren's abuse of Nicole. Again, Fitzgerald uses the word "rotted" to refer to Nicole's father, associating him with filth and corruption.

Collis joins Baby and Dick for a drink but is perplexed by their conversation about Nicole and finds it hard to follow. Baby suggests that if Nicole were to be "happier with someone else," she could have it "arranged." Overcome with the "preposterousness" of her remark, Dick tries to change the topic and begins to grill Baby on her love life, demanding to know why she's not yet married. Baby prattles on in a self-congratulatory way until her voice blurs completely with the background music.

Feeling devalued by Baby's proposition that the Warrens could simply discard Dick and find Nicole a new husband, Dick is determined to retaliate by belittling and embarrassing Baby about her hopeless love life. She doesn't seem to be too rattled by his questions, however, and continues to talk about herself until Dick can no longer feign interest.

Over lunch with Rosemary the next day, Dick discovers that he is no longer in love with her, "nor her with him," but this realization only intensifies "his passion for her." At the hotel later, Dick probes Rosemary once more about her previous sexual encounters, but she refuses to tell him.

Dick's discovery that there is no longer real love between him and Rosemary increases his desire for her; now he can view their relationship as a purely sexual and physical affair. His obsession with her virginity persists, however, and he continues to embarrass himself by dwelling on the topic. Rosemary seems to have become the mature party in their relationship, and Dick seems desperate and fraught by comparison.


Dick becomes irritated when Nicotera calls up to his hotel room to speak with Rosemary, and he directs her to brushoff Nicotera for the remainder of his stay. Forced to choose between the two men, Rosemary bursts into tears, pleading Dick to understand her position—"Dick, I do love you […] But what have you got for me?" Angry and jealous, Dick protests desperately, calling Nicotera "a spic." This "unjustified jealousy" repulses Rosemary and she draws away from Dick, admitting that Nicotera has asked her to marry him.

Finding that he has little to no power over Rosemary anymore, Dick feels emasculated and wronged. He reacts aggressively and with immaturity, using a racial slur to denigrate and insult Nicotera, Rosemary's love interest. The word "spic" is a racist insult usually directed toward Latin American people—Dick directs this description towards Nicotera to make himself seem superior in comparison.


Spurned and not wanting "to be hurt again," Dick resolves to put an end to his love for Rosemary once and for all, even "if he had to bring all the bitterness and hatred of the world into his heart." Rosemary tries to make amends, saddened that they might have tainted the memory of their love forever but Dick retreats from Rosemary once and for all. He reflects that, "I guess I'm the black death […] I don't seem to bring people happiness anymore."

Through the description of Dick as "the black death," Fitzgerald associates Dick with disease, sin, evil, and darkness. The metaphor suggests that Dick is poisonous and has the power to ruin and corrupt all those around him.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 22

At the bar that evening with Collis, Dick is "worn away by the events of the afternoon" and decides to take out his frustrations by insulting Italians loudly enough for those around them to hear. Dick receives a note from Rosemary telling him she'll be waiting for him in her hotel room, but Dick hands the note back to the bell-boy, saying, "Tell Miss Hoyt you couldn't find me."

Dick's mood has darkened, and he becomes increasingly cantankerous during his stay in Italy. The fact that he doesn't follow through on his plans with Rosemary suggests that, now they have had sex, he is no longer interested in her. He has already "taken some of herself away"—her innocence—and doesn't stand to gain anything more from her.

Dick and Collis move to a cabaret bar together. Collis is merry and looking for a good time, but Dick is in the mood to indulge his discontentedness. He drinks a bottle of wine and becomes "pale and somewhat noisy." Calling over the orchestra leader—who is "a Bahama Negro"—to their table, Dick initiates a bad-tempered row about how much of a tip he's left.

Dick makes himself sick and unwell from excessive drinking in the bar. He publically humiliates himself when starting an argument with the musician. It is likely that Dick has behaved in this way because he perceives himself as superior to the "Bahama Negro," revealing Dick's growing tendency to express his racist views loudly and openly.

Dick snaps out of his "evil humor" briefly when he sees a pretty girl observing him. He invites her to dance and perceives in her "a suggestion of all the pleasanter English things." When she heads back to her table and doesn't return for a while, however, Dick's sour mood worsens. He provokes Collis into a futile argument and makes them both feel "wretched."

The only thing able to lift Dick's terrible, bitter mood is dancing and flirting with a young girl. Being around youthful women seems to help Dick forget his problems, at least for a short while. When the English girl leaves, however, Dick sinks deeper into his mood.

Drunk and incoherent, Dick finds himself alone in the bar with the vague sense that he is responsible for breaking a row of ceramic dolls on the floor. After paying the check, Dick heads out into the street to hail a taxi but has a disagreement with the drivers about the price of the fare. A stranger on the street insists on translating for Dick, but when he tells the stranger to "Go on away," the stranger spits at the floor beside Dick. This triggers a "flash of violence" in Dick and he steps forward and strikes the man across the face. The drivers swarm around Dick "waving their arms," and, in an attempt to fight back, Dick trips and falls to the floor.

Dick is belligerently drunk and causes chaos and destruction wherever he goes—offending people, causing fights, and breaking objects. He is no longer the polite, charming doctor who Rosemary had met on the beach three years before, but a bitter and aggressive drunk. He feels a deep sense of injustice about being overcharged for the taxi ride, despite the fact that he is extremely rich and could easily pay the fare.

The men lead Dick to the police station to settle the matter. Here, the police officer tells Dick that he is to pay the fare that the driver asks and head back to his hotel. "Raging with humiliation" Dick concedes, but before turning to leave he walks up to the man who'd brought him to the police station and punches him so hard across the jaw that the man falls to the floor. The crowd falls upon Dick immediately, hitting and kicking him until his nose is broken, his ribs are smashed, and he loses consciousness momentarily. Dick is thrown into a prison cell and left there alone.

Humiliated by the Italian police—whom Dick considers inferior to him—Dick retaliates by violently attacking the man who had tried to help him outside. With this, Dick releases all the anger and bitterness he has harbored inside of him for months, maybe even years—Dick's illusionary façade has finally fallen down. Of course, Dick is drunk and not nearly has strong as he feels; he is immediately attacked by the men surrounding him.

BOOK 2, CHAPTER 23

Baby Warren is awoken in the early hours of the morning by a knock at her door: the concierge informs her that Dick is in trouble with the police. Arriving at the police station, Baby hears Dick's voice wailing in desperation. She pushes past the police officers to reach Dick's cell, from where he tells her that the police have put out is eye and that he's been beaten. Swirling around in fury she screams at the two officers, letting "her passion scorch around them until they sweated out apologies for their impotence." She reassures Dick and rushes out to the Embassy, "throwing a last glance of infinite menace" at the police.

Although Baby doesn't care for Dick a great deal, her snobbish belief in the greatness and superiority of Americans causes her to unleash a powerful fury, which she directs at the Italian police officers guarding Dick's cell. Her intense anger is a force to be reckoned with, and she leaves the officers feeling emasculated.


Arriving at the Embassy, Baby shakes the porter roughly by the shoulders when he bars her from entering the building. Refusing to take no for an answer, Baby's loud commotion is enough to rouse a young official from his sleep and she pushes her way inside to speak with him. The man descends down the stairs a little, careful to remain in the darkness so as to conceal his moustache bandage and the pink cream on his face. The man assures Baby that nothing can be done until nine a.m. when the Consulate opens, explaining, "Your brother-in-law has broken the laws of this country and been put in jail, just as an Italian might be put in jail in New York."

With a bold egotism and sense of self-importance, Baby rushes to the Embassy, demanding help and attention, even though the Embassy is not open yet. Baby believes that, because Dick is American, he deserves immediate special treatment even though he has actually broken the law. Fitzgerald's humorous description of the Embassy official—covered in a strange face cream and moustache bandage—makes him seem ridiculous and emasculated. Fitzgerald satirizes the bureaucratic nature of both government systems and Baby's self-important attitude of American exceptionalism.

At the Consulate, Baby finds only the cleaners. Unsure of what to do next, she takes a taxi to Collis Clay's hotel. After persuading the receptionist to let her in, Baby makes her way up to Collis's room. He is completely naked when she arrives but dresses hurriedly and travels back with her to Dick's prison cell. Collis agrees to wait with Dick to ensure he's not hurt further, while Baby drives back to the Consulate.

Collis Clay's nakedness serves to heighten and emphasize the humor and ridiculousness of the situation. Baby is incensed and determined, however, and pays no notice—nothing will stand in her way.

Back at the Consulate, Baby waits half an hour before unleashing her tirade of fury upon the Consul in his office. The Consul perceives Baby, "the American Woman," as having an "irrational temper"—the same one that "had broken the moral back of a race and made a nursery out of a continent." Her vitriol is "too much for him," and he calls the vice-consul. "Baby had won."

The man at the Consulate perceives Baby's temper as petulant and childish, and as a distinctly American affliction. He dislikes that Americans believe they are entitled to special treatment, especially in Europe where they can throw their wealth and power around in order to get their way. The reference to making "a nursery out of a continent" suggests that American expatriates act like children in Europe, while locals are forced to clean up their mess.

In the light of morning, Dick's rage has subsided, and he feels "a vast criminal irresponsibility." Dick has "bizarre feelings" about how this event will change him moving forward. He feels strongly that "No mature Aryan is able to profit by a humiliation; when he forgives it has become part of his life," and so Dick decides not to forgive and not to speak of retribution.

Upon waking, Dick realizes how he has behaved and feels terrible about it—he has lost the good part of himself that he resolved to resurrect after his father's death. He is stubborn, however, and decides not to apologize for his violent actions. Further, Dick is "Aryan"—white—and believes that his race makes him superior to Italian people and therefore exempt from asking for forgiveness.

The vice-consul, "an overworked young man named Swanson," accompanies Dick to the court and leaves him and Collis with a lawyer. When Dick enters the courtroom there is a loud heckling from the crowd above. A stranger explains that a man had been brought into court that morning for raping and killing a fiver-year-old. The audience had mistaken Dick for the culprit, hence the uproar when he had arrived. The lawyer returns to tell Dick that he's been freed, but Dick cries out that he wants "to make a speech […] I want to explain to these people how I raped a five-year-old girl. Maybe I did—."

The meaning of Dick's strange request—of wanting to make a speech pretending he is a child rapist—is ambiguous. The phrase suggests that Dick recognizes and feels guilty about his own troubling attraction to girls who are too young for him. Why he would want to finally admit this now, though, and in public, is unclear. Perhaps this indicates that Dick has hit rock bottom—he is a drunk, his body has been beaten, and he has had to be saved and rescued by a woman whom he detests.

Dick avoids eye contact with Baby on the way back to his hotel room. There, a doctor (who Dick thinks is "one of that least palatable of European types") cleans Dick's wounds and sets his broke nose, ribs, and fingers. Dick tells Baby and the doctor his version of events, but nobody has anything to say to him. Dick falls asleep after being given morphine, and Baby waits with him until a nurse arrives to take over. Baby is tired but has the satisfactory feeling that "they now possesse[s] a moral superiority over him for as long as he prove[s] of any use."

It finally becomes clear why Baby was so determined to help Dick—it wasn't because she really cared that much, but because she wanted to gain power over him. Dick is now indebted to Baby, and she probably won't let him forget it. Fitzgerald's depiction of the expatriate scene is now markedly different from the descriptions of fantastical and sparkling parties from Book 1 of the novel. Bitterness, jealousy, and manipulation are commonplace in this wealthy circle.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 1

Kaethe Gregorovious runs up the garden path to meet her husband, Franz, with just one question on her lips—"How [i]s Nicole?" Franz refuses to answer Kaethe's question until they're inside the house, where he shouts at his wife, saying, "Birds in their little nests agree" and accuses her of not using her common sense. Kaethe replies saying, "she only cherishes her illness as an instrument of power." Kaethe has a strong sense that Nicole doesn't like her, and jokes that it is "as if I *smelt* bad!" In fact, this isn't far from the truth; Kaethe's natural smell—a product of hard-work and being frugal—does offend Nicole.

Franz's relationship with his wife, Kaethe, is traditional and patriarchal. He is the breadwinner, while she takes care of the domestic realm. He is also vocally authoritative, patronizing, and clearly has more power in their relationship. Kaethe is right to detect that Nicole dislikes her. The two women are essentially positioned as opposites: while Nicole is wealthy, feminine, elegant, and spoiled, Kaethe is humble, hardworking and practical.

Realizing that her "outburst had been ill-advised," Kaethe resolves to take a different course on this matter. When Dick returns from his trip and she notices a scar on his face, Kaethe decides to raise the matter with her husband once more, announcing after a dinner with the Divers that "Dick is no longer a serious man." Although Franz denies it at the time—calling Dick a "brilliant man"—he takes on board what Kaethe has said, later convincing himself that he had never taken Dick seriously in the first place.

Kaethe is much more perceptive and intelligent than others realize. She is the first to determine, for example, that Dick is not the man he used to be. Franz comes to share her view about Dick's deterioration, but never gives Kaethe credit for being the first to detect this. Franz and Kaethe's relationship is acutely sexist, with Franz dismissing and belittling his wife's opinions because he sees her as inferior to him.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 2

Upon returning to Zurich, Dick explains his injuries by telling Nicole a revised version of what happened in Rome—"he had gone philanthropically to the rescue of a drunken friend." The ghastly experience lingers with Dick, but he decides to throw himself into work at **the clinic** so that Franz doesn't have an opportunity to "break with him."

Unsurprisingly, Dick lies to Nicole about the events in Rome, making himself out to be heroic, rather than impulsive and belligerent. Dick senses that Franz is trying to find an opportunity to fire him from the clinic.

In May, Franz finally has "an opportunity to insert the first wedge." Sitting down in Franz's office, Dick announces that a patient whom "he had come to love" has died. Franz suggests that Dick take a trip and offers him a case with a Chilean man who has "a problem with his son." When Dick asks what the problem is—"Alcoholism? Homosexuality?"—Franz replies saying, "A little bit of everything."

Dick's "love" for his patient is inappropriate and troubling and indicates that he hasn't changed or improved since the events in Rome. The reference to the Chilean patient—who is gay and an alcoholic—reveals early-20th-century attitudes toward sexuality. Homosexuality was considered a disease that could, and should, be cured with psychiatric treatment.

Dick feels renewed and rested on the train trip to Laussane to meet Señor Pardo y Cuidad Real, the Chilean man, and his son. Meeting the father, Dick is amused to find that he is "as interesting psychologically" as the patient whom he is actually there to assess. Señor Pardo y Cuidad Real tells "the story of his son with no more self-control than a drunken woman," explaining how he tried to cure his son's sexuality by sending Francisco on vacation to Spain with a friend who took him to a brothel each night of their trip.

Dick is somewhat bemused by Señor Pardo y Cuidad Real and his attitude to his son's afflictions. He sent his son on vacation with the hope of curing his sexuality by encouraging him to sleep with sex workers in Spanish brothels. Fitzgerald again highlights how homosexuality was perceived as a shameful illness during this period, and how people went to desperate lengths to "cure" it.

Talking to the son, Francisco, Dick observes that "There [i]s some manliness in the boy" but that he "ha[s] that typically roguish look in his eyes." Dick warns Francisco that his life will be consumed by the task of "controlling [his] sensuality" and that he won't have much energy for anything else. Hearing this "courageous" young man's story, Dick assumes that Francisco's "charm" is what makes it possible for him "to perpetuate his outrages."

Fitzgerald's bigoted depiction of Francisco reflects and reinforces the widespread homophobia present in early-20th-century society. He describes Francisco as "roguish" and portrays him as deceitful and manipulative when suggesting that he uses his charm to seduce young men.

Dick isn't that interested in the case, so as Francisco tells his "drab old story," Dick turns his attention to his own experiences—"His love for Nicole and Rosemary, is friendship with Abe North, with Tommy Barban." Dick reflects on the necessity of "taking all or nothing" and concludes that "There was some loneliness involved—so easy to be loved—so hard to love."

Dick is lost and can no longer dedicate himself to his work. He is prone to long, philosophical musings about the past and feels a great deal of sadness when thinking of his loved ones. He used to have the ability to make those around him feel loved, warm, and pleasant, but now he finds it "hard to love."

Dick's meeting with Francisco is interrupted when Mr. Dumphry walks out "from the shrubbery" and greets them enthusiastically. Dick and Francisco both try ignore him, but he compliments Dick on the wonderful evening he had shared with the Divers in their villa in Tarmes. Before he turns to leave, Mr. Dumphry says, "I hear he's dying" sympathetically. When Dick expresses confusion as to what he's talking about, Dumphry explains that Mr. Warren is sick and staying in Lausanne.

Mr. Dumphry, a man whom Dick hardly remembers, is enthusiastic to greet Dick. This indicates how popular and charming Dick once was, just a few years ago. The sudden news that Nicole's father is dying further emphasizes just how much has changed in the Divers' lives in just a few short years.

Immediately calling on Mr. Warren's doctor, Doctor Dangeu, Dick learns that Nicole's father has alcoholism and will probably not live longer than a week. Neither Baby nor Nicole know of their father's condition. Dick instructs Doctor Dangeu to consult a specialist.

It is no accident that Fitzgerald chooses to reveal that Mr. Warren, like Dick, is an alcoholic. The parallels between Mr. Warren and Dick become overwhelming: both men are father figures and both are alcoholics as a result of their excessive and lavish lifestyles. While Dick has not sexually abused his daughter as Mr. Warren did, he does *have a troubling attraction to younger girls and daughter figures.*


Dick meets with Señor Pardo y Cuidad Real that evening, where the latter begs Dick—on his knees—to take Francisco with him to **the clinic**. Dick refuses saying, "It's impossible to commit a person on such grounds. I wouldn't if I could."

Despite Dick's personal disapproval and near-repulsion at the thought of Francisco's sexuality, Dick announces that it would be unethical to admit Francisco to the clinic on these grounds. Francisco's father is desperate and upset—he is used to getting his way—but it seems that no sum of money will cure his son from his "disease."

Dick finds Doctor Dangeu in the elevator. Mr. Warren is desperate to speak with Nicole and Doctor Dangeu wishes to know how to proceed. Reluctantly, Dick agrees to visit Mr. Warren that evening. In his dark suite, Mr. Warren's "emaciated fingers" fiddle with a rosary. "I've been a bad man" admits Mr. Warren, before asking Dick for permission to see Nicole, citing that God "says to forgive and to pity." Dick pretends to hesitate, telling Mr. Warren that he'll have to consult with Franz, even though he's already made up his mind. Dick tries to call Franz but can only reach Kaethe. Dick explains the situation, asking her to tell Franz but forgetting to instruct her not to tell Nicole.

Mr. Warren is extremely unwell. It appears as if his guilt about Nicole has been slowly devouring him, and he has recently turned to God and religion to find strength and ask for forgiveness for his sins. Dick decides that he will not permit Nicole to see her father—probably fearing that it will trigger another spell of poor mental health—but he promises that he will ask Franz anyway.

As Kaethe hurries from the train to meet Franz up on the mountain, she bumps into Nicole and the children. Kaethe tries to compliment Nicole on her wonderful parenting skills, but when Nicole rudely pulls herself away from Kaethe, she retaliates "deplorably" by telling Nicole about her father. Kaethe realizes her error immediately, but it is too late. By the time Franz arrives to make things right, Nicole has already made up her mind to leave for Lausanne right away—"If my father is dying [...] I *must* go."

Kaethe resents how horribly and snobbishly Nicole treats her, as if Kaethe were below her, and so when Nicole literally flinches at her touch, Kaethe snaps. She acts rashly, telling Nicole something she knows is unwise and unkind, just to feel powerful for a moment. Nicole has suffered a lifetime of trauma due to the sexual abuse she experienced as a child, but she doesn't seem to be triggered by the mention of her father. In fact, her response is very normal, and she states that she must see him before he dies.

Meanwhile, Dick receives a call in his hotel room from Mr. Warren's nurse, who tells Dick that her patient has disappeared. It's "incredible," Dick thinks, "A man in that condition to arise and depart." When Franz rings, Dick admonishes him for telling Nicole the news, but Franz explains, "Kaethe told her, very unwisely." Dick admits that only he can be to blame—"Never tell a thing to a woman till it's done."

Mr. Warren's disappearance suggests that he became fearful of seeing Nicole and escaped before her arrival. Perhaps he was not ready to face the shame and dishonor of his actions, or perhaps he was scared of how she might have reacted. As Mrs. Warren's first name, Devereux, suggests, he has wormed out of his responsibilities and abandoned Nicole once more.

Dick and Doctor Dangeu attempt to catch up with Mr. Warren at the train station but they're too late. When Dick returns to the hotel, he finds Nicole in the lobby with "a tight purse to her lips that disquieted him." Nicole is saddened to hear that her father has run off to Paris, but Dick tries to explain Mr. Warren's motivations: "he got afraid, and off he went." Nicole accuses Dick of being overinvolved but apologizes immediately and puts her hand on his.

Dick notices the "tight purse" on Nicole's lips with caution—this is usually a sign that she is in danger of an outburst or relapse. Indeed, she snaps at Dick angrily, accusing him of being too controlling. Nicole apologizes immediately, however, and tries to make amends with Dick. This suggests that despite Nicole's fragile mental health, she is still aware of how her behavior affects others and feels guilty about hurting her loved ones.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 3

Back at **the clinic** a week later, Dick notices some "commotion outside." He sees his colleague, Dr. Lladislau, protesting as one of their patients, Von Cohn Morris, places all his belongings inside a limousine and prepares to leave the clinic. As Dick approaches, the patient's father, Mr. Morris, erupts furiously and shakes his finger at Dick, saying, "We've wasted our time and money." Dr. Lladislau proves to be useless at helping the situation—"Dick had never liked" him—but when Dick tries to lead Mr. Morris inside to discuss the problem with him, Mr. Morris comes up "menacingly to Dick." He accuses him of being an alcoholic—"My son is here for alcoholism, and he told us he smelt liquor on your breath."

When Mr. Morris shouts at Dick, accusing him of negligence, it seems that Dick's alcoholism, recklessness, and selfishness have finally caught up with him. He is unable to charm his way out of this situation, and Mr. Morris causes an embarrassing scene in full view.

Dick meets Franz on the path as soon as he arrives back at the clinic, explaining what had happened with the Morris family that morning. Dick suggests that they dismiss Dr. Lladislau, claiming that it was his fault that the situation had gotten out of hand. After a brief discussion about Dick's drinking habits, however, it becomes apparent that Franz is all too ready to break their professional partnership. Franz assures Dick that he'll be able to return Nicole's financial backing by the end of the year. Dick is surprised but relieved, since he has "long felt the ethics of his profession dissolving into a lifeless mass."

Instead of taking responsibility, Dick tries to blame the misfortune on his colleague, Dr Lladislau, when explaining the situation to Franz. His behavior here is unscrupulous and deceptive, especially because he seeks to manipulate his close friend and business partner, Franz. Although Dick is obviously ashamed to have been dismissed from the clinic, he rationalizes the situation, convincing himself it's what he's wanted all along.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 4

Dick and Nicole decide to return to their house in Tarmes, on the French Riviera. They travel a little to "German spas and French cathedral towns" in the meantime, and Lanier and Topsy give them purpose. Dick has become more interested in the children as they've grown up. Lanier is "an unpredictable boy with an inhuman curiosity," while Topsy is "exquisitely made like Nicole." Dick used to worry about this, but he has recently observed that she is "as robust as any American child." Dick is closer with the children than Nicole is, but nonetheless he is strict when it comes to teaching good manners.

Dick and Nicole retreat back into their old life of leisure and traveling. Dick is strict with the children, perhaps gaining some form of control over his life through his ability to determine the way his children are raised. His unsettling comment about Topsy makes reference to the troubling father-daughter relationships throughout the novel. However, Dick assures himself that his relationship with her is entirely paternal.

Since withdrawing their financial investment in **the clinic**, the Divers have been very rich indeed. Their wealth allows them to travel in an absolutely "fabulous" manner. The locals watch in awe as Dick, Nicole, and the children arrive off the train in Italy, for example. The servants bring the Divers' many bags of luggage onto the platform and organize them using a method Nicole devised when traveling with her ill mother as a child, which is "equivalent to the system of a regimental supply officer."

This scene, of the beautiful Diver family descending from the train with all of their many fabulous belongings, reminds the reader of younger versions of Dick and Nicole—breathtaking and almost theatrical in their splendor. Nicole is compared to a "regimental supply officer," depicting her as capable, efficient, and practical. It seems that Nicole is well at the moment, and almost independent.

Mary North—now a Contessa—has recently remarried. Her new husband, Conte di Minghetti, is a "ruler-owner of manganese deposits in southwestern Asia." He is noticeably foreign-looking and not fair-skinned enough to travel "south of the Mason-Dixon" line. He has about him the appearance of a "Kabyle-Berber-Sabaean-Hindu," which is preferable to Europeans than "the mongrel faces of the ports." Mary and her husband's house is grand and "princely," and as she greats the Divers, "two half-veiled" women stand behind her.

Mary North's new husband has earned his wealth through trading an industrial metal compound. Mary's marriage to a foreign man reflects the shift in race relations underway at the beginning of the 20th century—up until this time, it would have been unheard of for a white woman to marry an Asian man. Conte di Minghetti's vast wealth allows him to pass as high-class, in a way that grants him access to white, European social circles. Nonetheless, both Dick and the narrator express racist attitudes toward him, insensitively conflating many different cultures together ("Kabyle-Berber-Sabaean-Hindu) in order to highlight his difference as a non-white person.

Once inside their bedroom, Dick and Nicole discuss Mary's new situation. Dick is shocked by her choice of husband—"Abe educated her, and now she's married to a Buddha." Nicole has learned that Mary's husband has "two very tan children" from a previous marriage and that one of them is ill with a strange bug. Nicole worries about her children catching his disease, but also frets that she'll offend Mary if she's seen keeping Lanier and Topsy away.

Dick is offended by the notion of Mary, a white woman, marrying someone foreign. He has become less and less tolerant of racial difference in recent years, and he considers Mary's marriage a threat to his own racial supremacy. Dick and Nicole both exoticize and "other" Mary's husband, and his children, by suggesting that the child's illness is inherently threatening and dangerous because he is foreign.

Over dinner that evening, Dick talks with Mary's husband, Hosain. Dick is drunk and tells Hosain ridiculously exaggerated stories about America. Nicole rebukes Dick later, telling him off for drinking too much and for using the word "spic." Dick apologizes, saying, "I'm not much like myself anymore."

Dick gets drunk at dinner and patronizes Hosain with unlikely stories. It probably makes Dick feel important and powerful to abuse Hosain's naïve trust. When Nicole tells Dick off for using "spic," a racist slur, Fitzgerald reveals that the Divers are well aware that this is racist and unacceptable. Nicole is embarrassed, not that Dick is racist, but that he would use the slur in front of Hosain and Mary.

The next day, after Dick and Nicole have returned from shooting, Lanier announces that he had to take his bath in the same water as the sick boy, and that "it was dirty." Nicole whirls around in horror and Dick instructs Lanier to take another bath. Just then, one of the women who'd been veiled yesterday enters the Divers' bedroom. Dick enquires after the sick boy Tony, and instructs the "Asiatic woman" that, next time, she must drain the bath water and clean the bath before drawing Lanier a new one. The woman is "thunderstruck" and rushes out of the bedroom "crying."

The Divers are disgusted by the thought that the foreign boy might have contaminated Lanier with his strange and exotic disease. The Divers make a big mistake in assuming that the foreign-looking "Asiatic" woman is a servant. They are used to seeing people of color in subservient roles—as servants, cleaners, and drivers—and they fail to realize that they have greatly offended Hosain's sister by bossing her around and treating her as if she were beneath them.

At dinner, Dick decides that they must leave earlier than planned. He finds it hard work talking to Hosain, who is "reserved," and Dick would rather conserve his energy for his family. The next morning, the Divers are barely awake when Mary barges into their bedroom, saying, "*What* is this story that you commanded my husband's sister to clean Lanier's tub?" Dick and Nicole are shocked; they never guessed that she was Hosain's sister, believing instead that she was a "native servant." Mary is furious. She had explained on the night of their arrival that the two sisters are "Himadoun"—"the wife's ladies-in-waiting"—but Dick must have been too drunk to pay proper attention.

The fact that Mary had already explained—or warned—Dick about Hosain's sister reveals how careless and insensitive he was when treating the sister like hired help. Hosain's sister has an important role as Mary's lady-in-waiting, and in failing to recognize this, the Divers have greatly disrespected her and her culture.

Mary demands that Lanier be brought in to explain this mess about the dirty bath water, which angers Nicole. Upon questioning Lanier, it becomes clear that he was mistaken about the bath water but, becoming nostalgic for old time's sake, Mary softens her tone, asking the Divers not to leave in such a hurry. Dick is too irritated to concede, however, and insults Mary when telling her that she's become "so damned dull." After writing formal letters to apologize to Hosain and his sisters, the Divers leave for the train station. Mary doesn't come down to say farewell.

It is obvious that Lanier has learned to be fearful and suspicious of foreign-looking people from his parents when it becomes clear that he made up the story about Tony's bathwater. Dick's excessive drinking is largely to blame for the spiteful argument he has with Mary, an old friend. His stubborn pride prevents him from apologizing to her, and the Divers leave Mary's house, disgraced.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 5

It's April and Nicole can hear a fight going on downstairs in their villa. Augustine, the French cook, is brandishing a large knife at Dick, who is trying to fire her for drinking too much of their vintage wine. In retaliation, Dick waves his walking stick at Augustine, and the two exchange angry words. Refusing to leave, Augustine shouts at the Divers, calling them "disgusting Americans." Eventually, after the Diver's pay her off, Augustine's nephew picks her up and the Divers are left in peace.

Fitzgerald again draws attention to a pervasive tension between American expatriates and European locals when depicting an absurd fight between Dick and their cook, Augustine. Augustine is offended by the Diver's excessive and lavish lifestyle, thinking of them as spoiled and ridiculous, while Dick is outraged that a member of staff would help herself to their good wine. Their poisonous fight is symptomatic of Dick's recent bitterness and aggression.

Dick and Nicole travel to the French town of Nice that day. They dine on exquisite seafood and wine but find that they have little to talk about these days. Suddenly Nicole declares "I've ruined you [...] you used to want to create things—now you seem to want to smash them up." Nicole trembles—she hates criticizing Dick—but he has become unbearable lately, and prone to angry outbursts against people's "race, class, way of life."

Dick and Nicole try to pretend that their relationship is salvageable—taking comfort in an expensive lunch, for old time's sake—but it is obvious that they can't go on. Dick is aggressive, moody, and temperamental. Indeed, he has become increasingly intolerant of difference and prone to bigoted outbursts. This might be because Dick perceives various shifts in the social structure around him—for example, an increase in rights for women and people of color—as a threat to his superior position in society.

Dick changes the subject, pointing to a boat in the distance. It belongs to T.F. Golding, one of Baby's ex lovers, and Dick announces that they should pay a visit. Hiring a boat, Dick and Nicole set off across the water. They are welcomed onboard the ship and realize that Golding is having a party. A small orchestra is playing, and dinner is being served. Nicole is embarrassed to have come; she lost contact with some of the guests during her illness and senses that she's not very popular with the crowd.

Feeling a flash of his former youthful and impulsive spark, Dick suggests that he and Nicole go on an adventure. No doubt Dick longs to feel young and free again. They arrive on Golding's boat to find a splendid and lavish party, with impressive music and fashionable guests. Nicole feels small and insecure in the company, but Dick doesn't seem to notice.

Delightedly, Nicole spots Tommy Barban and rushes to greet him. His skin is darker than before and his accent has changed from years of traveling. "You like just like all the adventurers in the movies," Nicole exclaims. She notices a "small, pale, pretty young woman" who must have been sat beside them but, realizing that she's lost Tommy's attention, walks off "petulantly." Tommy explains that Lady Caroline Sibly-Biers is one "of the wickedest women from London."

Nicole is saved when she sees Tommy, a man she knows has always loved her. Tommy represents adventure and romantic heroism, and Nicole is probably glad for an excuse to leave Dick's side since he is so unpleasant to be around these days.

At dinner, Dick is seated next to Lady Caroline and, although Nicole can only catch snippets of their conversation, it's clear that Dick has offended Lady Caroline when her face "turns dark" and she says, "After all, a chep's a chep and a chum's a chum." Just then, a man at the piano starts singing a childish song about "a young lady from hell." Tommy explains that Lady Caroline wrote the words. Dick is furious but when he confronts her, she accuses him loudly of "asking for it." The two cause quite the scene, interrupting the party with their argument, and Golding intervenes to break them up. Nicole is furious, with both Dick and the "preposterous" woman.

Fitzgerald makes fun of Lady Caroline's British accent here, writing her dialogue phonetically, as she would have spoken it: "chep" rather than "chap." Fitzgerald also uses this exact line in his short story, "The Hotel Child," in which a wealthy young American girl finds herself surrounded by classy yet poor Europeans. Lady Caroline's line, then, might indicate that she has all of the pomp and snobbery of a sophisticated European, but ultimately has no wealth. Dick is incensed by the lyrics of Lady Caroline's song. It is possible that Lady Caroline intended to offend Dick by referencing Nicole's madness, calling her "a young lady from hell." If this is the case, Nicole is oblivious to the insult, but it sparks a new wave of fury in Dick, who embarrasses himself in front of everyone.

Nicole heads onto the deck to find Dick. She is worried about him, but when she tries to reassure him by saying, "It would give me so much pleasure to think of a little something I could do for you, Dick," he reacts with bitter words and grabs her wrist. When Tommy finds them, tears are streaming "down Nicole's face." When they go to join the dancers, Tommy asks Nicole if Dick has been drinking. "Only moderately," she replies. Back in Cannes, Tommy insists on driving the Divers home—Dick is too drunk to do so.

Dick lashes out violently at Nicole, who is just trying to comfort him. Dick hates the suggestion that he is the one who now needs to be taken care of. After years of Dick controlling and manipulating Nicole, their power dynamic has begun to shift—his alcoholism has left him helpless and feeble. Nonetheless, Nicole remains loyal to Dick when downplaying his drinking problem to Tommy.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 6

The next morning Dick tries to apologize for his behavior at the party. Nicole is glad when he leaves her bedroom. Overhearing a conversation between Dick and Tommy, Nicole admits to herself "that Tommy loved her," and that there was a growing tension between him and Dick. She enjoys the "feminine satisfaction" of knowing that two men care about her.

Nicole has had little to comfort her or bring her joy for a long time now, and she is pleased knowing that both Tommy and Dick love her. This simple "satisfaction" emboldens her with confidence.

On her garden walk, Nicole reasons that "other women have lovers," and so why shouldn't she? Nicole knows that she doesn't want to spend the rest of her life with the Dick she saw last night—drunken, angry, and embarrassing. Returning to the house, she finds Tommy and Dick on the terrace. Avoiding eye contact with the latter, Nicole begins to sketch Tommy's face.

Nicole intentionally tries to make Dick feel jealous when paying Tommy attention while ignoring Dick. No doubt it makes Nicole feel powerful and worthy to know that Dick is jealous of Tommy's love for her.

While Tommy prepares to leave, Nicole declares that she must fetch Tommy some "special camphor rub" for his cough. Dick protests at this generosity, however, saying, "don't give Tommy the whole jar—it has to be ordered from Paris." Nicole ignores this instruction and throws the jar toward Tommy, who is waiting with the car. "There was no necessity for that gesture," Dick says after Tommy has left. Dick turns away and heads upstairs to lie down. Nicole is "aware of the sin she had committed against him" and wonders what sustains Dick while she continues "her dry suckling at his lean chest."

Nicole's loyalty to Tommy becomes crystal clear when she gifts him their entire family tub of "camphor rub." Dick perceives this as a huge betrayal, suggesting that Nicole could have just given him a little of the medicine. The camphor rub is a metaphor for Nicole's care, and it seems that Dick would have been satisfied if she had given just a little of herself to Tommy, but he is shocked to learn that she is prepared to give all of herself to him. The image of Nicole suckling Dick is a peculiar one. It suggests that he has been both a mother and father figure to Nicole all this time, but that now he has nothing left to give her. Dick cannot nurture or care for Nicole, hence the image of "dry suckling," and now it is time for her to move on and find sustenance elsewhere.

It's a hot June day when Nicole next thinks of Tommy; she receives a note from him saying he'll be in Nice. That very same morning, Dick opens a telegram from Rosemary, explaining that she'll be at Gausse's beach the next day. "Grimly," Nicole pretends that she'll be pleased to see Rosemary.

Nicole's changeable and unstable nature is highlighted by the fact that she forgets about Tommy as soon as he leaves their house in Tarmes. It is a strange coincidence—or a fated intervention—when Rosemary contacts Dick on the very same day that Tommy reaches out Nicole. It is easy for the reader to imagine that Nicole might pursue an affair with Tommy, after all.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 7

On the way to meet Rosemary at the beach the next day, Nicole worries about Dick. Their relationship has been "unhappy" for a while, largely due to Dick's drinking problem and his "growing indifference," from which "Nicole d[oes] not know whether she [i]s to be crushed or spared." She doesn't fret, however, about what might happen after Dick has or hasn't ruined himself, since she has always had money as a security.

Nicole knows Dick very well and has the foresight and wherewithal to predict that he is on the verge of disgrace and self-destruction. Luckily for Nicole, she knows that her wealth will protect her, whatever happens with Dick.

Dick and Nicole are both wearing white as they step onto the sand at Gausse's beach. Dick looks around and Nicole decides that "he was seeking his children, not protectively but for protection." With a pang of nostalgia, Nicole is sorry that "tasteless" visitors have ruined their beach resort. Nicole spots Rosemary in the water and Dick suggests that they swim out to her.

Dick has assumed the position of a father figure throughout the story—first to Nicole, then to his own children, and then to Rosemary. Here this is inverted, as Nicole notices that Dick needs to be protected by his children and that he can't offer them protection in return. With this, Fitzgerald reveals how shattered and fragile Dick has become.

Nicole stays in the water while Dick sits beside Rosemary on the raft. Nicole is shocked by Rosemary's youthful beauty but rejoices "that the young girl was less slender" than her. It's been five years since they met Rosemary on the beach, but Nicole recognizes the same "old game of flattery" between Rosemary and Dick. She leaves them and swims away.

Nicole is remarkably calm and patient while Dick pays Rosemary attention in a way he hasn't done with Nicole for a long while. Perhaps this is because Nicole feels secretly and inwardly superior after noticing she is slenderer than Rosemary, despite being older. Fitzgerald refers here to the beauty standards of the 1920s and 1930s, which held up thinness as being an attractive ideal.

Rosemary's friends have a boat and aquaplane and Dick is keen to exhibit his physicality—standing on his hands or holding another man above his head. Nicole knows that Dick is "somewhat tired," but proximity to "Rosemary's exciting youth" has inspired him to show off. Nicole watches with "smiling scorn" as he attempts his lifting trick on the aquaplane board. Just one year ago he had done it "with ease," but now, Dick is not strong enough and he topples dramatically into the water, nearly hitting his head on the board. Nicole sees "Dick floating exhausted and expressionless, alone with the water and the sky."

As usual, Dick feels somewhat rejuvenated and revitalized through proximity to Rosemary and her "exciting youth," but he overestimates the power of her youthfulness when attempting ambitious tricks on the aquaplane. His failure to do his trick represents all the other failures in his life—he has failed as a husband to Nicole, who watches scornfully, failed to impress Rosemary, and failed to make a success of himself professionally. Dick is ashamed, emasculated, and isolated as he floats alone in the water.


Back on the beach, Dick fetches some sherry for them. Rosemary expresses how glad she is to see that the rumors about Dick's "deterioration" aren't true, but Dick corrects her saying, "It is true [...] The change came a long way back." Rosemary is shocked to see Mary avoiding the Divers. Upon noticing Rosemary, however, Mary comes over to their group to greet her and Nicole. Rosemary declines a dinner invitation but is surprised to witness Dick mocking Mary, asking sarcastically after her children "and their aunts." Refusing to engage with "Dick's bitterness," Mary leaves them. Rosemary is reminded of some gossip she had overheard about Dick: "He's not received anywhere anymore."

Rosemary witnesses Dick's deterioration and decline firsthand when he is rude to Mary. Perhaps this is why Rosemary wanted to visit in the first place, because she was curious about whether the rumors were true. Nonetheless, Rosemary has a sense of loyalty to the Divers and she turns down Mary's dinner invitation.

Nicole grows impatient as Dick turns on his charm and prattles away to Rosemary about her latest movies. When Rosemary suggests that Topsy would "make a fine actress," Nicole snaps, admonishing Rosemary for putting such ideas in her daughter's head. Nicole announces her exit. Feeling happy, independent, and free from Dick, she drives home alone and writes Tommy "a short provocative letter."

Nicole is repulsed by Dick's ability to maintain his performance and pretend to be charming to Rosemary. Nicole feels empowered when she contradicts Rosemary by making a snobbish judgment about her acting career and uses her newfound power to leave Dick on the beach. Tommy's "provocative" letter foreshadows a love affair between him and Nicole.

Come evening, however, Nicole's good mood is dampened by "nervous energy." She fears Dick's plans and resolves to take control of her own path—she mustn't rely on him to think for her any longer. Later that evening Nicole sings along as Dick plays the piano. When he realizes that the music he's playing is about a father, he automatically goes to change the song, but Nicole exclaims, "Am I going through the rest of my life flinching at the word 'father'?" She and Dick are "lonely and empty-hearted toward each other."

Nicole has spent her whole adult life taking guidance from Dick, but she knows that she must be stronger now. She demonstrates her newfound resolve when assuring Dick that she is not upset by the mention of a father in the song he plays on the piano. With this utterance, she proves that she doesn't need Dick's care anymore.

In the morning Nicole finds a note from Dick saying he's going away for a few days. Just then, the phone rings. It's Tommy, and Nicole "fe[els] her lips' warmth in the receiver as she welcome[s] his coming."

Nicole experiences a sort of sexual awakening with Tommy. He relationship with Dick had always been reduced to that of a daughter or a patient, but with Tommy, Nicole is desired as an equal lover.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 8

Nicole looks at herself in the mirror, examining her naked body. She knows she looks good, but she is not entirely immune to society's obsession with "girl-children," and she feels "a jealousy of youth." Nicole waits for Tommy's arrival and enjoys the feeling of being "worshipped again." She has a breezy confidence as she walks ahead of Tommy through the garden. Nicole "d[oes] not want any vague spiritual romance—she want[s] an 'affair'; she want[s] a change."

Fitzgerald places Dick's obsession with youthful beauty in the wider context of modern society, Hollywood, and the beauty industry, all of which contribute to a culture of worshipping youth. Nicole is not immune to these unrealistic standards and loathes the aging process.

Tommy pulls Nicole close to him and they look at each other for a while. Eventually Tommy asks, "When did you begin to have white crook's eyes?" Nicole moves away, offended, saying, "I suppose my grandfather was a crook and I'm a crook by heritage." She softens when she realizes Tommy meant nothing by it. She tells him that Dick's gone away, probably with Rosemary, and asks Tommy what she should do. "For the first time in ten years [Nicole] [is] under the sway of a personality other than her husband's." She and Tommy begin to kiss. Nicole is surprised by the passion she feels for Tommy and they kiss again before leaving for Nice.

On the one hand, Nicole's "white" eyes might represent rebirth and renewal as she prepares to leave her life with Dick and launch herself into a new affair. On the other hand, the word "crook" suggests that there is something impure about this new chapter of her life. Nicole refers to her grandfather, who made his money through exploitation, but maybe Nicole is a "crook" because she has essentially sucked Dick's vitality from him in order to get well. Now she is better, Nicole is ready to cast Dick aside for a new man, like Baby suggested all that time ago.

During the drive to Nice, Nicole thinks about her "crook's eyes," deciding, "better a sane crook than a mad puritan." She and Tommy stop at a hotel, book a room, and order two cognacs. Tommy's eyebrows are "arched," like "an earnest Satan." They kiss on the bed, and for a few moments Nicole forgets Dick and even Tommy, sinking "deeper and deeper into the minutes and the moment." Afterward, Tommy goes to the window; there is a ruckus below their hotel room from some loud Americans on a balcony. Coming back to Nicole, he inspects her naked body, laughing at her pale torso and tanned arms.

Nicole's conclusion, "better a sane crook than a mad puritan," probably refers to her forthcoming sexual relationship with Tommy. She knows that her affair will be sexually immoral, but feels that it will heal her, particularly from Dick, who has come to represent a sort of sickness in her life. While she and Tommy have sex, Nicole forgets the men in her life entirely, enjoying this moment for herself.

Tommy finds the hotel room "meagre," but Nicole declares, "this is a wonderful room." He doesn't try "to understand her" and instead goes to the window once more. There are two American sailors and a crowd cheering them on. It appears that they also have two sex workers with them too. As a fight ensues outside, the new lovers decide to leave. Before they do, two American women implore them to open their hotel door—they want to wave goodbye to their military boyfriends, who are leaving to embark the ship, from Nicole and Tommy's balcony.

From the presence of the soldiers, their distasteful girlfriends, and the sex workers, it is clear that the hotel is pretty low-class. For Nicole, however, their room represents her freedom, and she finds it utterly "wonderful." Unlike Dick, who always tries to understand and psychoanalyze Nicole, Tommy is content for Nicole to have views that differ from his.

Nicole and Tommy dine in Monte-Carlo that night and then go for a swim under the moonlight. Nicole feels Dick's influence over her slowly diminishing as she embraces Tommy's "anarchy" as her lover. She and Tommy wake at three in the morning and decide to drive back to Nicole's house. She is glad to be back.

Nicole knows that her affair with Tommy will bring "anarchy" into her life, but she chooses this consciously. Nicole earlier described herself as Pallas Athene, the goddess of just war, and perhaps Nicole sees her affair with Tommy as part of a just battle with Dick.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 9

Dick returns early from his trip and tells Nicole he's been with Rosemary. He "wanted to find out if she had anything to offer" but decided that she doesn't—she hasn't grown up. When Nicole tells Dick she's been with Tommy, he flinches, asking Nicole not to tell him any details. Once Dick has retreated to his office, Nicole receives a call from Tommy. He asks her to say that she loves him and encourages her to tell Dick about their affair. She asks him to wait. Nicole reflects on her decade with Dick, feeling "remorse" that she'd belittled her experiences with him the night before when "she lied to Tommy [...] swearing to him that" she'd never been so in love before. She turns to find her husband.

Nicole feels conflicted about having cast Dick aside; she hates to see him in pain. Interestingly, it's not the affair that she feels guilty about, but the fact that she'd told Tommy she loved him more than she'd ever loved Dick. Feeling that she's been careless and disloyal to Dick and their marriage, she goes to find him.

Nicole observes Dick as she approaches, feeling sad for him for the first time. She puts her arms around him affectionately, but he snaps at her, "Don't touch me!" Coldly, Dick declares "I can't do anything for you any more. I'm trying to save myself." Nicole cries in anger, retaliating by saying, "You're a coward! You've made a failure of your life, and you want to blame it on me."

Nicole's efforts to comfort Dick are futile—he's too embittered for her sympathy and declares that he needs to focus on saving himself. Fitzgerald presents the tragic disintegration of Dick and Nicole's marriage, eliciting sympathy for them both.

When Dick doesn't reply, Nicole begins to lose her nerve, but she is determined to remain "top dog." She reminds herself of her new affair, her beauty, her wealth, Baby's dislike of Dick, and his "deterioration." Refusing to lie to herself anymore, Nicole "cut[s] the cord forever," walking, sobbing but triumphant, toward the house "that was hers at last." Dick lowers his head; he is finally free.

Nicole stands up for herself, articulating her feelings with impressive precision and force. While Nicole has beauty, love, and security, Dick finally has his freedom. The narrator's framing here is arguably sexist because while the narrator sides with Dick—portraying Nicole as a burden and the ultimate cause of Dick's downfall—the narrator doesn't fully interrogate how abusive and controlling Dick's treatment of Nicole has been. Perhaps Nicole also deserves her freedom.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 10

Nicole is woken in the middle of the night when the phone rings for Dick. Pleased to be needed again, Dick resolves to help Mary and Lady Caroline, who have been arrested. When he returns a few hours later, he sits on Nicole's bed and tells her the whole "extraordinary story." He had picked up Gausse and driven with him to the police station where they learned that the two offenders had dressed up like male sailors in Antibes and picked up "two silly girls," who'd caused a scene when they'd uncovered the deception.

Mary and Lady Caroline's "lark" is symptomatic of the fact they are spoiled and feel the need to resort to scandalous behavior in order to create new fun for themselves. Their cross-dressing is considered sexually perverse by Dick and the police officers. It is not clear whether Fitzgerald intended for their behavior to be read as such, but the fact that they were in Antibes—an unfashionable part of town— suggests that they were doing something considered seedy by the standards of their social circle.

Lady Caroline's petulant lack of remorse had "confounded" Dick, who told her that she would need to pay the police a large sum in order to be released from the prison. Dick successfully negotiated with the police officers, telling a string of lies in order to present Mary and Lady Caroline as ladies of great standing and importance. When he and Gausse returned the women to their hotel, however, Lady Caroline declared pompously—to the others' surprise—that she would certainly not be paying Gausse back. In embittered retaliation, Gausse unfurled a long string of insults and stepped forward to trip Lady Caroline. She lay sprawled on the pavement wearing her sailor costume.

Lady Caroline embodies all the worst traits of wealthy expatriates in France: she is stubborn, snobbish, rude, and spiteful. Gausse detests her and what she stands for. The image of an old French hotel owner tripping over a high-class British woman to teach her a lesson might have been amusing to Fitzgerald's contemporary audience. Nonetheless, Lady Caroline is punished for her sinful behavior.

On the drive back to Tarmes, Gausse told Dick "I have known many of the great courtesans of the world, and for them I have much respect often, but women like these women I have never seen before."

Gausse implies that he has less respect for Lady Caroline than for escorts and sex workers. This is meant as a grave insult, considering Lady Caroline's sophisticated social class.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 11

The next day, Dick and Nicole go to the hairdressers together, as usual. For Nicole, the salon is just "another little prison," so when she spots Tommy driving past, she wishes she could join him. When Tommy rushes into the shop, then, Nicole realizes "with a flush of joy that there was going to be some sort of showdown." Dick appears a few moments later, explaining that he's agreed with Tommy to "have it other with." Nicole is forced to leave the hairdressers with her hair "half-cut."

Nicole feels trapped in her marriage and domestic routine, as if her life with Dick were a "prison." Nicole expects—and hopes— for there to be some exciting fight or drama between her two suitors, but Dick is quite calm when confronted with Tommy.

Inside the Café des Alliés, Tommy suddenly announces, "Your wife does not love you [...] She loves me." The two men regard each other, assessing which of them possesses more of Nicole. Asking Nicole for her opinion, Dick listens to his wife tell him that "Things were never the same after Rosemary." The two men jostle over Nicole and their love for her until the Tour de France passes through the town and interrupts them.

Fitzgerald's depiction of heterosexual relationships is markedly traditional and patriarchal; the narrator suggests that the men own or possess rights to Nicole. After some time, Dick does ask for Nicole's opinion, and without saying the words, she chooses Tommy.

Concerned for Dick, Nicole asks, "Isn't it true you're not happy with me any more?" Tommy interrupts impatiently. He wants a fight, but Dick assures him that he and his wife will "talk things over." Attempting once more to have the upper hand, Tommy warns Dick, "Let it be understood that from this moment [...] I stand in the position of Nicole's protector." Dick replies saying, "I never did go in for making love to dry loins." Although "drama" she had hoped for never transpires, Nicole is "happy and excited." She resists a small urge to "tell Dick all about it," and watches him walk into the distance.

Fitzgerald presents the fragile masculinity of these two men, each posturing to seem dominant over the other. Tommy appoints himself as Nicole's "protector," forgetting, perhaps, that she is quite capable of protecting herself. Dick makes a snide parting comment, aimed at offending both Tommy and Nicole (although Nicole doesn't seem to notice). "I never did go in for making love to dry loins" suggests that he wouldn't want to have sex with Nicole, anyway, because she is frigid. Interestingly, for the revised addition of the book, this was one of the only lines that Fitzgerald asked his editor, Malcolm Cowley, to remove—he regretted including a line so offensive and out-of-character for Dick.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 12

As Dick prepares to leave Nicole and their house in Tarmes, he dedicates himself to spending as much time with Topsy and Lanier as possible. He's "not young anymore," and no longer has any "nice thoughts and dreams." Dick is "uncertain" about whether he has been a good father to Lanier, and about what to give "to the ever-climbing, ever-clinging, breast-searching young." The children have been told that they will stay with Baby in London a while, before visiting their father in America. Dick says his farewells to the gardener and the children's nanny, who is sad to see him go. Leaving letters for Baby and Nicole, Dick heads for the station alone, deciding to take a detour to Gausse's beach to "take a last look."

Despite Dick's problematic behavior, his departure from Tarmes is still a heartbreaking one. Dick has to say goodbye to his dearest children, whom he fears he has nothing left to give to, and the villa staff he has known for years. Nicole and Baby aren't up when he departs, and so he leaves the family home alone, full of regret and sadness.

Nicole, Baby, and the children are at the beach that same hot, sunny morning. Spotting Dick across the beach, Nicole retreats inside her dressing tent. When Baby suggests that he should have had "the delicacy to go," Nicole defends Dick saying, "This is his place," and "Dick was a good husband to me for six years."

Nicole seems to have gained a degree of closure about Dick's impending departure and the huge change to her life, but she still feels nervous to see him. Nicole loyally defends Dick in front of Baby, not wanting her sister to insult him or undermine the love they shared.

Dick can see them, and he observes them closely from the terrace, where he sits with Mary. He can't quite believe that *she* is offering *him* advice but listens as she lectures him. "You say awful things to people when you've been drinking," she says. Desperate to distract himself from the figure of Nicole in the distance, Dick begins to flirt with Mary, purely for the sake of proving to himself that he still possesses a degree of charm. Mary responds "enthusiastically."

Dick is heartbroken by the figure of Nicole in the distance, and resorts to flirting with Mary—whom he finds both boring and grotesque—in order to make himself feel better. It is public knowledge in their social circle that Dick has disgraced himself through his excessive drinking, but still, Mary leaps at the chance of being charmed by him.

Suddenly, Dick "switched off the light and they were back in the Riviera sun." Dick stands up to leave, swaying a little. He blesses the beach theatrically with a "papal cross" as people below the terrace watch. Nicole gets up from the beach saying, "I'm going to him," but Tommy pulls her "firmly" back towards the sand.

Growing suddenly tired of the disingenuous game he's been playing with Mary, Dick switches off his charm and retreats from her. He is drunk and draws attention to himself with a dramatic farewell to the beach. Tommy's forceful decision to deny Nicole a chance to say goodbye to Dick seems unfair and controlling. Perhaps, however, Fitzgerald intended for this to be interpreted as kind and protective.

BOOK 3, CHAPTER 13

Even after marrying Tommy, Nicole tries to stay in contact with Dick. She often says, "I loved Dick and I'll never forget him," to which Tommy answers, "Of course not—why should you?" She learns that Dick opened a new office in Buffalo but hears that it wasn't a success. Later, Nicole finds out that Dick has moved to a different town, but again hears that he had some legal problems and had to leave.

It appears that Dick's life in America is littered with failure, and he's unable to make a new start for himself. Dick Diver, once a promising young man sent to Europe to become a brilliant doctor, has been forced to return to America—a place he decided long ago had nothing for him—with nothing but a failed career and a broken marriage to show for himself.

Dick never sends for the children, and never replies to Nicole's letter when she offers to send him money. In the last letter she received from Dick, he had told her that he was practicing in a town called Geneva, New York. Nicole had looked it up on the map and found it to be located near the finger lakes and "considered a pleasant place." Nicole likes to imagine that Dick's career is "biding its time again like Grant's in Galena."

Dick's tragic downfall is epitomized by the fact that he never sends for the children, with the miserable suggestion that he may never see them again. Nicole thinks of Dick often and never gives up on him. She compares him to Ulysses S. Grant, an American Civil War hero—and later the 18th U.S. president—holding out hope that Dick might yet fulfill his American dreams, after all.

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