He saw me looking with admiration at his car.

"It's pretty, isn't it, old sport?" He jumped off to give me a better

view. "Haven't you ever seen it before?"

I'd seen it. Everybody had seen it. It was a rich cream color, bright with

nickel, swollen here and there in its monstrous length with triumphant

hat-boxes and supper-boxes and tool-boxes, and terraced with a labyrinth

of wind-shields that mirrored a dozen suns. Sitting down behind many

layers of glass in a sort of green leather conservatory, we started to town.

I had talked with him perhaps half a dozen times in the past month and

found, to my disappointment, that he had little to say: So my first impression,

that he was a person of some undefined consequence, had gradually faded

and he had become simply the proprietor of an elaborate road-house next door.

And then came that disconcerting ride. We hadn't reached West Egg village

before Gatsby began leaving his elegant sentences unfinished and slapping

himself indecisively on the knee of his caramel-colored suit.

"Look here, old sport," he broke out surprisingly. "What's your opinion of me,

anyhow?"

A little overwhelmed, I began the generalized evasions which that

question deserves.

"Well, I'm going to tell you something about my life," he interrupted.

"I don't want you to get a wrong idea of me from all these stories you hear."

So he was aware of the bizarre accusations that flavored conversation in his halls.

"I'll tell you God's truth." His right hand suddenly ordered divine retribution to

stand by. "I am the son of some wealthy people in the Middle West - all dead now. I was brought up in America but educated at Oxford, because all my ancestors have been educated there for many years. It is a family tradition."

He looked at me sideways - and I knew why Jordan Baker had believed he was lying. He hurried the phrase "educated at Oxford," or swallowed it, or choked on it, as though it had bothered him before. And with this doubt, his whole statement fell to pieces, and I wondered if there wasn't something a little sinister about him, after all.

"What part of the Middle West?" I inquired casually.

"San Francisco."

"I see."

"My family all died and I came into a good deal of money."

His voice was solemn, as if the memory of that sudden extinction of a clan still

haunted him. For a moment I suspected that he was pulling my leg, but a glance

at him convinced me otherwise.

"After that I lived like a young rajah in all the capitals of Europe--Paris, Venice,

Rome--collecting jewels, chiefly rubies, hunting big game, painting a little, things

for myself only, and trying to forget something very sad that had happened to me

long ago.

*Guiding Questions:*

* *What major thematic concerns are apparent in this extract?*
* *How is perspective of the narrator revealed in this extract?*