

## 1 | General Information

Due Date	Topic	Important Documents
1/24	Gatsby Close Reading	The Great Gatsby

## 2 | Passage

Chapter 2: "Then I heard footsteps on a stairs, and in a moment the thickish figure of a woman blocked out the light from the office door. She was in the middle thirties, and faintly stout, but she carried her surplus flesh sensuously as some women can. Her face, above a spotted dress of dark blue crepe-de-chine, contained no facet or gleam of beauty, but there was an immediately perceptible vitality about her as if the nerves of her body were continually smoldering. She smiled slowly and, walking through her husband as if he were a ghost, shook hands with Tom, looking him flush in the eye. Then she wet her lips, and without turning around spoke to her husband in a soft, coarse voice" (25-26).

## 3 | Sub-Claim Synthesis

### 3.1 | Shifts blame upon Myrtle as Blocking Out Goodness

"thickish ... woman blocked out the light"

### 3.2 | Double entente metaphor of belittlement and one sidedness

"facet", two definitions:

- One side of something (one-sided-ness)
- One eye of a compound-eyed insect => belittlement

Lack of beauty, insect-like

### 3.3 | Uses vanity/objects to distract from character

"Her face, above the spotted"

"spotted" => "spot" = to be able to see. Her face is not remarkable, and dark (insect-like), but she leveraged clothing to be "spotted."

### 3.4 | Positive qualities all had a counterpoint

[She/her] ..., [contains quality], but [is different.]

Descriptions of her quality all had a counterpoint to it, via "but."

- [she was] [-] [+]
- [her face] [-] [+]

### 3.5 | **Conflicting**

"soft, coarse voice" sense of contrast.

- Coarse: Large, Rude, Vulgar
- Soft: easy to mold, pleasing

Pleasing vulgarity; hints at recognition of the affair as having a duality in quality

## 4 | **Claim and Topic**

(quotes in order of the sub-claims above)

Nick had originally a preconceived notion of "sinfulness" with Myrtle, and examined as such as she entered the room.

Upon examining Myrtle further, however, his negative descriptions become more nuanced; he believes Myrtle as being dangerously multi-faceted — hinting that, through his description of her lack of beauty, contains insect-like qualities which Nick believes she attempts to mask via her vanity.

However, through a more macro view of the text Nick is actually conflicted on his beliefs in Myrtle, beginning to be "enchanted" by alternate explanations of what he right before claimed as being negative qualities.

In the passage, Nick leaves us confused, that he finally makes admittance to the duality in quality exhibited by Myrtle.

Despite his preconceived (more "pure") notions of Myrtle, Nick nevertheless fall prey to her presence and began to understand the duality in her character. The process of passing judgment and analyzing her character, then, literally corrupted Nick's original value judgment.

## 5 | **Thesis**

In The Great Gatsby, the author leveraged Nick's subtle change of opinion during his initial, impressionable judgments of Myrtle to underscore the moral corruption that could take place during the dangerous process of mental judgment.