CHAPTER VI
FALL AND RISE
THE WATERFALL
REFERENCES


6. Marion Vlatos Libby, "Fate and Feminism in the Novels of Margaret Drabble," *Contemporary Literature* 16 (Spring 1975) : 179.
As mentioned earlier, Drabble's fiction reveals her frustration with the precarious position of the prestigious institution of marriage. She presents it in all its facets in her novels. Jane Gray, the protagonist in *The Waterfall*, feels fed up with the false prestige of her parents and their deceitful nature. To "escape the fate of being my parents' daughter" (94), she marries Malcolm, a guitar player, "a purist, a musician and just good enough to be able to afford to be so" (85). Enchanted by his song, she mistakenly thinks that she likes him and that it is love at first sight. She displays an interest in him which, she comes to know later, is not genuine. As she says, she "liked having a safe dependable reliable man to go around with and kill time with" (91). She misleads him and gives a false impression of herself (91). After a year of engagement they marry, but very soon she realizes her mistake. She tries to analyse her nature and her attitude towards marriage but fails to know what her expectations of marriage are.

*It is a curious business, marriage. Nobody seems to pay enough attention to its immense significance. Nobody seemed to think that in approaching*
the altar, garbed in white, I was walking towards unknown disaster of unforeseeable proportions.... I was prepared to take the world's calm view of marriage too, distrusting and ignoring the forebodings that even then possessed me : in such a mood, assured that it is a normal event or a commonplace sacrifice .... (98)

The negative emphasis and tone in the preceding citation suggest that the narrator is not at all happy with the contemporary society and its attitude towards one of the most important institutions — marriage. She expresses her concern at the matter-of-fact attitude of people towards marriage, the most significant event in one's life. Many people consider it a normal event or a commonplace sacrifice. Jane, herself, does not seem to give a serious thought to it. She seems to use it more as an escape from her parents. While moving towards the altar as a bride, she has an intuitive feeling that she is moving towards some disaster. She distrusts and ignores the forebodings and passively emulates the confident unconcern of the world as it proved useful on many occasions. Ignoring the pre­monitions, she takes a calm view of marriage and marries.
Sometimes Jane thinks that she married because her cousin Lucy married. Lucy, who was established as a "femme-fatale, of a kind familiar to that small world—
not cheerful, not even casual about her affections, but emotionally promiscuous, faithlessly intense, universally sincere" (120), has a tremendous influence on Jane. Jane says, "She was my sister, my fate, my example: her effect upon me was incalculable" (114). For years, several serious candidates hang helplessly around for Lucy's hand in marriage. She likes their devotion, their pain, and thrives on them. She grows strong on the arousing of unrequited passion and the poor creatures find themselves "reduced to a state of beggary and cold scraps" (123). Though Lucy plays the most savage game of sexual selection for quite sometime, she takes up a job at a publishers once she finishes with Cambridge.
"The competition of the real world, where there is one man to one woman" (126) subdues her nature and she marries a handsome racist. Jane is surprised to see the "transformations of maternity" (127) in her. Lucy and her husband achieve domesticity instantly and live together without bothering even to go out. Despite petty differences, they seem to get on very well. Jane inspects Lucy's house with the hope of finding the
secret of matrimony, the secret key to being a woman and living with a man. Maybe, Jane marries as monogamy seems safer, more honourable, more innocent, than endless choice and endless re-alignment: "Better a bad match and stick to it than to form a part of the endless snatch and grab" (125).

Marriage proves to be a turning point in Jane's life. She misses the chat of her colleagues about sex, food, clothes and books which used to give her an illusion of life and company (99). Marriage takes away all life from her and reduces her from the beginning to inactivity. She sees activity as evasion and inactivity as an obligation. Malcolm has his contribution in the collapse of their marital mansion. Having got Jane as his wife, he really does not want her. As Jane says, he does not need a woman (100). In the first years of marriage she takes the entire blame on herself thinking that "all the not wanting, all the failure and guilt, must be mine" (100). After some time she realizes the true nature of her effeminate and homosexual husband who shuts himself up at the top of the house most of the time practising. "Cold to the marrow" (94), Malcolm fails to rouse her sexually and it results in some sort of schizophrenia, and she finds her life dull and dreary:
Wait for me, Malcolm would say to her, and she would wait silently, her whole self weeping with bitter vexation, for a night, for a week of solitude, it was all the same: and when her own body cried out to him wait, wait, he would not wait, he left her there each time, abandoned, forsaken, desolate, until mutely, in silent pride, she died, and pushed him from her, into a cold and stony death. (70)

Sexual incompatibility drives them apart. The pointless, painful sexual encounters lead to frigidity and she finds her miscarriage a convenient excuse for her lack of interest in sex. Drained of all comfort, she faces "loneliness, treachery, hardness of heart" (100).

Though Jane is reluctant to live with a man and cook his meals in return for house-keeping money, she stays with him. Just like her parents, she wants to deceive the world. Her pregnancy in no way makes her happy. It fills her with the fear that it would bind her to Malcolm. The birth of her first child brings no change in her:

I could have turned myself into one of those mother women who ignore their husbands and live through their children. But with me, this did not happen; my ability to kiss and care for and feed
and amuse a small child merely
reinforced my sense of division
I felt split between the anxious
intelligent woman and the healthy and
efficient mother—or perhaps less split
than divided. I felt that I lived on
two levels, simultaneously, and that
there was no contact, no interaction
between them: On one level I could
operate well, even triumphantly, but
on the other I could only condemn
myself, endlessly, for my inadequacy
and my faults. My body, healthy,
indestructible, said to me, look, you
can do it, you could do that other thing
too; but my mind hovered somewhere
near it, shut out, restlessly unattached,
like a bird trying to return to its
familiar cage, like a living soul
trying to re-enter its dead habitation.
(103-104)

Incompatibility in one thing or other depresses
the protagonists of Drabble, like Emma Evans in The
Garrick Year and Rosamund Stacey in The Millstone, but
the arrival of children change the pattern of their
lives and they are no more victims of depression. They
ignore their husbands and find solace in their children
and live for them. But Jane's case seems different.
She is educated and intelligent but plans for no career.
Though she becomes a mother, she finds it difficult to reconcile to her plight. She fails to turn herself into a mother woman. She considers herself strong and healthy as an intelligent woman and also as an efficient mother. But lack of coordination between Jane the woman and Jane the mother results in a split between body and mind. Though her body pleads that she can perform duties of both, her mind refuses. Therefore she remains blind to the intense, instinctive joys of motherhood. "The temperature of her life seemed to be cooling into some ice age of inactivity" (7). When she conceives for the second time, she desires that her flesh and mind must either meet or die.

Born and brought up in a highly conventional family, Jane is forced to believe in "monogamy, in marrying for love, in free will, in the possibility of moderation of the passions, in the virtues of reason and civilization" (50), but she finds them irreconcilable propositions.

She often thought that one of the reasons for the total disaster of her sexual life was her own inability to reconcile the practical and the emotional aspects of the matter. The difficulties of both seemed to her to be so great that she
wondered how anyone could ever happily overcome them: and the thought of overcoming both at once, so that one might in one instant experience love without pain, without terror, and without danger, seemed beyond the realm of human possibility. Human contact seemed to her so frail a thing that the hope that two people might want each other in the same way, at the same time and with the possibility of doing something about it, appeared infinitely remote. (42)

The above passage gives a glimpse of Jane's mind. Her main problem seems to be her inability to reconcile the practical and the emotional aspects of sexual life. Married women subdue their minds and natures, or else most of the marriages would end in frustration. Jane wonders how other women manage to reconcile the practical and the emotional. Mismated, she is unable to apprehend how two people have the same feelings about sex at the same time. Jane and Malcolm drift apart and neither of the two tries to save their marriage.

Though highly critical of her parents' marital life and their dissimulation, Jane is forced to emulate their hypocrisy in her own marital life. Even in that she fails when her attempts to hide her sexual coldness from her husband prove futile. Her indolence and
indifference drive Malcolm to another woman, which gives her amazing relief. It proves to be a blessing in disguise and she leads her life in seclusion, keeping their present condition a secret even from her parents and in-laws:

Malcolm didn't desert me: he was driven away from me by my bad house-keeping, by my staring at the wall, by my too evident frigidity. I didn't want him: my body refused to accept him, it refused the act, it developed hysterical seizures, it shut up in panic, it grew rigid with alarm. (110)

The above citation reveals Jane's integrity. She holds herself responsible for the wreckage of their marriage. It is not wilful violation of the code of marriage but the clash between her mind and flesh and her inveterate nature that ruin her married life. She knows her defect and tries to rectify it but fails miserably. But for sex, she admits, they would have been together, faithful and affectionate.

Jane isolates herself willingly and hardly speaks to anyone for weeks. Her efforts to take up a new interest in life fail and she even rings up the organisation that "dispenses sympathy to potential
suicides" (107). Finding an escape in writing, she writes "constantly, badly, with passion" (109) and satisfaction, but her inability to compose a poem at her free will disquiets her. After Malcolm's departure and before Bianca's birth she writes copiously. Her nature is such that she doesn't want to reach out a hand to save herself even if she were drowning. She is unwilling to set herself up against fate (7). She subjects herself to fate so meekly that she believes that "there was something sacred in her fate that she dared not countermand by effort" (7). When her husband leaves her, it is not surprise but a secret sense of pleasure that overtakes her.

Everything seems a little colder to Jane without Malcolm. As a girl she had imagined an empty, solitary, neglected, cold life for herself, and her imagination comes true. She decides to deliver her baby unaided. Impressed with the story of a pregnant woman who was stranded by some unmemorable and unimaginable stroke of fate in a hut in the snowy wastes of Alaska, she is reluctant to call the midwife. She is averse to see and to be seen. But better senses prevail on her and she rings the midwife and her cousin Lucy in the hour of need. Long waiting and solitude
resolve themselves into some "hopeful expectation" (10) which fills her with happiness. She has no idea of what she is expecting but she is sure that deliverance is at hand.

Jane's disinclination to cause inconvenience to anyone is revealed in her plea to Lucy to go home when she comes to help her at the time of delivery. As Lucy comments, Jane seems to be spoiled with solitude. She protests when Lucy says that James will be with her. She fears that it may annoy him: "It'll annoy him, and then I'll be annoyed, having him here, and I shan't be able to read my book.... I'd rather be alone. I'd rather be alone" (18). Ignoring Jane's protests, Lucy leaves James to look after Jane in her house. When Jane finds herself with James,

> She shut her eyes, and rested her head, and listened to the sounds of the room, the quiet sounds and she thought that perhaps it might have been like that to be with somebody that one loved —— to be wanting nothing, to be desiring and suffering nothing, to be without apprehension, loss or need. (13)

Perhaps the presence of James in her room makes the new delivered Jane think of love, which she has never found
anywhere so far. The preceding citation explicitly presents Jane's longing to experience love. The presence of James gives rise to certain inexplicable feelings in her. These feelings bring a sense of satisfaction which she associates with love. She tries to experience what lovers experience when they are together and she assumes that lovers are above desire, suffering, loss, or need.

As a child, she couldn't appreciate the marital life of her parents. The insincerity of her mother, the boastful nature of her father, their deceptive statements that "marriage and family warmth are so important" (55) and "happy homes like ours so rare" (56) had made her react. She had tried to reconcile the irreconcilable evidence. She had believed that "some people conspire to deceive the world and find in their conspiracy a bond" (57) and her parents belonged to that category. Even that, they did with mutual dislike. She had hated her hypocritical parents and their dishonest social attitudes. She used to feel lost in that atmosphere but unawares she seems to have learnt the art of pretence. This pretence, this concealment, comes to her aid when her marriage is in shambles. Fate gives a blow to her innate longing to lead a happy, healthy marital life and shatters her hopes. She hopes
her husband would share this conspiracy, but when her hope fails, she retreats to a lonely world where she wishes to die alone, "without the comfort of screaming out my failure, claiming till death that my marriage existed, that there were no cockroaches in my kitchen, no gaping holes in the roof, no broken bottles on the steps, no vices in my heart" (51). She does not have a clear idea of how marital life should be, but she knows that it should not be like her parents' or hers.

When Jane is prepared to spend the rest of the evenings of her life alone, Lucy's husband James intrudes. His unexpected intrusion and his concern for her make her "weak with relief" (29). She responds with passive enjoyment to his commands that she eat or drink or go to sleep. She grows accustomed to his visits and acts in such a way that he realizes his visits make her happy. She begins to expect him and accepts his unsolicited appearance without surprise. In spite of "her reluctance to receive gifts, her reluctance to play the role of invalid" (18), she lets him help her. He scrambles eggs, makes tea and reads a few pages for her. She becomes addicted to the sight of him and she acknowledges that she likes to have him there. When he expresses his desire to share her bed,
she permits it without any second thought. She is "amazed to find herself suddenly no longer bankrupt, amazed to find herself in the possession of gifts" (33). She meets his eyes for the first time in seven years of family connection.

Jane is not blind to her beauty. She knows that she is beautiful, with a true sexual beauty. It looks a menace, a guilt, and a burden to her.

... her whole life had been overcast by the knowledge of it, so studiously evaded, so nobly denied, so surreptitiously acknowledged. It had seemed to her a cruel and disastrous blessing, a responsibility, wild like an animal, that could not be let loose, so she had denied it, had sworn that black was white and white was black: but now, for all that, it sat there by her bedside, eloquent, existent, alive, despite the dark years of its captivity. (37) Jane purposefully blinks at her sexual beauty. She considers it a wild animal and wants to keep it under check. She is cognizant of the disastrous results if it is let loose. Perhaps, the fear that it would turn her into another Lucy of student days makes her deny it but the presence of James by her bedside alters it and she is no more a lump of wood. When he expresses his love for her,
... she flinched and sighed, listening to him, alarmed, and yet hopelessly moved by his willing blind suicidal dive into such deep waters: the waters closed over their heads, and they lay there, submerged, the cold dry land of non-loving abandoned, out of sight, so suddenly and so completely out of sight, lost at the sound, at the syllable of the word love. (36-37)

Jane, who admits that "One of the things she had always most feared in love had been the wetness" lies "drowned in a willing sea" (45) of passion with James. She is surprised at the miraculous change that has overtaken her. James releases her "from the useless levity of her solitude" (33) sharing her bed and electrifying her body with his magical touch. His loving words, care, and concern melt her heart, and sorrow surges up in the form of tears like lava from a volcano. She begins to live for him, "submitting herself helplessly to the current, abandoning herself to it" (38).

Joan S. Koreman's comment that "Jane is the first of Drabble's protagonists to enjoy sex"¹ is not without full justification. Jane is never frigid. Malcolm's failure as a partner results in her aloofness. But she experiences "the trembling, the waiting, the
anguish" (47), in fine the three degrees of love, when James comes close to her. Once James awakens Jane sexually, she lives for sex and longs for sex. Jane's nature is such that she does not like to suppress her passion for James:

... everytime I look at the bread lying around, and biscuits going soft, and cakes drying up, and stuff like that, I feel something quite specific about it. I feel — I don't know, I feel a positive reluctance to putting lids on things. It's not just laziness. It is Freudian, do you think? I think that really I think it's immoral to impede the course of nature by a tin lid. I mean to say, if things are made to go stale, it hardly seems right to stop them, does it? (144)

The above citation throws light on the nature of Jane. It is not indolence but aversion which keeps her away from preserving bread, biscuits and cakes. She likes everything to take its natural course without being impeded by anything. If things are made to go stale, she feels that no one has a right to stop them. If it is immoral to put lid on inorganic things and stop them from getting stale, what about human emotions, desires, and passions? Does she not imply that they should not be suppressed?
Though Jane had hoped to have deliverance at the time of delivery, she in fact, enters into bondage. She had denied herself many things thinking that it would help her achieve innocence "despite those intermittent nightmare promptings of my true nature" (52). She remembers the day when she had declined to drink despite her strong wish to have it, just to keep the people ignorant of how much she loves to drink (63). But she admires James who helps himself Scotch for the second time. She sees "in such simple acts of selfishness the lovely flower of moral courage, so long sought" (63). She is certain that she "loved James because he was what I had never had" (66). In slavery Jane surrenders herself to James and in sanity she submits herself to self-criticism for sleeping with him in her marriage bed. She becomes a victim of "dreadful, lovely, insatiable anguish" (132), waiting for him with aching eyes. His presence forces her to think of his inevitable departure and his absence makes her anxious; she suffers from separation even in his presence. Neither his presence nor absence gives her peace of mind. The fear that she would "forfeit him for her unwitting transgression" (134) keeps her silent. Despite the knowledge that James would never
be hers and she would never be able to claim him and have him, she decides not to care the future as long as the present is hers. All her thoughts hover round him. Her body remembers him always, "fainting and opening for each word, each touch, each gesture, each one relived a hundred times" (135). Restlessness and sleeplessness exhaust her and "weariness and desire walled her in, like invisible glass, keeping the cold air from her, protecting her from the cruel inquisitions of sales-girls and neighbours, so that she moved in her own element, clouded by a perpetual hangover, isolated as though by drugs or drink" (136). Forgetting priorities, she devotes her life to James. She wants James more than she wants sleep: "'Hit me', she would say as she lay there, her eyes involuntarily drooping shut." She requests him to "Go on, hit me, hurt me, wake me up" (136). Though she lives in a limbo, half dead, she considers it her second life.

James takes Jane too far and she finds it difficult to get back to "the dry integrity she had once inhabited" (150). Sex with James makes her a helpless victim:

... she could not move but had to lie there, tense, breaking, afraid, the tears unshed standing up in the rims of her eyes,
her body about to break apart with the terror of being left there alone right up there on that high dark painful shelf, with everything falling away dark on all sides of her, alone and high up, stranded, unable to fall: and then suddenly but slowly, for the first time ever, just as she thought she must die without him forever, she started to fall, painfully,anguished, but falling at last, falling, coming towards him, meeting him at last, down there in his arms, half dead but not dead, crying out to him, trembling, shuddering, quaking, drenched and drowned, down there at last in the water, not high in her lonely place. (150)

The above passage shows how Jane reaches the heights of ecstasy when she experiences the first orgasm. She harps on "deliverance" even before her first sexual encounter with James. He becomes an obsession, an addiction, and the sexual subjugation frightens her and she refers to "a sexual text book — an old-fashioned one, Havelock Ellis, I think — where I found the word bondage, which seemed quite elegantly to describe my condition. I was in bondage" (153). She finds the inner violence to be in no way less significant than the outer violence. When the volcano in her body erupts and the lava surges up, she feels as
though she has achieved sexual salvation. She knows her passion to be unnatural, her emotions to be destructive and disproportionate (165). The sense of secrecy results in her own solitude, a self-inflicting decontaminating isolation. She goes to the extent of fearing human nature "in herself, her children, everywhere" (139).

Jane knows it is madness but she falls a helpless victim to that infatuation. Her survival depends on James. When he proposes to take her to Norway to his grandfather's house and pass her off as his wife Lucy, she takes it lightly and dismisses it for fantasy, "a dud project, delicately introduced by him to disguise their immobility, their lack of progress, the impossibility of their ever sharing a journey or a life or even a common interest : an extension of their wholly speculative connection" (168). She is surprised when she realizes James' seriousness about it. Malcolm's unexpected call expressing his desire to join her back surprises her but she rejects it outright. She is certain that she does not want him back: "the last thing that I wanted was his return" (173). Though he is clearly conciliatory in intention, she dismisses his appeal. She wonders what his feelings would be when
he finds "the vegetable, merely breathing" revived and restored to a new life, "where there was no memory of the old, no recollection of those who had sat by the bedside by the mute flesh, administering to its unresponsive cells" (175). When he rings on and off all day, she declares that she would never see him again, she is prepared to divorce him, and she would kill herself if he comes near her. She conceals from James Malcolm's renewed attentions and his stealthy visit that night in order to continue her secret affair with James undisturbed. The accident in which James and Jane are involved, however, shatters their secrecy, publicizes their illicit relationship, and pushes Jane from the world of fantasy into the real world.

It is a fact that I lived alone and lay there alone, that I spoke to no one, that I was unable to confront the sight of a human face. It is a fact that I regarded James as a miracle, and that when he touched me it was as though I had another body, a body different from the one I had known. Perhaps I had always possessed it: but without him, where would it have lived? What shadowy realms would it have inhabited? A body must take on flesh for us to know it. And without James, where would it have been,
where would I have been, where would have lived the woman that writes these words? He changed me, he saved me, he changed me: I say it again, there is nothing else to say. It is too much to lay at his charge, but it was he that did it: but for him, where would I now have been? Alone and mad.... (228)

Some feminist critics consider Jane's relationship with James sexual bondage. The above passage clearly shows that in her view, even if it were sexual bondage, it is a bondage that has put her in touch with her body and with her voice too. But for him, she would have remained "Alone and mad." Moreover, she does not remain in bondage for long. When Malcolm leaves her after "the brief despair of marriage" (42), fate throws James into her house and he wins her heart with his care and concern, induces life into all her dead cells with his touch, and rescues her from depression. Jane feels that the social, sexual, circumstantial, and moral views of an event contradict one another. She seems to believe that it was not loneliness or the feeling of emptiness that brought James close to her, but "a miracle, it was a stroke of amazing fate" (50). Drabble affirms it: "Human beings are at the mercy of fate. By accident Jane happens to meet the one man who really
knows what she is upto and who truly loves her. People who have good luck meet the right person. Some people look forever and they try but they never get." His love seems to result in self-sympathy, and she exaggerates her helplessness, her dislocation. Her presentation of herself "as a woman on the verge of collapse, on the verge of schizophrenia or agoraphobia" (227) seems psychosomatic. When she is rid of it, she declares that except an unhappy childhood, an unsatisfactory marriage, and her laziness, her life has been all right all the time.

The accident shatters the illusion of romantic love and Jane views all her actions in the right perspective. She realizes that desperation had thrown them together and need and weakness bound them. It was not the "profound aspirations of their natures" but "shallow stretches of ordinary weakness" (205) that had brought them close. Jane, who once considered James a saviour, now feels "what he had given her had been no miracle, no unique revelation, but a gift so commonplace that it hardly required acknowledgement" (205-6). She contemplates on abandoning the whole affair, leave for London, and get in touch with Malcolm. She grows sympathetic towards Malcolm "who had even in absence maintained
financial fidelity, continuing to pay with no returns" (205). She resents her resentment against Malcolm and regrets her gratitude to James, "who had done nothing more for her than to change an electric plug and mend the brake of the push chair with a bit of fuse wire and sleep in her bed" (204). At the same time she considers him responsible for the change in her. Complications that are the outcome of their illicit affair seem to create chaos in their lives. But their association brings a drastic change in Jane's otherwise dreary life. Rejuvenated, Jane reiterates the role played by James in her life, who seems to bring her back to sanity and make her a normal human being, who is ready to shoulder her responsibilities as a mother, wife, and poet. Considering herself "a disaster area, a landscape" (229) given to upheavals, she admits that James "made the new earth grow, he made it blossom." Giving him the credit of changing her, accepting it to be no easy task, she declares, "I am now what he made" (229). On coming home, she stares at the wreckage and decides to clear it up. She clears the mess she has made of her life, becomes a busy poet, decides to publish her poems, acquires a girl to look after her children, plans up her house, and, in fine,
achieves normality. Despite her inclinations to reunite with Malcolm. She continues her affair with James, though not with the same fervour.

In one of her interviews Drabble declares that she is an explorer and not a teacher. She explores the life of Jane, who marries a man of her choice, Malcolm, and fails to do justice as a wife. The drastic entry of James into her life kindles her dying desire. She tries to justify her emotional relationship with James: "I do not accuse myself of weakness of will.... I had done what I had to do, I had done what my nature was, what I would have done anyway. I had done what was to be. It is not myself I condemn, it is the nature of man" (152). Attributing everything to fate, she says she is not left with any choice. She considers the universe illordered and questions the validity of the fatal conjunction that condemns people to torture one another for a life time.

Drabble observes, "The Second Sex insists that the notion of femininity is a fiction created by men who tell woman 'that passivity and acceptance are her nature'." In fact, The Waterfall begins with Jane's statement announcing her passivity: "If I were drowning I couldn't reach out a hand to save myself,
so unwilling am I to set myself up against my fate" (7). The split between her body and mind makes her restless and she does not like the division. She finds a possibility of reconciliation between the two and feels that "my flesh and mind must meet or die" (104). The novel indeed presents the reconciliation of Jane's divided self.

Drabble bemoans the attitude of people, especially women in the transitional period, who are neither liberated nor tradition-bound. She considers it the duty of a writer to take the responsibility of writing about women in such precarious conditions and provide guidance. The protagonist, Jane, refers to several novelists for guidance and desperately tries to compare herself with several characters in different novels. Her affair reminds her of Maggie Tulliver, who loves her cousin's man but abandons him to regain her ruined honour. The similarity of the situation makes her compare herself with Maggie and she expresses her displeasure at Maggie's foolishness and her behaving like "a woman of another age" (153). Jane does not seem to bother about morals and manners: "I leave it to Jane Austen to draw those fine distinctions" (58). Drabble, herself, seems to be "divided" in the sense that she
expresses her unhappiness at the misuse of freedom by women and at the same time she is unable to accept the supremacy of man over woman. She does not agree that woman is always the "Other." Like other human beings, she has an 'Other' within herself. Just like a man, a woman can experience romantic passion but it is possible only for a few lucky ones. Drabble says, "It seems to me that sublime, romantic passion is something very special and that perhaps everybody expects it, but very few people get it. Those that wait sometimes get it and sometimes don't." Jane grabs the opportunity unmindful of her fall or rise, and "when offered a chance of salvation, I had taken it: I had not cared who should drown, so long as I should reach the land" (152).
REFERENCES


3. Nancy Poland, "Margaret Drabble : 'There Must be a Lot of People Like Me'" Midwest Quarterly 16.3 (Spring 1975) : 264.


