CHAPTER - II

THE COUNTRY GIRLS TRILOGY

*The Country Girl Trilogy* traces the lives of two Irish women, Kate and Baba from their school days in the Irish countryside to their disillusioned adulthood and failed marriage in London. The friends have a strict Roman Catholic upbringing, which comes into conflict with their sexuality and their dependence on men. Kate’s relationship with a married man is fruitless. She starts an affair with Mr. Gentleman, whom she considers a great lover but not much else. Her marriage with Eugene is proved unlucky, and they separate. Baba marries a man (Frank) who offers her financial security. Because of the graphic sexual content of the story, the whole trilogy was banned in Ireland. *The Country Girls Trilogy* is a powerful argument for feminism. To watch Kate and Baba and their various partners making war, not love, reminds us of ignorant armies that clash by night.

*The Country Girls Trilogy* is a landmark of Irish Fiction, celebrated for its engagement with young Irish female mindset and its candid treatment of sexual initiation. As an archetypal bildungsroman, it also provided some critics with female counterpart to James Joyce’s *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, particularly in its highlighting of the ideological distance between the individual and the nation. The comparison is one O’Brien herself would undoubtedly welcome. Discovering Joyce was, she claims, crucial point in her development as a young writer, a moment of revelation that one could write about the rich internal landscape of emotional, intellectual and sexual desire in the ordinary language of everyday characters. Her long-term homage to Joyce culminated in a glowing critical study of the author, published in 1999.
*The Country Girls* (1960) begins the bitter sweet story of Caithleen and Baba two girls brought up in the close-knit, cruel world of a small Irish village, narrated by the soft and sympathetic Caithleen and confessional in tone. The novel traces her development from a native school girl- afraid of her drunken father and used by confident, malicious Baba – into a no less native young woman, flirting with disaster in the alien environment of Dublin. It took her quasi-autobiographical heroine as far as Dublin.

At the outset, innocent and intelligent Caithleen Brady (Kate) wants every story to have a happy ending. Baba is so brazen that even her father Mr. Brennan, prefers Kate, “Poor Caithleen, you’ve always been Baba’s tool” (*CGT* 109).

*The Country Girls* represents a woman’s version of a traditionally masculine motif: that of an ego tempted by an alter-ego to enjoy forbidden fruit (Faust/Mephistopheles). The entire trilogy operates around this theme, Kate has “one mad eye, but her softness, daftness, and wantonness are not essential nature. They come to her from an alter-ego whose influence she is unable to resist, Baba promotes Kate’s decisions. And the story follows their consequence; their expulsion from the convent-school and Kate’s affair with Mr. Gentleman in *The Country Girls*; and her affair with Eugene Gaillard in *The Lonely Girl*. As she is so influenced by her friend, she is always restless. She feels ‘lonely’ without the weight of Eugene’s body, but she cannot commit herself to him.

She recognizes that she is disloyal to anyone who is ‘real’ for her and that what she yearns for is a ‘shadow’ – but she cannot stop herself. This weakness is reflected in the shift in narrative perspective. In *Girls in Their Married Bliss* Baba, the temptress has become the narrator and Kate, the ego is correspondingly unable to determine her actions. She
becomes increasingly introverted, afraid to giving herself, ‘life is a secret with the self. The more one gives out the less there remains for the centre’. The novel ends with Baba regretting the loss of ‘some important region that they both knew nothing about’. In the Epilogue, that O’Brien added, when her trilogy was republished in 1986, Kate, utterly wasted by life, has committed suicide, and Baba while waiting to meet the coffin at Waterloo Station, reflects on the conflict between her own desires and the emptiness of her own life. It is a bleak ending to what is still O’Brien finest work.

The youthful experiences of her convent days and the excitement of moving to the city are vividly captured in her first and most famous novel- *The Country Girls*, which traces the lives of two country girls, Kate and Baba, as they search for love and experience amid the crowds and clamor of Dublin. This was followed by *The Lonely Girl* and *Girls in Their Married Bliss* which form a trilogy, charting the disillusionment and failed romance of the two women. Through confessional first person narratives, O’Brien reveals the intense and often sexual frustrations of women raised on false romantic expectations of love and marriage. O’Brien highlights the sexual desire and attitudes of the women in her novels, and there is wantonness in the heroines’ search for lovers and husbands which led Stanley Kauffman to describe her novels ‘as lyrics of the loins’.

2.1 *The Country Girls:*

O’Brien’s first novel, *The Country Girls* (1960), published in twelve languages other than English, is a classic coming-of-age narrative set in rural Catholic Ireland. She wrote it in about three weeks. The story is partly based on the author’s own experiences being brought up in a convent.
Sean McMohan noted that the first novel *The Country Girls* established O’Brien: “as an important new Irish writer with a fresh, unselfconscious charm, an acute observation of life, and a fine ribald sense of humor.” (McMohan 74)

Edna O’Brien moved to London in 1959, in order to write *The Country Girls* she has narrated the reasons behind it:

I realize now that I would have had to leave Ireland in order to write about it. Because one needs the formality and the perspective that distance gives in order to write calmly about a place. Ireland is a wonderful incubator and --- I would rather be from Ireland or Russia as a writer than from any other country. To live there and actually write is quite difficult; it is not simply the question of censorship (Durham Interview).

Of the fluent writing of *The Country Girls*, she said: “It wrote itself; my arm held the pen” (Eckley 26).

*The Country Girls*, about teenagers are leaving rural villages for the wickedness of Dublin and London ever since its publication. Edna O’Brien has been a name to remember. It is described as a landmark in the battle for a modern secular Ireland that has, in the cities at least, all but been won. The novel changed the course of Irish womanhood.

Caithleen, the protagonist, tells the poignant story of the drowning of her adored mother, the brutal rages of her alcoholic father, the stifling conventions of the convent school to which she and Baba are sent. As tender and vulnerable as Baba is malicious and full of swagger, Caithleen seeks the love her mother had provided in a neighbor, the elderly and married Mr. Gentleman, whose qualifications are his sad, chiseled face and his genteel manners.

It traces the tender development of Caithleen Brady from age fourteen, when her beloved mother dies in a boating accident. When she
was seventeen years old, she freed from a convent through a ruse devised by her friend Baba. Caithleen finds employment in Dublin. There an expected rendezvous with Mr. Gentleman fails to materialize. She is left in a very ordinary Dublin, with neither glamour nor hope.

It described the childhood and adolescence of the shy and sensitive Caithleen and her volatile and malicious friend Baba. After Caithleen’s mother is killed she is rescued from her drunken father by Baba’s parents, who send both girls to a convent boarding school. They eventually contrive to be expelled from the convent and set off to start a brake new life in Dublin.

*The Country Girls* charts Kate and Baba’s movement from unselfconsciousness in matters of sexuality, food, and consumption and an unawareness of their lack of true autonomy as females in mid–century Ireland. It is complex and guiltier engagement with sex, eating and femininity.

*The Country Girls* also investigates the idealization in some depth. Taken in isolation, it focuses specifically on the naively and unpreparedness for life of Caithleen Brady and unmerciful friend Baba Brennan.

The youthful experience of her convent days and the excitement of moving to the city are vividly captured in novel. Caithleen and Baba are search for love and experience amid the crowds and clamor of Dublin.

O’Brien explores the crisis of identity. The mother and daughter relationship in *The Country Girls trilogy* despite a critical emphasis on the first book, in its entirely reveals O’Brien’s attempt to articulate not only the root of the psychological damage evidenced in the figure of Caithleen Brady but possibility of an alternative model in the figure of Baba Brennan.
In a sense *The Country Girls* may be viewed as a process of change from romance to realism. The popular Cinderella story is fraught with marital suicide in that Cinderella has lost the connection with abstract Wisdom or Cultural benefits.

The girl of eight, Caithleen, the protagonist is restless. Her father Dada is a bully and drunkard who never comes home in time. His irresponsible behavior has made the life of Caithleen and her Mother, Mama, miserable. So they get help and rely on Hickey, their workman. Caithleen is fond of him. She intends to marry this dirty man. Her mother is a worrier.

Baba is Caithleen’s neighbor, friend and classmate. She is a daughter of vet, Mr. Brennan and Martha. Caithleen’s poor and wretched family is helped by the Brennan family. Baba is a bully.

Mama is dragged down from heavy work, day and night. Because of this pathetic condition, Caithleen thinks to become nun. In school, she tries to outshine Baba by offering flowers to the teacher Miss Moriary. She fears that her father will come and kill her Mama; while she is at school. She gets scholarship and is sent to convent school with Baba. The Bready family lives in the Big House, which is burnt down and ruined by Tans.

*The Country Girls*, the very first novel of this trilogy begins with the first person narration of a girl that is protagonist, Caithleen. Her father is a kind of bully. This fear is root cause of the sorrows and disturbance in her family. Their life is like a nightmare: “I did not know why my heart was beating faster than usual. Then I remembered. The old reason. He had not come home” (*CGT* 3). This expression of Caithleen shows their fear and waiting for Dada [her father]. He is drunkard.

In the male dominated Irish societies women had to suffer, the mothers and their daughters also. They rely on Hickey for everything.
Hickey is their workman. He used to fetch eggs for breakfast to them. Caithleen is insisting him to call her dotey. He used to call: “Dotey, Ducky, Darling Honeybunch, do you want white or a brown egg for your breakfast” (CGT 4).

At the age of eight, very innocent Caithleen loves Hickey. She is fond of him but she couldn’t get her father’s love. When she was seven or eight, she used to say that she would marry him. Then she changed her mind. “Hickey was honest but dirty man. He never washed himself. His teeth were green. At night he did his water in a peach tin that he kept under his bed” (CGT 4).

This description of Hickey shows that although Caitleen is attracted towards him innocently, afterwards she changes her mind.

She is very simple and innocent country girl. She loves her Mama (mother). She is sensitive and she fears her father.

Baba is her friend, neighbour and classmate. She used to come at Caithleen’s home.

Due to wretched and poor condition of the family both Mama and Caithleen suffer a lot. Caithleen wants to bring lilac flowers for her teacher, Miss Moriarry, and to outdo Baba and become Miss Moriarry’s pet. Caithleen loves her Mama very much. For her, she is the best Mama in the world: “I told her so, and she held me very close for a minute as if she would never let me go. I was everything in the world to her, everything” (CGT 6).

This shows Caithleen’s love and attachment with her mother.

In The Country Girls O’Brien has addressed the subject of woman in society, of solitude and sexual repression. Although one feels that there is no sharp conflict in this novel, it is very clear from the very beginning of the novel that there are roots of conflict and roots of tragedy of the family and especially women characters. O’Brien has depicted this
conflict very gently and indirectly, Caithleen says: “I was ashamed of myself for taking advantage of her wretchedness to bring the teachers flowers” (CGT 6).

Caithleen is very sensitive girl. Caithleen likes Hickey to be around when Dada comes home. Her mother has been always waiting and coughing. She is always thinking:

Thinking where was he? Would he come home in an ambulance or a hackney car --- He had gone, three days before, with sixty pounds in his pocket to pay the rates. Hundreds of bills. Bills never worried Dada, he just put them behind, plates and forgot (CGT 6).

Because of such fate and situation, the innocent girl like Caithleen and her mother (Mama) are always worried. They are suffering very calmly and with great courage. When Caithleen comes out to get the lilac, she feels freedom. She gets peace of mind.

I came out to get the lilac. Standing on the stone step to look across the fields, I felt, as I always did that rush of freedom and pleasure when I looked at all the various trees and outer stone building set far away from the house, and at the fields very green and very peaceful (CGT 7).

This description shows that Caithleen, a small girl, is craving for freedom from cruelty of father. Her Mama is very hard worker. She used to say:

Ah, that is life, some work and others spend --- she was dragged down from heavy work, working to keep the place going and at night time making lampshades and fire screens to make the house prettier (CGT 8).

This description is very touching. It brings to the mind and reminds one the sacrifices of women for their families and nature. Her Mama’s
maxim is: “weep and you weep alone!” (CGT 11). This shows courage of Caithleen’s mother.

Caithleen used to think: “I’m going to be a nun when I grow up, that’s what I was thinking” (CGT 8). She always fears when she used to go school: “In fear and trembling I set off for school. I might meet him on the way or else he might come home and kill Mama” (CGT 9). They are not safe and secure in their home also. “There were tears in my eyes. I was always afraid that my mother would die while I was at school” (CGT 9).

Fear of father is lurking in her mind. This is emotional expression of an innocent girl Caithleen. Because of such atmosphere, she becomes very timid girl.

The image of sparrow used by O’Brien to describe mother and daughter is very apt and powerful. Image is used for Mama: “She was waving. In her brown dress she looked sad, the farther I went the sadder she looked like a sparrow in the snow, brown and anxious and lonesome” (CGT 9).

The attachment of mother and daughter is very touching. Caithleen is barely fourteen; Hickey is expecting a ‘birdie’. She runs off. She wants to keep away from him. It is her innocence and teenage separation. A birdie is his private name for a kiss. “I hadn’t kissed him for two years not since the day Mama gave me the fudge and dared me to kiss him ten times” (CGT 10).

Hickey comes home from the fair and tells her the price he has got for a heifer, and then she permits Caithleen to kiss him ten times for the piece of fudge. Hickey is not the man of greed and avarice. He is simpleton. He is faithful servant and attached to their family.

They have been living in the big house. It is called lawn because it had been a lawn in the old days when the big house was standing, but the
Tans burned the big house and her father, unlike his forebears had no pride in land, and gradually the place went to ruin. Instead of using sharp dialogues, the technique of first person narration is used. The events take place in countryside of Ireland. It is rural area full of nature and fine scenery.

The behavior of father is narrated by the daughter. The effects of his behavior are long lasting and deep. They are the root cause of tragic death and end of the protagonist as well as her mother. Irresponsible father is the cause of tragic death.

Jack Holland is of the age of her father. He is their neighbor. He thinks that Mr. Gentleman is ‘Indubitably odd fish’. But for Caithleen ‘he was a beautiful man who lived in the white house on the hill’. Mr. Gentleman used to play chess in the evenings and work as a solicitor in Dublin. It is not his real name. His name is Mr. de Maurier. But no one could pronounce it properly. He is such a distinguished man with his gray hair and his satin waist coats that the local people have christened him Mr. Gentleman. He likes this name. He used to sign his letters J.W. Gentleman. He has a sad face, but his smile is beautiful, remote and very condescending. He has never lost his French accent: “There was a certain slyness about his smile, and as he shook my hand I had an odd sensation as if someone were tickling my stomach from the inside” (*CGT* 13).

This description of Gentleman by Caithleen shows her attraction for elder man which is very innocent and sinless.

Jack Holland says about the Irish people:

You know many Irish people are royalty and unaware of it. There are kings and Queens walking the roads of Ireland, riding bicycles imbibing tea, plowing the humble earth totally unaware of their great heredity. Your mother, now has the ways and the walk of a queen (*CGT* 13).
This insulting description of royal families and aristocratic families is ironic and realistic. This is harsh criticism on such families.

Jack Holland has a grocery and bar up the street. Jack Holland has attraction for Caithleen’s mother. Even he is attracted towards Caithleen. He wants to marry her. This is not proper. It is like incest. Jack Holland used to compose a paragraph for his column in the local paper. Caithleen doesn’t like Baba.

There is somewhat envy for Baba –‘She’s a bully’. Baba is the veternity surgeon’s daughter. She is coy, pretty, and malicious. She is Caithleen’s friend. She is the person whom Caithleen fears most after her father. Their house is like a doll’s house. Baba’s father brings new Pink-Witch bicycle for Baba and she looks glorious on her new puce bicycle.

Jack Holland’s relation with Caithleen’s mother also has affected her mind deeply.

He didn’t dare come up. Not since the night Dada had ordered him out of the kitchen. They were playing cards and Jack had his hand on Mama’s knee under the table. Mama didn’t protest, because Jack was decent to her, with presents of candied peel and chocolate and samples of jam that he got from commercial travelers. Then Dada let a card fall and bent down to get it; --- My father shouted and pulled up his sleeves and Mama told me to go to bed. The shouting, high and fierce, came up ---. Such shouting! It was rough and crushing. Like the noise of a steam-roller. Mama cried and pleaded and her cry was hopeless and plaintive (CGT 14).

This event shows the tense relations between Caithleen’s Mama and Dada. It also throws light on love and attraction for other person, due to drunkard and careless husband. She is helpless woman, yet she is trying to live with him only for the sake of her daughter-Caithleen,
whereas Caithleen has become aware of the illicit relation of the elders. Such relations have affected and become the cause of tragic end.

Mrs. O’Shean is polishing the knocker in the Greyhound Hotel. The hotel is occupied chiefly by greyhounds. Mr. O’Shean thinks he would get rich that way. He used to go to the dogs in Limerick every night and Mrs. O’Shean drinks port wine up at the dressmaker’s. The dress maker is a gossip. “Mrs. O’Shean got a lot of drinkers at night because she kept good fires. The men drank there after hours and she had bribed the police not to raid her” (CGT 15).

Caithleen’s mother has warned Caithleen not to be too free with Mrs. O’Shean, as she has given her father so much credit that ten of their cows are grazing on their land for life. The local people liked her hotel because it is friendly drinking in the kitchen late at night. This description shows the behavior of Mr. and Mrs. O’Shean which is one of the reasons of tragedy of Caithleen and her mother.

Jack Holland tells the news to Caithleen: “Your place is mortgaged; the bank owns it.” But, like the dark water underneath, his words did not disturb me. They had nothing to do with me, neither the words nor the water” (CGT 16).

By above incidents it is clear that from her very childhood days, she becomes aware of illicit sexual relation and irresponsible behavior of the people.

Caithleen wins the scholarship and gets admission in the Convent school. Baba also is going there as paying student. Caithleen fears that Baba would tell everyone in the convent about her father. This event shows the tensions created on her innocent mind by her father’s behavior and cruelty as well as their poverty.

Baba always insults her. Even she is teasing her about the condition of their house and lavatory, about soap and bathe as well as
face-cloth. “It was surprising that she could talk so fast and yet she was not able to write a composition but bullied me to do it for her” (CGT 19).

Baba used to say: “Anyhow, you are a country mope and you don’t even wash in the bathroom. Bowls of water in the scullery and a face cloth that your mother made out of an old rag” (CGT 19).

Baba is always insulting her publicly. It creates fear in the mind of Caithleen. The following description throws lights on their relation.

I could smell her soap. She was using neat bands of sticking plaster. She had cute smile. Her dace was dimpled and soft and just the right plumpness. For these things I could have killed her. She was the best singer in the chair and no one seemed to mind if she sat on the piano. “Baba could boast and when she did everybody listened, but when I boasted everybody laughed and nudged” (CGT 19).

This shows that Baba is rich girl and she is liked by all. Caithleen envies her.

Jack Holland tries to molest Caithleen. She fears him. Jack Holland is jealous of Hickey because her Mama relied on Hickey so utterly. Jack wants to kiss her, the very teenage girl.

There is a paper shop for a free read and of adventure books. The woman in the paper shop is half blind and Baba used to steal a lot of books from there. This shows the nature of Baba. They used to bring flour from the local shop/grocery. There are, once, two dead mice in it. So her Mama says that Protestants are cleaner and more honest. This criticism on Catholic and Protestants is realistic description.

Baba is always insulting Caithleen. Baba says:

Your nose, she said, “is always wide, you’ve a nose like a bloody petrol pump. “you are daft,” (CGT 22) she said, lifting up a coil of my hair and looking carefully at the scalp
--- “you’re full of bugs and bugs and fleas and nits and all sorts of vermin ---.” “Your hair is like old mattress stuffing” (*CGT* 25).

Caitheen says about Baba: “She (Baba) was very pretty when she danced. I was clumsy” (*CGT* 27). Above descriptions show comparison between Caithleen and Baba. Caithleen is always insulted and bullied by Baba.

Caithleen’s father is brute. She tells:

He came over and gave her a punch under the chin so that my two rows of teeth clattered together, and with his wild lunatic eyes he stared at me. “Always avoiding me. Always avoiding your father. You little s- where’s your mother or I’ll kick the pants off you.” --- He didn’t like people to think that he was brutal. He had the name of being a gentleman, a decent man who wouldn’t hurt fly (*CGT* 27).

This shows her father’s behavior and cruelty.

Caithleen says: “My two greatest fear in life were that Mama would die of cancer and that Hickey would leave” (*CGT* 29).

Such type of tension is always in the family of Caithleen. The atmosphere of family of Baba and her mother, Martha, affected the life of Caithleen from her childhood days. It shows that Caithleen is very sensitive and aware of her family conditions.

Sympathy was bad for Caithleen. Not that Martha was motherly. She was too beautiful and cold for that. Baba called her mother- Martha. Martha looked pale, but then she was always pale. She had a pale Madonna face with eyelids always lowered, and behind them her eyes were big and dark. Most nights she went town to the Greyhound Hotel; dressed in a tight black suit with nothing under the jacket, only a brassiere, and with a chiffon scarf knotted at her throat. Strangers and
commercial travelers admired her. Pale face, painted nails, blue black pile of hair, Madonna face, perched on a high stool in the lounge bar of the Greyhound Hotel, they thought she looked sad. But Martha was not ever sad, unless being bored is a form of sadness. She wanted two things from life and she got them—drink and admiration.

Caithleen has described behavior of Baba’s mother Martha which has made lasting impression on her tender mind.

There are five persons in Baba’s family—Baba, her mother Martha, her brother Declan and their maid servant—a girl of sixteen Molly and Mr. Brennan.

Baba wants to be an actress. Her mother Martha is interested in dancing. Declan wants to be a film actor. The family members of Baba are interested in acting and dancing. They do not care for Mr. Brennan. Caithleen is very sorry for Mr. Brennan. He works hard and he is suffering from ulcer.

Caithleen always feels alone. No one belongs to her. Baba used to say: “My Mama is the best looking woman around here” (CGT 36).

Caithleen also used to think that her Mama was the best looking woman with her round, pale heartbreaking face, and her gray trusting eyes. Caithleen is leaving with Brennan family. She has been leaving in their house so she could not say that her mother is better than Baba’s mother openly. This shows the burden and pressure on Caithleen’s mind.

Caithleen’s Mama died in accident. Her father is cruel. Because of her father, Caithleen is attracted towards fatherly figure like Mr. Gentleman which is Electra complex. In her later life she falls in love with Mr. Gentleman and frustrated in her life.

Suddenly the news of her mother’s death is brought by Mr. Gentleman. Caithleen’s mother dies by a little accident. This news is shocking for Caithleen. She says:
Lost, lost. And yet I could not believe that my mother was gone and still I knew it was true, because I had a feeling of doom and every bit of me was frozen stiff. Slowly my knees began to sink from me and everything inside of me was gone. --- Mr. Gentleman was the only one that could keep me calm (CGT 41,42).

This teenage girl Caithleen is shocked by death of her mother. She feels lonely. Her impression is that Mr. Gentleman can keep her calm in her life. She has become restless and because of this restlessness she establishes her relationship, even physical relations, with Mr. Gentleman and here is the beginning of her tragic life and end of her innocence.

She said this many times.

The following description is full of emotions. Everyone even the greyhound dogs feel absences of Caithleen’s mother. It is very touching. It is symbolic. As if it is beginning of tragic life.

Caithleen says: “I knew that mama would never have a grave for me to put flowers on somehow she was more dead that than anyone, I had ever heard of. It was the last day of childhood” (CGT 45).

Caithleen’s father sells the place to Jack Holland. He gets the place cheap. He blackmails her father. This is another cause of her tragic life.

Hickey has been with them for twenty years. He has been there since before birth of Caithleen. But now he also has to leave that place and go to England.

Caithleen goes to live with Baba (Brennan family). She has decided to go to Limerick to buy her school uniform. Mr. Gentleman takes her in his car. Her heart flutters. When she gets down from the car, she hates to leave him. “There was something about him that made me want to be with him” (CGT 53).
This attraction for Mr. Gentleman shows the difference between her father and Mr. Gentleman. Her father is a pretender. Caithleen says:

I hated going into his room when he was in bed, I could see Mama on the pillow beside him. Reluctant and frightened as if something terrible were being done to her. She used to sleep with me often as she could and only went across to his room when he made her. He wore no pajamas in bed, and I was ashamed even to think of it (*CGT* 50).

The above description shows that Caithleen hates her father. Now she is grown up, teenage girl. Behavior of her father creates bad impression on her tender mind.

Caithleen is preparing for Convent school. She goes to purchase school uniform in Mr. Gentleman’s car. Mr. Gentleman leaves her in the market and promises her to return at 10 o’clock.

Caithleen purchases Gym-frock. Then she goes into a big church, to have three wishes, which Mama should be in Heaven, that her father would never drink and that Mr. Gentleman would not forget to come at 10 o’clock. When Mr. Gentleman comes back her heart flatter and she finds it hard to speak. This shows her falling in love. Now she is neither girl nor grown up woman just beginning of womanhood. Mr. Gentleman says: “men prefer to kiss young girls without lipstick, you know” (*CGT* 54). When they have been returning to home in his car: “his hand came off the steering wheel and rested on the lap of my ice blue dress. My hand was waiting for it” (*CGT* 56). Mr. Gentleman says to her: “You’re the sweetest thing that ever happened to me” (*CGT* 56).

These words keep always ringing in her ears and in her mind. Because of them: “my soul was alive, enchantment something I had never known before. It was the happiest day of my whole life” (*CGT* 56).
She keeps singing these words in her mind. These words are like dramatic irony. Because the rest of life, there is tragedy in her life. She feels about her first love:

My new god, with a face carved out of pale marble and eyes that made me sad for every woman who hadn’t known him. --- In my mind I kept singing it, “You’ve the sweetest thing that ever happened to me.” It was like having a precious stone in my pocket and I had only to say the words in order to feel it, blue, precious, enchanting --- my deathless, deathless song (CGT 57).

She is not happy with her father at home. She feels that her father should not visit her at convent. Because of his cruelty, she feels better at convent than at home. At fourteen, she is in convent school, with Baba. Caithleen is thin & much too tall. Baba is always insulting her. Once Baba says: “Jesus, they’ll say you have worms” (CGT 60).

Baba has broken her heart, destroys her life. She has been jealous of her happiness. There is envy in her look. “And then all of a sudden I could see the look coming into her eyes. It was a green look, the eyes narrowed like a cat’s” (CGT 61).

This description is very symbolic. The fine image is used by the writer. The image of cat and green look is aptly used to symbolize future tragedy. Baba is one of the reasons of her tragedy.

Suddenly Mr. Gentleman has to go to Paris. Some relative of his is serious and almost dying. Caithleen has to leave for the convent. The atmosphere at the convent is dark and bleak. The dark sheet of water of lake & the sad poplar trees and the strange dogs outside the strange shops make her indescribably sad, but her father feels that it is nice place. She says: “The convent was a gray stone building with hundreds of small
square curtain less windows, like so many eyes spying out on the wet sinful town” (CGT 64).

The bread provided at convent is ‘dull gray bread’. There are two types of nuns lay nuns & choir nuns. “The lay nuns did the cooking & cleaning & scrubbing, & they were lay nuns because they had no education or no money when they entered the convent” (CGT 64,65).

There is a lukewarm cup of dusty milk every night. The dormitory is dirty place. The lavatory is also dirty place. Baba Brennan & Caithleen Brady is not happy there. Caithleen is sentimental. Her conduct is childish. She takes a tea service at Convent. It is given to her by her mother. For these two girls, the Convent is like a jail. Cynthia, a big (senior) girl, has been taking care of Caithleen at Convent.

At home, these two girls are not properly instructed & trained by their parents. Proper care is not taken. Lack of proper education & lack of money affects the personality of children. The family worries create more problems in the places like Convent school. No values & no cultures are imbibed in them. Because of her family background, Baba has become very arrogant & proud girl. She always tries to insult Caithleen. After the death of her mother (Mama) Caithleen has to live at Mr. Brennan & Martha. Molly is maid servant in the house of Brennan. Declan is brother of Baba. When Mr. Gentleman comes to see the girls at Brennan’s family. Caithleen feels very happy. She says:

When he walked into the room, I knew that I loved him more than life itself. --- when I looked into his eyes they were saying the sweet things which they had said before, --- Every few seconds Mr. Gentleman gave me a look that was at once shy & loving & full of promises (CGT 87).
The girl of only fourteen years age fell in love with Mr. Gentleman nearly of her father’s age. This is a mysterious & striking for the readers and critics.

It is clear that Caithleen is deceived by the appearance of Mr. Gentleman, a French old gentleman and lawyer one may call him a ‘liar’.

Caithleen has been showing faults in her father. But she couldn’t find faults in Mr. Gentleman. This is fatal mistake committed by Caithleen. She feels that there is end of her suffering in the union with Mr. Gentleman but actually it is the beginning of her tragic life. This shows that she has become blind and fool in her love affair with Mr. Gentleman. Her emotions have turned her blind.

Martha is suffering. She has been paying back for all the gay nights that she’d spent down at the hotel. This shows immoral character of Martha and its effects on her.

Jack Holland calls Caithleen ‘an Irish Colleen.’ He is also old person. One day he says: “Caithleen, in time to come I hope to marry you” (CGT 94). It throws light on the behavior of elder males.

Mr. Gentleman gives her a little package. It is a small gold watch with a bracelet of gold lace. “I love you”- he whispered. ‘I love you” (CGT 97). Caithleen said.

But there is fear of Mrs. Gentleman in her mind. Caithleen is sorry for that tall, dark woman who lives so entirely to herself behind the trees and the white stone house. He is also sad sorry and worries about his relations with Caithleen.

Baba wants to run away from the Convent.

We’ll go with a travelling show company and be actors. I can sing and act: and you can take the tickets --- “I’ll kill myself if I have to stay five years in that jail.” “We’ll go
together.” I nodded. It was nice to know that she needed me” (CGT 99).

This shows that Caithleen is in need of the company. She doesn’t really want to run away. But, all the time, Baba is thinking of how they might escape from the convent. She has been reading film magazines in bed and she always imagines that they could get into pictures, if they knew anyone in America.

Caithleen and Baba are dreamy about bright future but they do not know the hardship and hurdles in such goals and wishes. They are lead by their emotions and romantic foolish ideas.

Mr. Gentleman takes Caithleen out in his boat. They go to enjoy the holidays, in the summer. He kisses her hand there and says that she was his freckle faced daughter. His mentioning Caithleen as his daughter shows his unconscious guilty mind. Somewhere in his mind he feels that he should treat her as daughter. But actually he has committed mistake and he has been seducing her. “Are you my father?” I asked wistfully; because it was nice playing make believe with Mr. Gentleman” (CGT 101).

Both of them are aware of their age and relations. Yet they have been committing fatal mistake, which is very striking.

Mr. Gentleman is not happy and satisfied in his married life. He could have treated Caithleen like daughter. She is happy in his company. She is very innocent. He used to say her ‘innocent little girl’: “Yes, I’m your father” (CGT 101). He promises her that when he will go to Dublin later on, he would be a very attentive father. But instead of behaving like father he seduces her.

Baba is very naughty girl. Once she brings several tubes of ointments. One of them is ‘For UDDER INFUSION’. When Caithleen
enquired about it, she says: “Make us look female.” “We shall rub it into our bubs and they’ll swell out, it says it is for udders” (*CGT* 99).

This shows Baba is very naughty and whimsical girl.

Caithleen really doesn’t want to run away from the convent. But one incident forces her to accompany Baba. One day sister -Margaret did not want the nuns to come into the Chapel while the priest from Dublin had come to lecture devoted to the sixth commandment. It was the most important lecture of all and it was also very private. It was March. They had a retreat in the convent. The priest was to speak very frankly about boys and sex and things.

Sister Margaret had prepared the warning notice—‘Do Not Enter-Lecture on here,’ she asked Caithleen to pin it on the door upstairs. Caithleen secured notice board to the center panel of the door. She didn’t know that it was lavatory. It was the insult of convent. Sister Margaret was very angry with her. She said, ‘You are an evil girl, you have insulted my sisters in religion and you have vulgarized the name of your school.’ “It was an accident.” (*CGT* 103) Caithleen said meekly. Caithleen was punished. She had to stand for three hours and had to apologize to the Reverend mother. Baba wanted to take advantage of this incident. She had a plan that would expel them from the convent.

Baba said, “We’ll leave a dirty note in the chapel as if it fell out of prayer book” (*CGT* 103).

This shows the difference between the character and the nature of Caithleen and Baba. Caithleen is very innocent and meek girl but Baba is very harsh, naughty and criminal minded girl. Because of Baba she suffers in future life. So Baba is one of the important reasons of Caithleen’s tragedy. Baba’s purpose to run away from the convent is deeply rooted in her mind. She uses Caithleen as her tool.
They wrote the wicked sentence concerning father Thomas the chaplain, and sister Mary—the nun. The sentence reads, “Father Tom stuck his long thing” (CGT 109). Because of this they are expelled from the convent. They are found and they are punished. Their parents are informed about this. They are put in the infirmary for night. Caithleen is insulted and ashamed of this act. She wants to put an end to her life. It is the act of disgrace. They are called as ‘children of Satan.’ Caithleen thinks about committing suicide. This shows that she is very innocent and sensitive. She is not guilty at all.

Actually Caithleen is victim of Baba’s behaviour. Mr. Brennan says about Caithleen: “Poor Caithleen you’re always been Baba’s tool.” Ah, if one could only choose one’s children” (CGT 109).

The description about Mr. Brennan by Caithleen is very touching.

And it seemed to me that life was a disappointment to him --. Mr. Brennan had not found happiness, neither in his wife nor in his children. And thought came to me that he would have liked mama as his wife and me as his daughter. I felt that he was thinking to himself (CGT 109, 110).

Above description is related with central theme of the novels of O’Brien. In her novels unhappy families and unhappy family members becomes cause of sufferings and tragic death.

Actually, Caithleen is a scholar. She could get admission in another convent because her scholarship is still valid. But Mr. Brennan decides to send Baba to Dublin to take a commercial course. So Caithleen also decides to join her. She promises her father that she will do examinations to get into the civil service. Meanwhile, due to poverty, she has to go to work in a grocery shop. She answers an advertisement and gets the job as shop assistant at Tomas Burns. A glowing reference is given to her by Jack Holland. He gives her a note of pound also. But Jack Holland is very
cruel and crafty person. He deceives her and her father also. He expects kiss from her. Because of poverty and father’s irresponsible behavior Caithleen has to suffer.

Baba and Caithleen try to hide the news that they have been expelled from the convent. They used to tell that, ‘there’s an epidemic in the convent,’ so they have left the convent. But it is lie. Only due to shame and disgrace they lie. Even their parents also do not want it known that their daughter are expelled. The event of expelling makes deep impressions on their minds.

Caithleen loves her own house. She is very emotional girl. But after the death of her mother, her father mortgages their old and large house. Now that house is being used by French nuns. Only five of six nuns with a mistress of novice in charge of them are living in that house. Young nuns are coming from the mother house in Limerick to spend their spiritual year in their large house. It is nice and secluded farm house. Caithleen says that ‘French nuns are not as severe as the nuns in the convent.’ The French nun Mother Superior helps her father get over his drinking bouts. So Caithleen likes her. She gives Caithleen ‘a tiny blue medal.’ Caithleen pins it to her vest and always wears it there.

O’Brien has criticized Irish Catholic Church and the church authorities which afterwards became the cause of banning her novels. Caithleen is religious minded. She is believer in moral character. But because of Baba and her own innocence she becomes victim, which leads her to her tragic death.

Now her father has been living in the gate-lodge. He is robbed of his grandest house in the country. It is very painful for Caithleen and her father. It is insulting and hurting matter. Her father used to scratch his forehead, point to the big house, and used to tell them that he is robbed of it. Caithleen feels very sad. She recalls her mother. She is deeply hurt.
Even their dog ‘Bull’s Eye’ has been poisoned and killed. Her father has never bothered anyone in his life. But he is careless and irresponsible person. Because of him Caithleen and her mother suffered. Even their faithful servant Hickey leaves them. Nothing is left behind. This is the turning point of the life of Caithleen.

She says—“I was looking for romance, thinking that next week I would be in Dublin, free from it all” (*CGT* 117). This is very touching and painful.

Her father says: “You’re to behave yourself in Dublin, Live decent. Mind your faith, and write to your father. I didn’t like the way you have turned out at all “Not one bit” (*CGT* 117).

Her father becomes very emotional. He thinks that her behavior should be decent and moral.

Martha, Baba’s mother, always sneered at religion and praying and craw thumpers. But her mind has changed since the children’s first communion. She begins to attend devotions. Even she is attending mass. There is change in her attitude towards the religion. Before this Martha used to say ‘religion is dope for fools.’ Molly says about religion: “Age changes people, it softens them. They’ll stick up for things when they’re young. But when they get on, they get soft” (*CGT* 118).

This situation is very ironic. People change their behavior or way of life after bitter experiences.

One day Caithleen and Baba leave for Dublin by train in a third class carriage. The new life style begins. Caithleen says about this life

I suppose it was then we began that phase of our lives as the giddy country girls brazening the big city. People looked at us and then looked away again, as though they had just discovered that we were naked or something. But we didn’t care. We were young and we thought pretty (*CGT* 121).
This shows that the innocent country girls are dazed and maddened by the town life.

Baba’s comment on nuns is important. She says: “how the poor bloody nuns managed the day you kept them out of the lavatory” (CGT 121).

It means Baba feels that life in convent and life of nuns is burden and bondage. She likes romantic life.

At the mention of the convent, Caithleen got the faint smell of cabbage, the smell that lingered in every corner of the school. This is realistic description of life in convent. This is harsh criticism on the Catholic Church, life of nuns, and life in convent school.

They reach Dublin. Their future landlady is a foreigner. They reach their room. Caithleen is ‘cowardly-custard nonsense girl’. She fears landlady. The voice of landlady is brutal and commandeering. The name of the landlady is Joanna. Gustav is her husband but he works like a servant. Caithleen is reminded of her mother and of her house. It shows her attachment with past events, with parents and her rural life. She is very emotional and sensitive girl.

Joanna says about Baba and Caithleen, “Country girls have big huge appetite” (CGT 123). Baba likes to drink wine and smoking. She is pleasure seeker. Baba used to call Caithleen: “sarcastically lady supreme and lady divine, will you pass me the wine?” (CGT 123).

Baba is always making a fool of Joanna. Baba and Caithleen are Catholics by religion. They are Irish Catholics. Joanna is also Catholic. Joanna says: “We on the continent are not so rigid as you Irish” (CGT 128).

This remark of Joanna on Irish Catholics is important. It is critical remark on Catholics and Catholicism. It is eye opener. Irish Catholics are very rigid.
On Sunday evenings, they used to go to confession. But instead of going to church and confession, Baba preferred to go to downtown for a dance. Caithleen isn’t interested to go to dance. But she is forced. This shows the fate and misfortune of Caithleen.

Caithleen has wistful face. This face is liked by Mr. Gentleman. Caithleen is always reminded of her past. When she is in the Joanna’s kitchen, the dead chicken reminds her of all their Sunday dinner at home, and Hickey and Bull’s Eye. She is reminded of her childhood going with Hickey on bicycle, sheepdog and all things.

Because of Baba, she starts smoking. Baba is very advanced girl. She wants to be in films, “I’ve a smashing idea. I’ll change my name. I’ll be Barbara” (CGT 130).

One day they set out to visit the neon fairyland of Dublin. Caithleen loves it more than she had loved a summer’s day in a hay-field of her country village. Lights, faces, traffic, the enormous vitality of people, hurrying to somewhere, all these things and events impress her mind. The response of the country girl is shocking. Baba says, “Jesus we’re living at last” (CGT 132). Baba is looking around to see if there are any nice boys at the other tables.

Caithleen says, “It’s nice.” “I knew now that this was the place I wanted to be. Forever more I would be restless for crowds and lights and noise. I had gone from the sad noises” (CGT 132).

Above incident shows that, there is end of innocent country life and their innocence.

Baba says, “I’m going to blow up this town” (CGT 133). Purpose of Baba is clear. She wants to enjoy city life. Baba and Caithleen have been living at Joanna and Gustav. Baba is not attending college because she danced the night before and gone to bed very late. It shows their behavior in Dublin. Caithleen’s grocery shop-her working place is only a
five minutes’ walk. It is in a shopping center. Its name is ‘TOM BURNS GROCERY’. These words are written over the door of grocery shop. It is very untidy place. It belongs to Mr. and Mrs. Burns. Joanna is comically fat. Mrs. Burns is also fat and lazy looking lady.

Caithleen has no money to buy shop coat, because she has spent ten shillings at the dance the previous night. She is not perfect dancer. She falls down at the time of dancing. Nobody asks her to dance. She feels very nervous. She says about that night:

Waltzing was forgetfulness and I wished that Mr. Gentleman would suddenly appear out of nowhere and steer me through the strange long sweet night, and say things in my ear and keep his arms around me (CGT 136).

This shows her mental attachment with elderly Mr. Gentleman rather than with young boys. She wants to have romance with Mr. Gentleman.

Caithleen used to read books as she like the reading but Baba doesn’t like reading. On Easter Sunday, Caithleen gets her payment, she goes to confession. This shows she is religious. Due to poverty, she used to buy cheap brassieres. Joanna is also very poor. She used to bring the brassieres thrown away in the dustbins. It shows the condition of poor girls and poor women in Dublin. Joanna used to give such dirty and cheap as well as once used brassieres to the woman, who used to come to scrub, in her house, instead of money. This realistic description throws light on poverty in Ireland and exploitation of working women.

The language used to describe these poor and working women is very touching and apt. The description of mice, cats, hens foods, fruits, wines, cigarette smoking, trees and hills, shops and houses makes the novel realistic. Her novels are full of such description of places and persons.
Gustav and Joanna are coming from Vienna. They are running lodging in Dublin. Caithleen is now getting fat. Her hip was nicely curved. One customer comments on her and says, ‘Rubenesque.’ It means sexy. This description shows that the mental and physical changes have taken places in the country girls. They are becoming romantic and sexy.

Baba loves money. She wants to have date with rich men. One day she says to Caithleen: “Two rich men. Mince owns a sweets factory and your has a stocking factory” (CGT 144).

Dublin is a small friendly city; Baba makes a lot of acquaintances and friends. She says: “Gorgeous, They’ve aged about eighty and my fellow has every bit of himself initialed Tiepin, cuff links, handkerchief, car cushions. The lot. He has leopards in his car as mascots” (CGT 144).

Caithleen is not ready for such dates. But Baba again says:

Look, Caithleen will you give up the nonsense? We’re eighteen and we’ve bored to death.” We want to live. Drink gin. Squeeze into the front of big Cars and drive up outside big hotels. We want to go places. Not sit in this damp-dump (CGT 145).

This shows that Baba wants to enjoy life like her mother. She persuades Caithleen to enjoy such life.

“What’ll I drink?” I asked and “distantly somewhere in my head I heard, my mother’s voice accusing me, and I saw her shake her finger at me. There were tears in her eyes. Tears of reproach” (CGT 147). This shows Caithleen is not ready to commit such sins.

People are looking at them as they are wanton girls. Baba loves to drink gin. Both of them used to save money. They used to walk some distance, instead of taking bus, to save money. Sometimes the conductor wasn’t charging them fares. He is also attracted towards such wanton girls. It shows change in their public life in Dublin.
Both Baba and Caithleen used to go to the hotel. The people, men and women in the hotel are enjoying drinks, smoking, talking and also flirting with one another. The light in such hotels is pink and soothing. The foyer of the hotel is brightly lit. The people look smooth and composed. Their faces are not at all like the faces of men who drank in Jack Holland’s public house. The women wear the jewelry. This shows the life of rich people in Dublin.

Baba and Caithleen start to flirt with two middle aged men who are not attractive but they are rich. The man with the gray hair-Harry and the man with the black hair-Reginald. They order for pink gin and orange to drink. Baba says to Caithleen: “Laugh, Caithleen, Chrissake, laugh.” Baba said and I tried a little laugh, but it didn’t work” (CGT 150).

This remark of Caithleen shows her situation. She is forced to live such type of life –unwanted life. She feels guilty in such life. But Baba suggests Caithleen:

Eat and drink all you can and leave James Joyce to blow his own trumpet. Caithleen said, “I hate it I’ll scream if that lump Harry touches me.” Baba said, “Think of the dinner. We’ll have lamb and mint sauce. Mint sauce, Caithleen, you like it” (CGT 150). It shows Baba is always forcing her. Caithleen becomes victim.

Caithleen’s opinion about rich women is very shocking and critical. She thinks it is easy for a woman to be mysterious when she is rich. Because of such life Caithleen has become emotional.

There are tears in her eyes. Harry and Reginald are measuring Caithleen by their look from behind. Harry remarks on her hip, “My dish is lovely dish” (CGT 151). By such remarks, Caithleen is hurt and nervous. She feels insulted.
Irish coffee, black tea, red wine, whiskey, lamb, mint sauce, dish of boiled potatoes and tinned peas. All about drinking, eating, enjoying kissing and fucking. This is life in Dublin. “Happy? Baba asked me, and I cut her with a look” (CGT 152).

This shows that Caithleen is not happy in such life. What she wants is to get home safely. She doesn’t feel safe in Dublin and such life. This shows the real nature of country girl Caithleen and the qualities imbibed in her by her mother.

Harry wants to tell her a fairy story of a cock and a fox and a pussy cat, living on an island. It is dirty story of double-meaning. Chaithleen is not interested in such life. She wants to go home. She has lost control of her temper because of the behavior of Harry. Harry said: “Cold bitch, Cold little bitch”. Caithleen said, “you are vile and horrible” (CGT 155).

This shows that Caithleen opposes such bad acts.

Baba steals guest towel, two tomatoes and a jar of chicken and ham paste from the hotel. This shows the bad nature of Baba. She is not only cunning but immoral and criminal minded.

Reginald is married, yet Baba is happy with him. It shows her attitude towards life. She loves his money. On the way home, they met Mr. Gentleman. Caithleen is very happy to meet him. He said to them: “This is a shocking hour of the night to be coming home” (CGT 156). Caithleen is wandering with Baba even at night times. She is forced by Baba for such activities.

He takes her in his car and kisses her. Both of them are lonely. (Having no friends or company) Having met each other, they feel happy. Caithleen says about this: “He caught my hand. His clasp was at once delicate and savage. Then when he kissed me, my body becomes like rain. Soft, Flowing, Amenable” (CGT 157).
This is her impression about first love. Mr. Gentleman calls her ‘you funny little girl.’ Caithleen feels his words sweet. “Everything after that was touched with sweetness and enchantment” (CGT 158). He takes her at the sea. She feels it a secret place. She is very happy. Caithleen says, about her first love and this secret places “That was how I came to see dawn rising over Dublin Bay” (CGT 158). This is her emotional response to first love and romance in Dublin. She wants always something more than kiss but: “It was always like that with Mr. Gentleman. He slipped away just when things were perfect as if he couldn’t endure perfection” (CGT 159).

Her experience shows that she couldn’t get satisfaction from Mr. Gentleman. There is something lacking in married man Mr. Gentleman. Due to this event and meeting, she missed mass.

It is the first Sunday she could not attend mass which creates guilty feeling. It shows she is very sensitive girl. After these events, Baba and Caithleen become almost strangers. Both of them are happy in the company of their friends especially married men. Caithleen used to go out with Mr. Gentleman as often as he is free, and Baba used to meet Reginald every night. Baba doesn’t even come home from class in the evenings. Now their faces become pale for want of sleep and their fingers brown from nicotine. Baba has been suffering from cough due to these bad habits. She becomes weak and thin. She has to go to a sanatorium in Wicklow for six months. It is found that she has been suffering from tuberculosis. Caithleen feels sad. She says to Baba, “why had we become strangers? Why had we been sharp and secretive in the last few weeks?” (CGT 159).

This is their experience in Dublin. Reginald is very attentive to Baba. They are getting wines to drink, cigarettes to smoke and night parties (dinner). Joanna’s notion about the rich man is striking. She is
landlady and keeper of the Hostel. She feels that rich men leave five pound notes under the table cloth or forget overcoat on purpose, and leave it behind for her husband Gustav. Caithleen wants permission of Joanna to have her friend Mr. Gentleman in the drawing room. Joanna permits because she feels that Mr. Gentleman is rich man.

Caithleen says about this experience: “I began to get ready for my date. It is the only time that I am thankful for being a woman, that time of evening when I draw the curtains take off my old clothes, and prepare to go out” (CGT 160).

This is the remark of young and poor girl Caithleen. Most important comment of Caithleen on women and herself is given below.

She experiences love and romance as a poor and innocent teenage girl. She is not aware about her future. She blindly believes in Mr. Gentleman an old man. She feels in her company secure.

She used to shadow her eyelids with black stuff. She is astonished by the look of mystery it gives to her eyes. She looks in the mirror and says:

I hate being woman. Vain and shallow and superficial. Tell a woman that you love her and she’ll ask you to write it down so that she can show it to her friends. But I am happy at the time of night. I feel tender towards the world (CGT 161).

Mr. Gentleman used to visit her in her room. About this Caithleen says: “I wasn’t appalled really. Just nervous and sad in some way, because the end of my innocent was near” (CGT 162).

She is eager to make love with him but Mr. Gentleman is as if waiting for right time. He is postponing some important event.

Caithleen is eager to have dates with him. She expects that Mr. Gentleman should treat her as wife. Mr. Gentleman looks very calm and
quiet as well as decent. But actually he is very cunning. He is the cause of her tragedy.

Caithleen says, “But I want you for always. He smiled and kissed me lightly on the cheeks. Kisses like the first drops of rain” (CGT 163). This is her first experience of love. There is end of innocence. She feels presence of male. “He looked at me for a long time. That looks of his which was half sexual, half mystic” (CGT 163).

As a sensitive young girl she is inexperienced and she does not know about the mysterious love which she is eager for. She cannot avoid the temptation and she is not aware that Mr. Gentleman is taking disadvantage of her innocence, poverty and her family background. He is seducing her which becomes one of the important reasons of her tragic end.

Following dialogue between them is symbolic. It is central idea of first novel.

You are a bad girl, he said “I like being a bad girl”, I replied wide-eyes. “No, not really, darling. You’re sweet. The sweetest girl I ever met. My country girl with country colored hair. Darling, I’m not made of iron,” he said (CGT 165).

It is the description of an Irish girl and Irish beauty which has attracted a French man Mr. Gentleman, who is not happy in his married life.

Mr. Gentleman knows his weaknesses and strong point. At some extent he feels guilty about his behavior with her. Both of them are very happy in this life.

Caithleen’s father sells the furniture of his old house in auction. She hasn’t written a letter to her father since last six weeks. She doesn’t want to write him anymore. She is trying to avoid her father because she
always fears him. Caithleen has been dreaming about ‘Vienna’. She is eager to go to Vienna with Mr. Gentleman.

May 15—there on the very first page of morning paper, there is a memoriam for her mother, under the anniversaries. “Four years, four short years and I had forgotten the date of her death; at least I had overlooked it! I felt that whenever she was she had stopped loving me” (CGT 170).

This is very touching moment of her life. She has forgotten her mother totally. She has become self-centered in the company of Mr. Gentleman and her so called romantic love. There is nightmare—

But all the night I slept badly. I tucked my legs up under night gown and was shivering. I was waiting for someone to come and warm me. I think I was waiting for Mama. And all things I am afraid of kept coming into my mind. Drunk men. Shouting. Blood, Cats, Razor blades, Galloping houses (CGT 170).

This is her guilty—feeling expression because in her real life, she has forgotten her mother. She has been thinking about Mr. Gentleman and love.

Caithleen misses company of Baba for some days. In the company of Baba she feels ‘sane person’. Baba used to keep her away from brooding about things.

One Thursday morning Caithleen gets a letter from Hickey. Caithleen has almost forgotten him. She hasn’t written him a letter or hasn’t sent a telegram. She feels:

The thought came to me that I was foolish and disloyal, not only but Hickey, who had been my best friend, but Jack Holland and Martha and Mr. Brennan. To all the real people
in my life. Mr. Gentleman was but a shadow and yet it was this shadow I craved (*CGT* 171).

This is real tragic remark made by herself on her life. The presence of Mr. Gentleman is called shadow. It is symbolic. The image of shadow is aptly used because of him. She has forgotten everything. She has become greedy and dreamy. She calls her own behavior as foolish and disloyal.

She is waiting for Mr. Gentleman. She is eager to go with him to Vienna: “My whole body was impatient now. I couldn’t sit still. My body was wild from waiting” (*CGT* 173). He doesn’t turn up. He sends a telegram. It is not signed and it has been handed in at a Limerick post office early that morning. It says: “Everything gone wrong. Threats from your father. My wife has another nervous breakdown. Regret enforced silence. Must not see you” (*CGT* 175).

The words used in telegram again throw light on the theme of novel. Caithleen cried on the bed for a long time. It is clear that Mr. Gentleman has deceived her. Her first love could not last long. Her dreams are shattered. Now she feels lonely girl, a country girl. His enforced silence becomes the cause of tragic end of Kate.

Father and poverty these two factors are root causes of her sad life. According to one critic ‘It seems that the sectarian violence, sexual repression and what used to be called the land question are still central to Irish life’.

What about the big houses. The big houses of Ireland with the genteel drawing room culture of the Anglo-Irish Ascendancy. These houses offer an explanation of that class, its style and manners, they set out its relation with its environment and culture and they plot its eventual disintegration and decomposition which is clearly reflected in her first novel *The Country Girls*. Mr. Gentleman does not come to take her
Vienna. It is turning point she is frustrated. Because of this frustration she commits again the mistake which becomes the important thread joining or bringing together a sequence of first three novels.

The novel focuses on questions of indignity, women’s bodies, and the land and how their representation is shaped by colonialism and its negative consequences for women in newly independent Ireland. O’Brien’s present novel manifests, the acute losses, resulting due to certain loss of ethical values and culture. Her protagonist Cait and Baba suffer due to heterosexuality. The maternal figures in the novel suffer due to ‘Mean’ men naturally the daughters are affected by this. Cait’s romantic relationship with Mr. Gentleman is the results of her interactions with her abusive father and suffering mother. Her relationship with Mr. Gentleman offer her comfort and reward of the familiar it makes death of herself leading her to tragic suffering for the whole life. The daughters tread the immortal path of sexuality as they ate deprived of their parents love and cares while out of the need of paternal love and comfort Caith falls in love with Mr. Gentleman, Baba engages loves affairs as she is most spoilt girl and desires to enjoy life freely. But Baba also is the outcome of her parent’s wrong behaviour. The innocent girls having romantic nations and craving for rich amenities develop sexual relationship with elder persons and naturally they have to suffer. O’Brien has varied realistically depicted how elder persons exploit the younger girls by offering them gifts. The elders persons depicted in the novel are not happily married and hence they develop extra marital relationships. These unhappy family relationships, sexual represssion spoilt children, poverty, problems of land arise due to colonialism are the theme handed by O’Brien very realistically. She has also harshly criticizes catholic religion. She feels it a bondage and burden. The realistic presentation of all these issues was unbearable for the Catholics
and they banned the novel. The style is simple and realistic. The presentation of the events is poetic. Her simple, lucid and lyrical style makes the novel readable.

2.2 The Lonely Girl (The Girls with Green Eyes):

*The Lonely Girl* published in 1962 as a sequel to *The Country Girls*. In this second novel, Caithleen Brady is now twenty–one and has been employed in a Dublin grocery store for two years. She develops an attraction toward another older man, Eugene Gaillard. She stays with him at his house in Wicklow. Once her incensed father abducts her and another time he attempts a raid to rescue her from Eugene. At the same time she is pulled in an opposite direction from ‘respectability’ by the sophisticated Eugene’s scorn for her: “Stone Age ignorance and religious slavery” (*CGT* 202). Extremely sensitive and self-critical, she gropes a painful way toward self-development, finally by flight to England.

Caithleen becomes the mistress of Eugene, a director of documentary film, who, like Mr. Gentleman, has a melancholy sculptured face. She is trying to be all – in – all to Eugene, she realizes:

Eugene and I were all right alone. But when anyone else came I’ lost him to them ---. I had nothing to talk about really except things about my childhood, and he had heard all of (*CGT* 204).

Edna O’Brien rewrote this novel as a very successful screenplay *Girl with Green Eyes*, and the original novel was republished by Penguin in 1964 under the film *Girl with Green Eyes* title.

*The Lonely Girl* which is also called as *The Girls with Green Eyes*, after the film, begins with girls in Dublin. They have begun their life in Dublin as they feel freedom. Caithleen who is mostly bullied by Baba has been working in a grocery shop. Her employers both Mr. and Mr. Burns
are kind. Although they are country people they love and like Caithleen and suggest her to work hard for which they have promised a raise.

Caithleen who loves reading feels that romantic and nice men are found only in books. On the contrary Baba has many friends for dating.

Baba has returned from sanatorium. Now Caithleen wants to become thin like her. Baba remarks on her, “You look like you were going to have a child” (CGT 179). Baba is always teasing her. Although Baba knows that Caithleen has never done more than kiss Mr. Gentleman. It shows Baba’s criminal mind. She is always insulting Kate.

Having six months treatment, Baba has come back to Joanna’s boarding house from the sanatorium. This shows their behavior in Dublin. They have no steady men but just only dates with some. They are trying to get rich friends. About Baba Caithleen says: “Baba is unreasonable, she thinks people are more stupid than they are” (CGT 180).

They used to go to downtown to a Sunday night dance. Baba said: “Don’t take cigarettes from those Indian fellows with turbans they might be doped” (CGT 181). It shows Irish women’s attitude towards Indian fellows living in Ireland and doing some jobs.

Caithleen wants to have a friend but she is not getting a proper friend because she is not perfect in dancing. “It was my constant wish – some morning I used to get up convinced that I would meet a new wonderful man?” (CGT 181).

Their life in Dublin is described in the following lines:

Baba and I (Caithleen) were going to a wine tasting reception that night. We had crashed two other functions-a fashion show and a private showing of a travel film of Ireland. All lies about dark-haired girls roaming around Connemara in red petticoats. No wonder they had to show it in private (CGT 182).
There is trouble for them for getting into banquet room. They lie and enter the reception hall for wine testing. It shows they lie and cheat others for their pleasures. Baba is interested in wines and parties with friends.

Tod Mead their friend introduces them to the two people. (Tod Mead is a public-relations officer. He has been working for a big wool company. Baba and Kate have met him at a fashion show.) One is a lady journalist, and other is a strange man with a sallow face. His name is Eugene Gaillard. He has a sad face. He is film director. He has made a classic documentary on shatteringly realistic poverty. Then he has becomes a farmer. Tod mentions Caithleen as ‘Literary Fat Girl’ with ‘Long hair and rubber boots’. Kate feels ashamed and it stabbed her. She is insulted by such remark. Eugene Gaillard is tall, about the same height of her father. Here is the beginning of new life of Caithleen. Now she has forgotten Mr. Gentleman. This shows Caithleen is attracted towards Eugene because she is deceived by Mr. Gentleman. She is impressed by Eugene’s presence. She feels that Eugene has a saint’s face.

Eugene has come in that wine party in Grafton Street because of Tod Mead. Tod has dragged him along. “I came for the scenery not the wine” (CGT 185). This statement of Eugene shows that he is not interested in wine or women but only in the scenery. The reason behind it is that his wife has left him alone and gone to London with his child.

Caithleen is called ‘Mary of the sorrow’ by Baba. Baba is always insulting Caithleen. She wants to impress others and enjoy ‘flirt life’.

Eugene says to Tod about the two girls—“Those are two nice girls you found” (CGT 186). On this remark Baba says “Nice people with nice manners that have got no money at all” (CGT 186). Eugene is rich. He looks nice from the back. He is tall and lean, with a bald patch on the very top of his head. Baba says about him, ‘he is a good catch’. This
remark of Baba shows her nature. She is always trying to find some rich men to enjoy dates and get money from them.

Tod, Baba and Caithleen are poor persons and they are always worried that they might have to pay the bill of dinner. Eugene gets a call from somebody and he leaves them. “I nearly died, thinking that Baba and I might have to pay for the dinner by washing up for the next ten or eleven year, but Eugene paid it all right” (CGT 188). This remark of Caithleen shows their poverty. They want to enjoy life of parties and wine. But money should be spent by the rich friends. This is the nature of urban life in Ireland.

“I suppose lots of women have died for him” (CGT 188). This remark of Caithleen about Eugene shows his personality. She likes him most. But Caithleen is different from Baba. She is not thinking or expecting money from Eugene. She is naturally attracted towards him. It is her physical need. She feels alone or lonely. To avoid this loneliness she is expecting friendship with man. Baba is fickle minded girl. She wants to have friendship with many rich men. She says about Eugene, “He is classy, I’d like to get going with him” (CGT 188). Both of them are very much impressed by him. They decide to invite him for a dress dance.

The Body is a friend of Baba. He has been always training greyhounds in Blanchardstown. His real name is Bertie Counihan. His nickname is ‘the Body’. He is called the Body because he hardly ever washed himself. He is big and broad shouldered man with black curly hair and a happy reddish face. According to him (the Body) washing harms the skin.

They bring four tickets for a grocer’s dance which is to be held in Cleary’s ballroom in October and they invite Eugene. But Eugene declines. On this Caithleen says “What a life, we had the tickets but no
men, no money, no dance dresses” (CGT 189). Caithleen is disturbed. She has become restless.

They have no money to buy fur coat or to rent dresses. But Baba’s suggestion is striking. She says, “We’ll sell our bodies to the college of surgeons. They come and collect when you’re dead, and the students put you on a table, with no clothes, and take you to pieces” (CGT 189). This shows Baba is ready to do anything for a few bob. Baba is very meaning minded. Her behavior leads them to tragic end of life.

Following dialogue between Baba and Caithleen must be considered. Baba says, “You can steal in that joint where you work, they’re underpaying you”. Caithleen says, “It is a sin.” Baba says - “It’s not a sin. Acquina says you can steal from an employer, if he underpays you” (CGT 190). (Acquina is a big Nob in the church)

Above dialogue between them shows difference between the nature of these two country girls. One is criminal minded who slowly leads another innocent girl and friend to commit sins. The reference to Acquina is symbolic image.

They borrow five and ten shilling amounts from various people and hire long dresses and silver dance shoes. All the night they spend in drinking and dancing.

Caithleen likes reading books. She has been reading the book *The Charwoman’s Daughter*. She has an appointment to meet Baba in O’Connell Street. On the way, she suddenly meets Eugene near the bookshop. She meets him, ‘point blank’. She is astonished by him. In daylight his face looks very different longer and more melancholy than the parties at night. Then there is a shower of rain. It brings them together. Now Caithleen is more attracted towards him. Caithleen longs to stay in a hotel and have breakfast in bed with him. Caithleen’s behavior and her expectations are natural.
Eugene says about this sudden meeting ‘A pleasant encounter’. Then he leaves her. Caithleen watches him go, she says, “I saw him as a dark-faced god turning his back on me. I put out my hand to recall him and caught only the rain” (CGT 197). This remark shows her natural love and liking for Eugene. So, she feels that it should rain forever and noiselessly. The image of rain and dark faced god are symbolic. They are apt.

Caithleen starts to wait for him. She has been waiting for him and searching for a sight of him. She says about her waiting and restless eagerness to meet him.

“I waited and walked around certain that I would meet him, and the wild hope made my spirits soar. I imagined him sitting in Robert’s cafe looking at dark-haired girls” (CGT 198).

She has become restless. She is eager to have his company and friendship with him.

Once again they meet in the restaurant. Eugene remarks on her - “I always forget how pretty you are until I see you again.” --- “Ah, the bloom of you, I love your North Circular Road Bicycle Riding cheeks” (CGT 198). Eugene is actually not interested by his heart in her.

Then they take their dinner that evening in the hotel. They drive out to Clontraf and walk down by the Bull-wall. It is a mild, misty November night. Caithleen says about this meeting, “He held my hand, he did not squeeze my fingers or plait them in his, he just held my hand very naturally, the way you’d hold child’s hand or your mother’s” (CGT 199). The image of child and mother suggests innocence of both Caithleen and Eugene. Eugene has lived in New York and In Hollywood. He always talks about America and of places. He said to Caithleen. “Yes, I was born to be a monk” (CGT 200). This remark shows he lives life of a monk. He does not like monad and sexual life. Caithleen says, “But
you’re not a Catholic” (*CGT* 201). On her remark he laughs loudly and comments on the Catholics, “Catholics were the most opinionated people on earth, and, their self mania frightened him” (*CGT* 201). This is criticism on Irish Catholicism.

Eugene drives her home and says “It’s a long time since I’ve spent an evening with such a nice girl” (*CGT* 201). It shows really he has been living a life of monk. He is not interested in girl or woman. He says, “up to the age of twenty five which he was apprenticed to various trader-cinema-operator gardeners, electrician- he could only afford to look at girls, the way one looks at flowers or boats in Dun-laoghaire harbor” (*CGT* 201). It shows his pure life. He is not like Mr. Gentleman. His nature is pious. But because of Caithleen he starts to take interest in life. He calls her Kate. Each Monday, Wednesday and Saturday he starts to wait outside the shop for her in his car. He takes now interest in her.

Eugene knows about the writers like. Cheknava, James Joyce and James Stephens. He compares Caithleen with Anna Karenina. He says, “You’re like Anna Karenina in that coat” (*CGT* 203). This comparison is apt. It reflects hard and honest life of poor girl and her tragic end.

Joanna’s house is clean but shabby. It is a terraced brick house, linoleum from top to bottom. Caithleen and Baba have been living in her house. Baba has been forcing and pestering her to invite Eugene home to tea so that she could flirt with him.

Caithleen loves that part of Dublin, the side of the Liffey toward the Customs House because she is kissed by Eugene first time there. She loves that part of Dublin then and forever.

Caithleen recites the song ‘The Mother’ by Patrick Pearse. It is only poem she knows. It is emotional song. “Lord thou art hard on mothers. We suffer in their coming and their going” (*CGT* 211). This song shows her love for mother and attachment with her.
Even God is hard on women as mothers. One Sunday Caithleen is going to visit him in his own house. Other people are on their way to mass. She does not feel sinful about missing mass. Joanna is sending Gustav with her as a ‘spy’. Eugene comes to take her home. He is ten minutes late. Caithleen has washed her hair and has worn the wide straw hat, summer hat, with a bunch of wax rosebuds on it. Having seen her Eugene says, “you look like a child bridge” (CGT 215). This remark of Eugene refers to the age difference between Eugene and Caithleen. Eugene is conscious about the age difference. Caithleen is very happy.

Caithleen prays to her Guardian Angel to protect her. “Oh, angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God’s love commits me here, ever this day be at my side. To light and guard to rule and guide” (CGT 215).

This prayer throws light on her condition and her personality. She, being a poor girl, is very cautious of her future. She is deceived by Mr. Gentleman. So, she prays Guardian Angel to protect her future life.

Caithleen comes to know from Boss’s wife that Eugene is married man. Yet she loves him. He has married an American girl. About her he says:

Yes, I married an American girl when I was over there. She was a nice girl very personable, but after a few years she didn’t care for me. I wasn’t fun. A privileged girl, brought up to believe that she is special, changes as unsatisfactory husband as she might change her bath salts. She believes that happiness is her right (CGT 221).

This remark shows Eugene’s changed attitude towards woman. Because of his humiliation from his wife, he treats Caithleen in different and strict ways in his life. Caithleen feels that he is ‘secretly proud’ of his life. According to American girl, “Eugene had a Feudal attitude to
woman” (CGT 220). These two remarks throw light on feudal attitude of Eugene.

Once Eugene says, “you mustn’t worry about my being married” (CGT 222). On his remark Caithleen says, “I am not worried, I lied” (CGT 222).

Actually here is the beginning of her sad married life with Eugene. It is mistake of Caithleen. Her decision is wrong. Once again she has committed mistake. According to Eugene “Guilt and failure are painful topics and as you get older you try and put them out of your mind” (CGT 222). Eugene is very calm and quite sufferer. But Caithleen is inexperienced young lady deceived in love twice by two different married elder men. She feels guilty.

There is the picture of naked woman lying on her side, over the fireplace in his house. Eugene takes Caithleen in his bedroom to seduce her. She is frightened. It is eight o’clock in the evening. She wants to return her home. On this he says, “Go, but, my dear girl, I haven’t seduced you yet. He laughed and I (Caithleen) thought of a portrait of him downstairs which looked sinister” (CGT 224). Caithleen has come to know his sinister motives. But she can’t openly deny him. She is in two minds. Eugene remarks on her. “You are a silly girl. He bent down and kissed my wet mouth more tenderly than he had ever kissed me before” (CGT 224). She has become a victim as the rabbit in the trap. He treats her as a silly girl.

Caithleen used to visit his house on Sundays. One Sunday night she stays there. Anna tells her about the incident. A woman (a Colonel’s wife by taking digital pills) had died in that room just before Eugene bought the house. The incident is symbolic. Caithleen stays in his house that night and it looks her quite respectable really because Eugene’s mother has been also staying there. She is a frail, argumentative little
woman; with a craggy face and a big forehead like Eugene. She coughs a lot. Caithleen sleeps in his guest room. For that night she feels respected and warm. Even she feels secure in that house.

Caithleen is very poor. She has bought a red ear rings which are very cheap. She wants to look very glamorous for him. Eugene promises her to buy a gold pair. His remarks about her are striking. He says, “you soft, daft, wanton thing, you’ve got one mad eye.” “You are not washing your teeth properly.” “You’re such a nice plump girl” (CGT 229). That night they slept in one bed she is very frightened. Nothing happens but only kisses are exchanged.

Under the divan bed she finds a box of old toys and torn books. One animal book belonged to baby Elaine Gaillard. Having seen it Caithleen nearly died. Eugene has never said that he had a child. Caithleen finds that Eugene is very tender with Anna’s baby. But she never suspects that Eugene is married and he has a child. Because of the box of the old toys and torn book of animals she comes to know the reality. She becomes sad once again.

Cathleen is always dependent on others. She is not firm. She is very timid. She is unable to take her own decisions. She used to day dreaming.

She stays there for second day. She is looking in the mirror and she feels. “In the mirror my face looked round and childlike.” Eugene remarks, “The old man and the girl” (CGT 233). This is the central theme of these novels.

This shows that this innocent girl is deceived and entrapped by experienced old man Eugene. The intention of Eugene and inner mind of Caithleen should be considered.

She has been always thinking about Laura, his American wife and child. She longs to go with him to London, where he has decided to go in
a day or two. But he doesn’t invite her to London. She is full of fear and nervousness. She feels insulted. That night they sleep in one bed. “But that night was a failure too” (CGT 235).

Eugene presents her two books one a novel and other The Body and Mature Behavior. Her experience with him is very striking. She is treated like a stranger. That night he drops her near the shop of Mrs. Burns. He says, “Goodbye, he was as off hand as it I was, some stranger to whom he had given a lift” (CGT 236). This shows his treatment given to Caithleen is insulting. He is indifferent. He is not attached by heart with her.

Baba’s opinions about him and wives in general are harsh and striking. Baba says that he might have arranged to meet his wife in London and that they (Caithleen and Baba) would never see him again. “It’s bound to be that bitch he married.” Baba said. Baba maintains that all wives are bitches” (CGT 237). It is insulting remark on an Irish married woman and women in general.

Baba and Caithleen go to meet a fortune teller in Donnybrook. They visit Donnybrook Church, first time. They expect for three wishes from God. Then they visit the Fortune teller. He is living in a large brick house. The place reminds Caithleen of the Convent. Caithleen is very emotional and sensitive girl. She is conscious about her poverty.

Baba had worn her mother’s engagement ring. The Fortune teller tells Baba that there is trouble in store for her. She looks into her palm. Baba is frightened. “You’ll marry a rich man, that is, when you give up this married man” (CGT 238). (Tod Mead) Then she tells Caithleen.

You’ll make a journey” It’s an unpleasant journey, she added and before the new year is out, you’ll marry an eccentric man, - you’ll have to marry him, because you will be the mother of twins (CGT 239).
This shows their curiosity about their future and their superstitious mind. The prophetic remark of Fortune teller comes true.

Caithleen is always thinking about Eugene. “I thought of him and of his sudden outbursts of nervous energy which made him dance around and conduct an imaginary orchestra or chop wood for an hour” (CGT 241). This shows Eugene’s frustrated behavior. His wife has left him alone behind and has gone to London with child.

Then the letter of Eugene from London comes. It says,

Dear sweet-ling, How are you? --- I didn’t notice the resentment in your fat bottom --- I’m staying in a hotel, which is full of young American girls --- I’m working very hard on those glories sewerages --- Goodnight from you devoted, E” (CGT 243).

Caithleen is insulted by this letter. She is nervous by the remarks – ‘fat bottom and young American girls.’ This letter is written on hotel paper.

Another letter comes. But it isn’t written by Eugene. It has a Dublin postmark. It is from unknown friend. It reads – “Are you aware that this man is evil and has lived with numerous women and then walked out on them --- I shall have to secure your parents address and inform them” (CGT 243). The words ‘treacherous’ and ‘bad’ are also used in it for Eugene. Caithleen is frightened. Some unknown friend of Caithleen wants to tell her about Eugene. The friend wants to warn her. She is in two minds.

Then one day, on New Year’s Eve, her father arrives with letter in her shop. He has been drinking. Having seen him, her breathing quickened and her body starts to shake all over. He first praises her then accuses. According to him, Caithleen is clever and she has been preparing for civil service examinations. Then, after sometime, he says, “I wasn’t
expecting this, I want to talk to you, my lady, you living like a heathen-” (CGT 245). There is a typed letter written to her father by unknown person. That letter reads:

Dear Mr. Brady. It is high time you know about your daughter and the company she keeps --- He is well known in this city as a dangerous type. No one knows where he gets his money and he has no religion. I would not like to see a nice Catholic Irish girl ruined by a dirty foreigner (CGT 246).

The words used in this letter show the nature of Eugene and the attitude of Irish person towards a foreigner. Such letters play prophetic roles in the novels of O’Brien.

Her father is bursting with anger. He says, “Nice thing for your poor father to get in his old age.” ---, where is he? I’ll hammer the life out of him.” He’s having more to do with you.” You will never set eyes on him again” (CGT 246). Her father is annoyed by her behavior but Caithleen is against her father. It is too much to hear. “I’m my own boss; I’ll do what I like” (CGT 246). This is first time she has become bold and very aggressive. The very first time she goes against her father and uses harsh words. She rebukes him. Her father has got the money for grazing. Jack Holland has taken in his possession most of their land. Her father has kept some fields at the far end of the boundary. He is always drinking wine.

Aunt Molly (her mother’s sister) has been looking after her father. Her father takes her in the car forcefully and takes her to the home. He abuses her and tells the taxi-driver that she had driven her mother (Mama) to an early grave. Then they travel by train from Dublin to the central plain of Ireland. On the way they meet Tom Healy, an old friend of Dada. Tom Healy is hackney car owner.
Her father has become weak, broken and unlovely. Caithleen feels sorry for him. But her mind immediately changes. She says to herself – “Don’t be ass stop pitying him, that’s what ruined your mother’s life” (*CGT* 253). Her mind becomes very harsh. She is not ready to pity him.

Then she plans to leave her father’s house on the first bus the following morning before her father wakes up. She feels disloyal to her aunt but she is determined and resolved to go back to Eugene. “Eternal Damnation or not” (*CGT* 254). This remark is prophetic. It is very pity that she is not happy in her father’s house.

Her aunt is very kind but Caithleen lies and tells her that she has to go back to her job at Limerick. Her aunt pleads her, “Don’t go, don’t leave me, He’ll kill me, to find you gone” (*CGT* 255).

Caithleen loves and likes aunt. But for the sake of Eugene she lies with her. The image used in this chapter is very apt.

There is ‘the calf hanging out of the cow dead.’ Maura a local girl who comes to milk cows’ morning and evening has been always helping them. Mr. Brennan, the vet, is Baba’s father. He also helps them. Caithleen’s house is damp, dilapidated and cursed. People feel that the ghost of Caithleen’s Mama visits that house.

Mr. Brennan says her, “I am very disappointed in you,” “I thought I could rely on you” (*CGT* 257). On this remark Caithleen feels that she has lost him also as a friend. Caithleen feels that Martha would help her as she professed to understand about men and love – But Martha says unflinchingly – “Baba’s father and I agree that you should not see this man again” (*CGT* 258). Because of these remarks Caithleen feels alone and she cries a lot. She is full of sorrow. She has lost all her friends and her relatives. She is a lonely girl.

Martha suggests that Caithleen should stay home and should go to technical school with her and learn crocheting and tapestry. Caithleen
says about all this – “why did everybody hate a man they’d never met” (CGT 259). This remark shows that Caithleen is leaving behind reality and moving towards illusions that is love of Eugene which leads her towards tragic end of her married life.

Caithleen is hurt. She feels guilty. People look at her in her village as if they want to kill her. As if she has committed a shameful act. Caithleen mention two events. Caithleen has stolen three pounds out of her father’s pocket in Joanna’s hall stand.

Once she has gone to buy two letters in her village on bicycle. On the way returning home, she meets Mr. Gentleman. She hadn’t seen him for two years. He looks thinner, more haggard, but his face still has that strange holy – picture quality that makes her think of moonlight and the chaste way he used to kiss her. Now Caithleen recalls about Mr. Gentleman who is half French. His voice is a bit foreign. He had persuaded her to go with him to Vienna for a few days; and on the evening that they were to go, he just had not come to collect her. About this Mr. Gentleman said, “you’re young, young people do a lot of foolish things.” “You are a very foolish–little girl, do you know that” (CGT 261). It shows Mr. Gentleman has deceived her. He is a liar. Actually he is not saint. It is illusion of Caithleen. There is illusion and reality, juxtaposed.

The fate, or duty or family forces him away from Caithleen. He becomes religious and carries a big missal to mass. Caithleen, having seen him, is trembling with anger. Even she could not cycle. Her emotions are expressed in the following words. “I thought of Mr. Gentleman with his pale face his beautiful, loveless eyes, and I thought of how I used to think he was God. I wished I had some ways of hurting him, because of his falseness” (CGT 262). Illusion has turned into stark reality. She feels sick and angry with her aunt and with everyone, even with Mr. Gentleman.
One day father Hagerty comes to see Caithleen. Her father has told him about her affair. He has come to change her mind. He says about Eugene:

You are walking the path of moral damnation. --- This man is dangerous company. He has no faith, no moral standards. He married a woman and divorced her whom-God hath joined together let no man put asunder (CGT 269).

Father Hagerty cautions Caithleen about her affair with Eugene. Yet Caithleen is firm. She says, “He seems to be good man. He doesn’t drink, or anything” (CGT 269). This shows her deep love and attachment with him. She has become bold. On her remark her father says, ‘a stubborn girl.’ Father Hagerty gives a little book. It is a beautiful leather-bound volume with gilt edging, *The imitation of Christ*. He tells her to read a little of it every day and learn to model herself in the image of Christ. He asks her to promise never to see or write the divorced man that is Eugene. Then he asks her to make an ‘Act of perfect contrition’ i.e. to say “O my god I am heartily sorry” (CGT 271). Caithleen says these words but there are different emotions and feelings in her mind. She says, “I felt an awful hypocrite saying words that I did not mean” (CGT 271). This shows Caithleen’s changed nature. She is no more country girl.

Then father Hagerty asks Caithleen to attend the confessions on Saturday night and Woman’s Confraternity function in the church on Sunday. But Caithleen is not prepared for such religious acts.

They are very poor. Even they have no money to give father Hagerty as offering for a mass. “We had no money, I thought it funny that two grown people living in that large house hadn’t a two-shilling piece between them. A tinker wouldn’t believe it if he knocked on the door” (CGT 272). Caithleen is aware of her poverty as well as her act. She goes
against her father and father Hagerty. This one mistake leads her on tragic path unknowingly.

Her father’s depression is very frightening. He has been taking too much alcohol. So he is not able to take food or to eat for several days. Dada asks her to smoke a cigarette. She smokes only to oblige him. Then he uses the insulting word for Eugene ‘a hooligan’. This word ‘hooligan’ has incensed Caithleen. But she controls her temper. This shows tense relationship between father and daughter over the issue of love affair of daughter.

Her father asks for another drink. There isn’t wine or alcohol in the bottle (the siphon). Her aunt asks her to go to Jack Holland-the local wine shop owner- to fetch bottle. She goes in Jack Holland’s public house to fetch wine bottle. Jack Holland the man of sixty or seventy asks her to marry him.

Because of poverty and need of money to run away to Eugene. She kisses old and dirty man like Jack Holland. She tells Jack Holland – “I love someone and they are going to lock me up and not let me see him.” I said, exaggerating a bit to melt his heart. --- “And can you loan me money for the train?” (CGT 277). He promises to loan her five pounds. This shows the nature of Jack Holland and such Irish men, who are aged but immoral.

Her Aunt Molly and Maura also help her to run away from home. Tom Duggan takes her in his car up to Nenagh, the railway station. She catches the eleven o’clock train.

On the way he stops his car and goes into the pub and drinks. It is in the lighted street of Invara. Then he drives on. He has only one hand. Then he says to Caithleen, “would you marry me?” This is very bitter and insulting experience of a country girl Caithleen.
Then she takes the train and reaches Dublin. It is night. She takes the taxi and reaches Joanna’s house in total darkness.

Next day she goes to Eugene’s house. She is tired and frightened. She kisses him, a little kiss and feels the comfort of being near him again.

Eugene, who is the man of thirty five and going bald, welcomes her. He is very considerate man. He is always taking care and planning about his life. Caithleen feels that he has been trying to get rid of her. Sometimes she feels insecure. Because once he had said,

But you must understand that relationships between people are not as crude or as simple as this. Sex is not some independent thing, it is part of what people feel for each other and I could no more make love to you in this nerve racked state than I could chew my old socks. --- “In fact, the wisest thing would be for you to go away.” --- “I’ll give you the money to go London for a week or two, and then when everyone has called down, you can come back again” (CGT 288).

Eugene is also frightened as he feels insecure in his life. He says, “If we both stay here, they’ll come and perhaps force you away, if we both go London, they’ll probably have the police after us” (CGT 289).

Eugene buys and presents Caithleen with portable radio. He plans to send her London by airplane. He is very casual about everything. By temperament he is very cool and composed. He is very proud and does not wish to share his trouble with anyone. He believes in the slow, invisible process of growth, the thing which has to take root first in the lonely dark of one, away from the light. He likes to plant trees and watch them grow. His voice is very calm and face very still. He answers the questions in a very peculiar way. He loves to live life like a monk. Caithleen is living with him. The fear of father Dada is lurking in their
mind. One day her father Dada comes with five or six men by taxi. Andy-
her father’s cousin, a Cattle dealer, Jack Holland and the Ferrets. They
ask Eugene the questions like – “Are you a Catholic?” “Do you go to
mass?” “Do you eat meat on Friday?” (CGT 297). On such foolish
question Eugene says, “God help Ireland” (CGT 297). “You are old
enough to be her father,” (CGT 297). Dada said, “You’re nearly as old as
myself” (CGT 297). This is very insulting remark.

Eugene says, “she’s over twenty-one, you can’t force her,” not
even in Ireland,” she is in my legal care. A gust in my house.” “Leave my
house or I’ll telephone for the police” (CGT 297). Then they kick and hit
him hard. But he is saved by Anna. She comes with gun and says “I’ll
blow your brains out,” (CGT 297). Thus Anna saves his life. This event
shows her father’s disturbed mind although he is drunkard. He wants to
save his daughter from immoral act.

Next day, in the morning Caithleen makes tea and take it to him.
He says, ‘Nice tea.’ Caithleen feels about him – “he lay there, like a
Christ, sipping tea, his head resting on the mahogany head board” (298).
Reality and illusion are mixed.

Caithleen cannot differentiate between reality and illusion. She is
emotional.

Anna has saved his life. So, Eugene is very grateful. But Anna tries
to blackmail him. Anna says, “Will you loan me fifty pounds?” “I want to
get a sewing machine and a few things for the baby. If I had a sewing
machine we could mend all your shirts” (CGT 305). Anna always talks
about Laura. Because of it Caithleen is under burden. She thinks that one
day Eugene will leave her and will go to his previous wife and child.

The touching conversation between Caithleen and Eugene shows
that they have been creating a kind of attachment. Both feel lonely and
they are seeking a good partner. “Why do you want me to stay” –
Caithleen. Because I like you. I’ve lived like a hermit for so long. I mean, sometime I feel lonely.” “Caithleen” he said softly – he usually said “Kate or Katie.” Caithleen, stay” (CGT 309). Because of her, his life has changed. Once again he is getting interest in life. He wants to marry her.

He has planned to buy her a marriage ring, so that Anna and the neighbors would not bother her with questions. He wants that she should not be under pressure and tension. He tells her that they can’t get married legally. He says, “We can’t actually get married, I am not divorced and there is the child.” Even he tells her about his mother “My mother is a hypochondriac” (CGT 310). She married my father in those fortunate days when women’s legs were covered in long skirts. “I am the product of that accidental encounter” (CGT 310). He tells her about his personal life because a kind of affinity is to be created between them. He becomes very emotional. He narrates about his previous life in detail.

His father had left them when he (Eugene) was about five. He remembered his father dimly as a man who came from work with a fiddle and oranges, his mother had worked as waitress to feed them both and like nine truths of the human race, he had a hard life and an unhappy child-hood (CGT 310).

Because of his unhappy childhood life at present he wants to spend his present days, quietly like harmit. Caithleen also tells about her Mama and her childhood days. But she has not told him about Dada’s habit of drinking. On this Eugene says, “So we both need a father, we have a common bond” (CGT 311). As if O’Brien wants to show that in patriarchal societies, one has to search for good father. There is the need of father, kind and considerate. Protagonists are in search of secure place and care taking relatives.
Eugene is against the sentimentality. One day a letter from Aunt Molly for Caithleen comes. Kate wants to answer it. But Eugene says, “Don’t answer it.” “You’ve got to be hard on people, you’ve got to be hard on yourself” (CGT 313). This is the philosophy of Eugene. He has become such unsentimental person. He has been living life like a harmit, only because of his unhappy childhood days and his parents. Because of her relationship with a foreigner and especially a marry man who is against their religion, Caithleen fees guilty.

She always feels that she has committed sin.

One day he brings her a ring and one or two other things. Caithleen feels very happy and pleased. Because of it she gives the gray-haireded attendant five shilling tip and tells her “I got married today” (CGT 315). This expression shows that she is very much happy and overjoyed. That poor lady shakes her hand and tears filled her kind eyes as she wished a long life of happiness for Caithleen.

Caithleen expresses her happy married moments in the following way. “In certain lights and at certain moments, most women look beautiful that light and that moment were mine, and in the wall mirror I saw myself, fleetingly beautiful”( CGT 315). She has been craving for this. That night they sleep in one bed. She describes her first night with Eugene.

The first thrust pained, but the pain inspired me, and I lay there astonished with myself. --- “I thought of Baba and Martha any my aunt and all the people who regarded me as a child and I knew that I had now passed – inescapably into womanhood” (CGT 316).

Her first night with Eugene has turned her into a woman. She is no more a girl. Her first night has transformed her into grown up woman. Eugene compares the enjoyment with an ice-cream. It is symbolic. This
image is unconsciously used by Eugene. But in future this married life becomes cold. It loses its warmth.

Eugene says her, “I could eat you like an ice cream” (CGT 316). He loves and likes her but he never uses the dangerous words like “forever and ever”, for his love.

Caithleen has explained her first experience of love and sex in the following way – I felt no pleasure, just some strange satisfaction that I had done what I was born to do. --- I thought to myself, so this is it; the secret I dreaded, and longed --- for the growing excitement of his body enthralled me – like the rhythm of the sea. --- kisses and little cries that he put into my body, until at last he expired on me and washed me with his love. --- Then it was quiet, such quietness, quietness and softness and the tender limp thing like a wet flower between my legs (CGT 316).

This description shows that they could not establish love and deep relationship between them. She feels that love means different thing which she could not get from him also. Her union with him is only because of physical needs and no more. The images used in her expression are very powerful and apt. The words and phrases ‘strange satisfaction’, ‘he expired on me’, and ‘washed me’, ‘wet flower’ and ‘tender limp thing’ strike the readers. They predict the tragedy in future. It shows that there is no romance at all. Only physical pleasure takes place.

Eugene’s expression is very striking, he says, “you’re a ruined woman now.” --- “Well, a new incumbent more responsibility, more trouble.” Then he adds – “It’s all right. I wouldn’t throw a nice girls like you out of my bed” (CGT 317).
The enjoyment of first night is expressed in striking words as if there is no love at all. They have come together only because of circumstances. As if both of them are in search of heavenly pleasures and romance which remains a dream.

There is inferiority complex in Caithleen’s mind. She expresses her feelings which are noteworthy. “I wondered what he really thought of me. I was not sophisticated and I couldn’t talk very well or drive a car” (CGT 317). It shows that Caithleen is always under tension or burden.

Eugene says, “I didn’t want you sophisticated, I just want to give you nice babies” (CGT 317). This remark shows that he wants to enjoy her and produce nice babies which is against the wish of Caithleen.

“Babies”—I nearly died --- Babies terrified me. I remembered the day Baba first told me about breast feeling and I felt sick again” (CGT 317). Everything goes against Caithleen’s wish. She is common country girl. Her minimum expectations like friendship warmth, parents love are denied. So she feels once again, lonely even in the company of Eugene. She feels sick. Even she denies or doesn’t like motherhood.

Eugene says about her, “You were a marvelous girl.” Kate, “you look so peaceful in your sleep. I’ve been looking at you for the past half hour, you’re like a doll” (CGT 318). He compares her with a doll. The image of doll is very symbolic. He treats her like a play thing and not as a human being.

In this way their experience of honeymoon is described which is prophetic. Eugene’s stern and practical approach to life is striking. He says, “Lucky you don’t snore, or I’d send you back.” On this Caithleen asks – “Do you love me?” Then Eugene says, “ask me that in ten years time, when I know you better” (CGT 319).

Eugene links her with ‘breakfast’. He treats her as ‘breakfast’ or ‘ice-cream’. It is insulting. But poor Caithleen quietly bears him.
There are some letters and talks about Eugene are going to South America in the spring to do a documentary film on irrigation for chemical company. It is certain that he will have to go to South America for a few weeks to earn money by making the picture on irrigation. He is going alone. There is no chance of Kate’s going. It is clear that he will not take her with him to South America as if he is trying to avoid her. His attitudes towards her are totally changed.

Attitude of men toward women or husband toward wife in Ireland is explained in the following remark of Anna - “It’s all right for you, Mr. Gaillard talks to you,” (CGT 321). Anna says to Caithleen. Denis is husband of Anna. He uses kind word for the baby and the sheep dog, this is noticed by Caithleen. Denis is never answering or talking with Anna, as if he wants to punish her. This event shows that in Ireland women are treated very badly. They are always humiliated.

For some days Caithleen feels very pretty, and happy in his company. He used to say her, “Love suits you, makes you prettier,” (CGT 321). Caithleen is opinion about Eugene is ironic. She says, “I’m told now that some men are strangers with a woman after they have loved her, but he was not like that” (CGT 321).

There are many rules. She is bored by rules. --- “Life with him carried many rules which I resented slightly” (CGT 323).

One day the Body and Baba come to see them. The Body and Eugene exchange some hot words. The Body is drunkard. By mistake, he drinks cows urine kept in a whisky bottle by Eugene.

Here Caithleen expresses her deep feelings and her experience as a married woman in the company of Eugene. Eugene treats and guards her as if she is a child.

Baba’s impression about Caithleen’s life is “well, Jesus, you’re in a nice mess”. On this Caithleen says, “I’m not in any mess, I’m very
happy” (CGT 324). Baba asks her whether they have got married or not. Caithleen changes the subject. She avoids answering her questions. Baba suspects about her happy life. Baba’s remark is prophetic.

Baba is nice looking and pretty girl. She meets one person at a party. He wants to paint her picture, the picture in the nude. According to that person, Baba has the nicest profile he ever saw. This shows the nature of Baba. She is ready for the nude picture.

Baba tells that she has heard from her mother that Dada is coming to see Caithleen along with the Bishop Jordon of the diocese. Eugene and Caithleen are not ready to receive them. Her father’s voice has become plaintive. He is frightened and ashamed. Caithleen feels pity for him. Eugene talks with him in harsh words, “she’s twenty one years old and here of her own free will” (CGT 327).

Dada says, “you think you’re very important but this is our country and you can’t come along here and destroy people who’ve lived here for generations, don’t think that ---” (CGT 327).

Psychological state of Caithleen is very sad and nervous. She feels once again lonely. She has lost her Mama and now she has been losing her father Dada and other relatives.

These dialogue’s show that in those days foreigners where coming and destroying the life of common Irish people. Most of the Irish people were worried about their daughters and their future life.

Caithleen feels very sorry that she can’t meet her father in her house. “I cried and disliked myself for having been so cruel to my father.” “I am in love and I’m miserable” (CGT 327). On all fronts she is defeated. She is not successful into love or in married life. Her love has turned her life into miserable condition. She has lost goodness in her. She has become irreligious. She feels that she has committed big mistake and sin. She feels guilty. So, one day she decides to go to the church.
“I could feel the goodness going out of me, as I had not been to mass for five weeks” (CGT 327). Instead of going to the local chapel, they go to village chapel, eight or nine miles away. It is new concrete chapel. She has no prayer book but just the white beads that has been given by a nun to her in the convent. She tries hard to say a Rosary but she can’t. Eugene is not religious person.

His bright eyes are mocking her “only egomaniacs see Christ as God come --- emanation of goodness from all men,” (CGT 328).

The villages are full of dirty and poor people. They have ill-fitting clothes with sour smell. Eugene and Caithleen feel pity for them.

In that chapel there is the sermon about Grace. Caithleen comes out from mass wondering if she has spurned God’s Grace. On this - Eugene remarks, “so, when you’ve in there you become a convent girl again” (CGT 328). This insults Caithleen. She feels very sorry and awkward.

She thinks of herself “looking like a crow in black shoes and stocking and serge gym which was never ironed properly, because Mama died before I went away to boarding school and I had to attend to my own uniform” (CGT 328). Because of Eugene’s remarks as a convent girl – she recalls her bitter experience in the convent. Eugene has been always insulting her. He remarks on her hypocrisy –

I don’t know how you can do it. How can you live two lives? --- you’ve deep in it with crucifixions and hell and bloody thrones. And here am I sitting on a wall, reading about atom – bombs and you say, “Who am I? Who are you and what are you doing in my life.”? (CGT 329).

Eugene feels that she is hypocrite and selfish girl. Her nature is very different. He doesn’t like her nature. Because of her, his life has changed. It has become worst living. Here is the beginning of ‘rift’ or partition in their life.
Eugene recognizes the flashes of unhappiness in her face and remarks “what unites men and women is not God or the New Statesman”. Then he adds, “you won’t brood for the rest of the day, will you sweet-ling?” (CGT 329). Eugene is reading about atom bomb. He is congregated with fructification, hell and hypocrisy of the religious activity. Eugene is very conscious about her happiness and her interest. He calls her sweet-ling. Although he calls her hypocrites, he himself is a hypocrite. Caithleen has already began to brood. “I scented trouble and difficulties” (CGT 329). This shows future difficulties to come. She feels she will have to face certain difficulties in her life. Her words come true. She can’t arm herself against him, as she loves him too much. This shows her pathetic situation.

She is worried about her marriage. She says, “I wouldn’t get married, unless I got married in a Catholic Church” (CGT 329). said Caithleen. On this Eugene says, “I’m glad you told me, I’ll make a note of that” (CGT 329). Caithleen feels sarcasm in his rich voice. Slowly she comes to know about his bullish nature. She is looking in the sky. There is rainbow. She is attracted towards rainbow. She says, “I could feel my attitude to him changing like the colors of the changing sky” (CGT 330).

The image used here is very symbolic and powerful. The changing colors of sky and her changing feelings are aptly compared.

Eugene’s friends and visitors always come to see them. Caithleen used to put on a lot of make up to compensate for her social inadequacies. Simon is the poet and a friend of Laura. Caithleen is frightened of him. Eugene’s friends terrified her. She doesn’t like their company. Because Simon used to call all women cows – “a fat cow, a thin cow, a frigid cow,” “a nice cow” (CGT 332) as well as he used to ask vulgar questions. Caithleen has come to know that Eugene has daughter from his previous wife Laura.
Elaine is the name of daughter. Eugene hasn’t taken divorce. Caithleen can’t become his legal wife. So she can’t marry with him in the church. Caithleen starts to hate him. She starts to find his faults and weaknesses as well as strengths.

Caithleen was a country girl. Eugene’s mother uses insulting words for Caithleen. She says, “well what can you expect?” (CGT 335). Country girl fresh from the bogs.

Caithleen has become helpless. Eugene has been always insulting her. Once Eugene says to Baba in the company of his friends. “Baba, when I have a harem, you’ll be in it” I’m teaching Kate how to speak English before I take her into society” (CGT 335).

Cathleen starts to hate him, she is very angry. Here starts the rift in their married life. Eugene starts to avoid her company because she has no social manners.

Once Baba says, “He’ll never marry you” and I thought,” “It’s true, because he’s a dark horse”. “The good and the bad of him alternated in my thoughts” (CGT 336). This remark shows that she is not happy with him in her married life. She is deceived. So, she compares him with dark horse. When the visitors have gone, in the evening Caithleen says to Eugene, “Trying to make little of me in front of people” (CGT 336). She is reproaching him. She first time uses such harsh words.

She asks him – “Simon says that Laura is sailing for Cobh,” (CGT 337) she is coming to meet him. On this, Eugene says, “I’ll delighted to see her” (CGT 337). Eugene is very calm and impassive. It hurts Caithleen. She feels insulted again. Eugene tries to convince her. He says, “we can discuss things; maybe I can get a divorce and marry you. We’ll share the child, Laura can come here and well all be the good friends” (CGT 337). But Caithleen doesn’t believe in him. She is indignant. She feels, “He’s a prig’ an indifferent unfeeling prig. I let out some sound or
despair” (CGT 337). His behaviour has despaired her. She wants freedom from him.

“The words stung me. Something-everything-had struck the whole, laughing pleasure or my life” (CGT 337). Once again she has lost all the pleasure of life. She has lost her hold on life.

Once they have gone to drink, in the lounge bar. The local people comment on this couple- ‘Pagans, pagans’. One villager says, “So his nib’s got rid of the American woman and now he has this young one” (CGT 338). By such insulting remarks Caithleen ‘blushed and looked down’. Even local people have been insulting them openly. She has lost interest in life with Eugene. She also starts to avoid him. A turning point comes in her life.

She receives first telegram sent by Laura for Eugene. She becomes very angry. In the state of outrage she crumples it. Then Laura’s letter comes. Laura’s name is written on the back of it, ‘Mrs. Laura Gaillard’ in this letter she has mentioned about Eugene- “I always said you had a feudal attitude to woman” (CGT 341). This letter shows Eugene’s feudal attitude to women. Eugene has also sent a letter to her, in it he has mentioned about Caithleen. I have met a girl, she is Irish and romantic and illogical. Laura has written in her letter “We were made for one another” (CGT 342). The word illogical is very insulting. It shows Eugene’s opinion about Caithleen. It means that there is some cordial relationship between Laura and Eugene. Caithleen feels insecure.

Eugene is very calm, cold and controlled. Whereas Caithleen is nervous, frustrated and angry. Their temperament is not matching. They are always trying to find faults. Caithleen says, to Eugene, “It’s terrible” (CGT 342). On this he says, “you shouldn’t have meddled in my affair. It has nothing to do with you, I didn’t intend you to read that letter and you had no right to do so” (CGT 342). Caithleen feels that he is snatching her
rights or he is denying her natural rights. So, Caithleen angrily says, “But the way you do things, you are so independent and you don’t tell me anything” (CGT 343). She accuses him that he has been deceiving her. On this -

Eugene says, “So you want ownership, too signed and sealed? One hour in bed shall be paid for by a life sentence?” (CGT 343). There words are very sharp and cutting. She is shocked by these words. She says angrily “it’s the best thing to go away” (CGT 343).

The simple country girl Cathleen starts to experience the bitter married life. She has been expecting complete love of Eugene. She needs complete possession. But she is denied. She asks for five pounds and he gives her. She is touched and hurt by this last minute generosity. Eugene says, “you’ll give the wrong impression, you know, leaving in a disheveled state” (CGT 344). Eugene has marvelous faculty for being right. He tells her in a kind and considerate voice. That she should have to grow up and learn to control her emotions. According to Eugene discipline and control are the virtues which he most appreciates. His motto is when about to cement fourth wife under kitchen floor, pause and make tea. He wants to impress Caithleen. This shows his control over anger. She is ready to live with him. But his previous wife Laura always creeps into her mind. She is often disturbed by his relationship with Laura. Eugene tries to calm her down. So he prepares and offers her tea. Caithleen feels happy and elevated.

She wants to be different person large, placid and strong. She has learnt very new philosophy of life from him. That night,

When he loved me and sank into me, I thought to myself. It is only with our bodies that we ever really forgive one another, the mind pretends to forgive, but it harbors and
remembers in moments of blackness. And even in loving him, I remembered our difficulties (CGT 345).

Both of them have come from the separate different worlds- Eugene is controlled full of bite and intolerance, knowing everything and everyone. But Caithleen is swayed and frightened by every wind, light headed, mad in one eye, and bred in “Stone Age ignorance and religious Savagery” (CGT 345). They try to live together peacefully.

Cathleen praise god to help her. She prays St. Jude - patron or hopeless cases. She doesn’t want to leave him. She wants to spend her life peacefully in his company. Then for four or five weeks, everything is all right.

Powerful images and symbols are used to describe her calm and quiet life. The images are taken from the nature.

Buds like too many points of hope tipped the brown and black twigs- green buds, black buds and silver white buds that looked as if they should sing as they burst upon us waiting. Lambs were born at all hours of day and night. In these words she describes her happy life.

There is a sudden twist in her life. One day Baba comes. She gives her bad news. Baba is pregnant. But her friend has left her alone. Now she either wants to go to England or to live in Caithleen’s house. Caithleen is frightened and dreaded. She is dreaded by babies. Caithleen is worried that Baba would share her bed and it frightened her. She suspects Baba and hates her. Eugene says about Baba: “poor Baba, the poor old bitch” (CGT 349). It shows Eugene’s attitude towards Irish women. Caithleen is also shocked by these remarks. Eugene is ready to help her in her difficult time. Caithleen wants babies. Her intention is expresses by her in the following words. “Women care for themselves or for their children who are extensions of themselves or for husbands, who
fill their days and their bodies as he filled mine. Though he was not my husband” (*CGT* 349).

Eugene is not her legal husband. So she feels insecure. She wants to protect herself by bearing children to him.

One day, they receive two telegrams. One from Baba to Caithleen and another from Laura to Eugene Caithleen read both and feels “something dreadful was coming to wrench us apart” (*CGT* 350). These telegrams are prophetic.

Laura’s telegram reads “IF YOU MARRY HER, YOU WILL NEVER SEE ELAINE OR ME AGAIN. I PROMISE YOU LAURA” (350). Caithleen is once again frightened and disturbed by these telegrams. One day Eugene brings home a bunch of red and white hawthorn. It has sickly-sweet smell. Caithleen says, “Don’t bring it in the home it’s unlucky” (*CGT* 351). This is very symbolic image. It symbolizes calamities in future.

The telegram of Laura has affected. Eugene’s face starts to look haggard and the lines around his eyes seem to grow deeper. In the evening he listens to music and sits very still. It shows he is very sad. Caithleen feels pity for him. It is clear that Laura has blackmailed him, and Caithleen has allowed it to affect their relationship. Because of it the gloomy atmosphere has spreads over their house, as the mountain mist spreads over the fields in the wet evenings. Caithleen feels that they are unknown to each other. She feels him martyr nailed to his chair, thinking and sighing and smoking. It shows Eugene is annoyed by two wives. He has become helpless.

Eugene pours tea and offers cup first to Mary It is insult of Caithleen. Caithleen says, “At any other time I would not have mined, but that day I was more touchy than usual. --- I felt very lonely and did not want to be with them. Eugene and I were all right alone, but when anyone
else came I lost him to them” (*CGT* 355). This shows her attachment with Eugene. She loves him. She wants complete possession. She is disturbed by the pressure of his friends.

The presence of American girl creates jealousy and hatred in her mind. She thinks that American girl is smart like Laura. Laura and American girl are bright, talkative, and long legged. They are beautiful. Eugene is observing American girl closely. Simon and Eugene are talking about her beauty and figure. Caithleen is insulted and hurt by Eugene’s behavior. She leaves the room and goes to her secret seat in the lady’s garden and cries a lot, feels wretched. She thinks that Eugene is cruel. She says,

> It was such a shock to me to know that he could love me at night and yet seems to become a stranger in daytime. --- Up to then I thought then being one with him in bed meant being one with him in life, but I knew how that I was mistaken and that lovers are strangers in between times (*CGT* 356).

This is the turning point of her life, her so called married life. She suspected him, “I felt sick and doomed, knowing that one day he would leave me because of them” (*CGT* 357). Caithleen suspects that Eugene loves Laura, Mary and Elein his daughter. She suspects that Eugene might have written letter to Laura. He might be in touch with her and his daughter. She says, “I had no idea if he had replied or not. He always did things without telling me” (*CGT* 357).

Caithleen feels herself an outsider. She feels that Eugene is a liar. After the departure of Mary and Simon, Eugene comes in her bed room. There is some hot exchange between them. Because of this hot exchange the separation in their life taken place.

Eugene says in grievous tone:
What the hell is wrong with you? “Are you in one of your emotional states?” Cathleen says, “You just make little of me and ignore me, Eugene is too articulate too sure of his own rightness. He says: I give you everything-food, clothes -- I try to educate you, teach you how to speak, how to deal with people build up your confidence, but that is not enough, “You now want to own me” (CGT 358).

He goes on insulting her. Even he mentions her father and her weakness. She becomes angry. He says, “Your inadequacies, your fears, your traumas, your father ---” (CGT 358). Caithleen begins to cry because of his insulting remarks.

Caithleen tries to please him. She refers about Laura’s coming back. About it Eugene says, “One relationship does not cancel out another, you’re all” (CGT 359). Eugene uses insulting and abusive words.

The word is used by him ‘different’ this shows his intension. He says her ‘acting like a barmaid’. Because of such remarks, Caithleen feels lonely. She feels nervous and sorry. She wants to remind Eugene that Mary’s face is like Laura. It reminds her Laura. So out of jealousy she says to Eugene. “If you see her again I’ll go away and I won’t come back” (CGT 360). It is the fact that she has reminded him of Laura. Her intension is clear. As a married woman. “I wanted him exclusively for myself” (CGT 360). The problem of possession is the theme of these novels. It creates rift in their relationships.

Eugene says, “In the that case you ought to start packing now because I’am having lunch with them tomorrow” (360). Caithleen is totally outraged by this. Then there comes the most striking and insulting remarks of Eugene- “Look at yourself in the glass – you’re like red, swollen washerwoman” (CGT 360).
There is bitterness on his face. He points out her faults. So Caithleen decides to teach him a lesson and by leaving him alone, she feels that he would search for her and will never to let her out of his sight again. Her intension is good but Eugene couldn’t understand it. He feels that she has left him forever. She doesn’t like to live with him.

She gets a suitcase and packs her clothes and some jewelry of her Mama and a gold chain bought by Eugene for her. She puts the case in the trunk of the car and the marriage ring he had bought for her in the ash-tray on his desk. She has finally decided to go away for a week to give him plenty of time to miss her. She is pretending that she is going away forever. In the letter written to him, she has mentioned—“I love you, but I do not want to be a burden to you, so I am leaving. Goodbye” (CGT 362).

She puts her marriage ring in ash-tray. It is ominous symbol. It predicts the tragic end of her married life. Her unconscious act leads her to tragic end.

She goes to Joanna’s house. Baba inquires about her. She starts to cry. Baba consoles her and reminds her “My mother is bloody right. All men are pigs” (CGT 362). Baba uses very harsh words.

Baba has decided to go to England the following Friday. Her parents have allowed her to take her insurance money out of the bank. She is looking pale, due to her recent misadventure. She has been smoking more. Baba asks Caithleen “Come to England” --- “We’ll have a whale of a time, Striptease girls in soho, that’s what we’ll be!” (CGT 363). Caithleen wants to be a nurse. She clings to stupid hopes. As one does in times of desperation. Then the shocking news about comes Eugene that Eugene has gone to home without Caithleen. Caithleen is shocked. Baba and Joanna suspects that he has gone home with Mary-that maron, cute and moving American girl. Caithleen trembles with fear she
feels that the worst thing is going to happen in her life. Baba comments about Eugene- “He says old men and young girl are all right in books but not anywhere else. You are to stay here” (CGT 365). Baba is very cruel and naughty. She frightens Caithleen by above remark. On her remark Caithleen cries loudly- and says “I’m going to Eugene I’m going to him. He does want me, he does want me” (CGT 365). This shows that once a gentle country girl has become wild debased person because of some damn man.

One day Caithleen tries to talk with him on phone, but he is not at home. Anna tells her that Eugene has gone away and taken a travel bag with him. Caithleen is frustrated. So she decides to go to London with Baba. Baba prepares the plan of leaving to London.

Baba writes a letter to her mother and through it, she tells Caithleen’s father that Caithleen has left Eugene and she is also going to London with Baba. Her father is delighted by this news. He praises Caithleen through his letter and he sends 50 pounds reward for her because she has been loyal to her family and to religion. But Caithleen thinks that Eugene will meet her in London. She has written him letters. But he has not answered her letters. She has been craving to be one with him.

They pack their luggage and leave the house of Joanna to go to London. They says good bye to Mr. and Mrs. Burns. Mr. Burns gives her a pound and say that it is God who has saved her from that awful man. But no one except Baba seems to realize that Caithleen by heart wants only to go back to Eugene.

Caithleen rings him again, but he is not at home. The house has become a monastery and he has become a monk. Caithleen remembers him saying ‘a stone’.
I could see his brown eyes as I had lost seen them in the hotel; full of sadness and full of knowledge that I was not the girl he had imagined me to be. A stone, he’d solid. I thought of stones bursting open in the hot sun and other stones washed smooth by a river. I knew well (CGT 371).

The metaphoric reference of stone creates various meanings in this novel. Eugene feels and thinks that Caithleen is not only a country girl but she is senseless. So, he calls her a stone. She is deeply hurt. She has become helpless and because of it once again she feels lonely which the title of the novel The Lonely Girl is.

Caithleen’s description of herself and explanation about stone is an image aptly used by the writer O’Brien. The image is powerful and meaningful. Caithleen’s mental condition becomes clear by following expression. She says: “I’ll go mad, I’ll go mad,” “I’ll never forget him” (CGT 372). Caithleen is crying and weeping continuously. Then they leave Dublin for London by the ship named Hibernia. She is not ready to leave Dublin by heart. But Baba has forced her to leave Dublin. So she says to herself –

I could hardly believe that we were moving that we were leaving Ireland. --- And gradually the City of Dublin started receding in the mauve twilight of a May evening the city where I first kissed him outside the Customs House, the city where I had two teeth out, and pawned one of Mama’s rings. The city I loved. --- “She swore never to set foot there again, love or not love” (CGT 374).

This is very tragic and touching end of her happy life with Eugene. She has become emotional. She resolves not to return Dublin or Ireland, Here we find the autobiographical element of the writer O’Brien who has left her own country and settled in London.
She gets work in a delicate seen shop in Bayswater. She has been going to London University at night to study English. It shows her love for education. It is also autobiographical element. Baba is working in Soho, but not in striptease club, as she hoped. She wants to be a receptionist in a big Hotel. Baba and Caithleen are living in a small bed – sitting room in London. They are not happy there. So,

Caithleen says- “I ask myself why I ever left him why I didn’t cling on tight, the way the barnacles cling to the rocks” (CGT 376).

Eugene writes a letter to Caithleen. She answers it. Then there is gap. They don’t meet each other. Caithleen couldn’t hear from him for a couple of months. She thinks, he might have gone back to his wife and daughter or he might be busy in the film making in South American, doing the picture on irrigation. Such types of thoughts linger in her mind. She is restless.

Caithleen remembers him and his words. Once he had answered to her fear that:

The experience of knowing love and of being destined. One day, to remember it, is the common lot of most people; we all leave one another we die we charge. It’s mostly change we outgrow our best friends, but even if I do leave you, I will have passed on to you something of myself, you will be a different person because of knowing me let’s inescapable (CGT 376).

These very touching and emotional lines come at the end of second novel.

Caithleen is trying to find her feet. She wants to be independent. She wanted to settle down on her own. So she says, “I won’t be so alone, but may be too is an impossible dream” (CGT 377). She wants to have
union with him. She craves for it. But it remains the dream of country girl. It becomes the dream of lonely girl.

2.3 Girls in Their Married Bliss

*Girls in Their Married Bliss* published in 1633 as a sequel to *The Country Girls* and *The Lonely Girl*. It depicts the tragic descent of Baba into isolation, Penury and suicidal desperation. *Girls in Their Married Bliss*, with its bitter and ironic title, does not sustain the common ‘happily ever after’ fiction and instead reflects disappointment, upheaval and the dissolution of marriage.

Caithleen’s innocence, already dissolving at the end of *The Lonely Girl*, disappears proportionately as she discovers the savagery of her husband. That savagery is counter posed by her own weakness, which he no longer thinks are charming. Baba becomes pregnant by a lover and plays her husband’s sexual impotence against his male ego and his desire to avoid scandal to extort from him both financial support and acknowledged fatherhood. Baba has no compassion for her husband about this extortion because she knows men well, ‘there isn’t a man alive wouldn’t kill any woman the minute she draws attention to his defects’. She remarks certainly a growing awareness of what it means to be woman emerges mainly in the statements of Baba and gives O’Brien a ‘feminist’ label. Seeing women mistreated by both doctors and husbands, Baba as she lies with feet in stirrups while being prodded by a gynecologist, protest:

> Oh God, who does not exist, you hate women, otherwise you’d have made them different. And Jesus, who snubbed your mother, you hate them more (*CGT* 473).

The hopelessness of the female condition to Kate’s decision to have herself sterilized as a final protest against the perfidy of men.
As Baba indicates, the realities of the female condition represent a complexity of eternal male – female differences, including undeniable factors of woman’s physical condition, as well as the ideals and desires of both parties.

*Girls in Their Married Bliss* all opportunities for Eugene to live the role of Prince Charming, or for Caithleen to be transformed into his queen, have been shattered. The force that fixes her in his grasp is an unwanted pregnancy, while Eugene’s small meanness’s, his authoritative exactnesses about small things and his frequent tempers contrast with her quite – ridden weaknesses and dislike of household duties. For a few hours escape to a friend, Duncan.

How deeply sexual fears are ingrained, Edna O’Brien revealed in the interview with Nell Dunn when she said: “I don’t think I have any pleasure in any part of my body, because my first and initial body thoughts were blackened by the fear of sin” (Dunn 71).

The intellect, however, define these emotions, and O’Brien said: “I believe in only one or two sins, cruelty, killing and injustice. These are sins; everything else, lust, sex, adultery, covetousness are venial, you know, they’re just little flaws” (Dunn 72).

Yet O’Brien also admitted:

I was married once and after four or five years I then became very attracted to somebody else and the only reason I didn’t sleep with that somebody was my permanent and pervading guilt. I couldn’t come home to my husband, who was then my husband, and look him in the eye and make tea, I couldn’t. And this wasn’t niceness of anything, it was deep – rooted fear, he might kill me or something if he found out (Dunn 72).
Baba thinks that Eugene is crank. Her impression about Eugene is correct. Caithleen is craving to meet Eugene in London also. She wants to unite with him. About this Baba says:

Kate remet crank called Eugene Gaillard, whom she’d known in Ireland. They took up their old refrain, fell in love or thought they did, and lost no time making puke out of it. The marriage was in the sacristy of a catholic church. Question of having to. They wouldn’t do it out front because he was divorced and she was heavily pregnant. I was bridesmaid (CGT 381).

Eugene’s behavior is described very well by Baba. His behavior is one of the reasons of Caithleen’s tragedy. Baba says, “he’s the sort of fusser that issues instructions” (CGT 381). It shows Eugene is not religious minded. He gave the envelope to priest, containing one Irish ten-shilling note, instead of twenty pounds for marrying them.

Eugene always refers Caithleen as ‘farmer’s daughter’ or ‘stone’. There were always disputes between them in London also. He told her she was nothing but a farmer’s daughter reverting to type, and she told him he was so mean he wouldn’t let her buy things for the baby. A dig because he was married before and had kept pram and nappies in storage (CGT 382).

Then Eugene and Caithleen go to live in the country after the birth of child. Caithleen doesn’t like children. But she is forced for motherhood.

Baba’s character is not moral. One night, Baba goes to an Irish club. She meets her builder. His name is Frank. He is a rich person and always blowing his money around the place and telling jokes. Baba has been getting dinners from him. He is a merchant at heart. But he is not
educated person. He is not a romantic lover because he doesn’t propose bed. This is very striking experience for Baba. She says, “I didn’t know whether to be pleased or offended” (CGT 383).

One night they slept in one bed.

“I explored a bit and got to his skin and the surprising thing was, his skin was soft and not thick like his face. He began to delve deeper, very rapacious at first and then he dozed off” (CGT 384). Because of this experience Baba uses hard words for Irishmen in general. “An Irishman good at battles sieges, and massacres. Bad in bed” (CGT 384). Baba is completely frustrated and sad. She is offended by Frank’s behavior. Baba herself narrates her experience in London which shows her humiliated mind.

That night I sat on the chair thinking of the eighteen months in London, and all the men I had met and the exhaustion of keeping my heels mended and my skin fresh for the Mr. Right that was supposed to come along (CGT 384).

It is clear that Baba couldn’t get a romantic lover the Mr. Right in her life in London. So this statement makes clear that the title of the third novel is ironic. These two married girls have been searching for pleasures and paradise, but they have found themselves in the hell. There is no romantic love. Instead they have been facing various problems and illness. Their life is completely ruined. This is the outcome of their married life. Baba frankly says, “Well, to cut a long story-short, I married him, and we had a big wedding with names being yelled out and red carpet to walk on” (CGT 385). Frank is an Irish hick and rich person who is called slob.

Baba likes his money and his slob ways. She doesn’t mind holding hands at the pictures but she has no urge to get into bed with him. Baba has been thinking to end up her relations with Frank. She doesn’t love
him. Baba has no love for her mother, Martha also, because she had sent Baba away when she was a child of four. This shows Baba’s bitter experience with her parents and friends as well as husband. She narrates her childhood experience.

“I was four. I had scarlet fever and she sent me away to Gaeltacth to learn Irish. She really sent me away so that she wouldn’t have to mind me” (*CGT* 386). Baba’s mother is very greedy and mean minded.

Baba has become the wedded wife of a Builder. He has been financing them all. Because of his money her mother has come in London to live with them ‘the life of Riley’. Baba says about her husband Frank ‘the bloody sacrificial lamb’.

Baba’s mother Martha dies by cancer of the stomach. She used to say, “It was because of physical attraction that most marriages went wallop, that physical attraction was another form of dope” (*CGT* 386). It shows Martha’s way of living and her attitude toward life.

Because of Frank and his money they have moved into a posh house. Baba always loves the smell of rich houses, the shops, flowers and carpets. Baba has got everything except romantic husband and lover. It shows she got pleasures of life but not sexual satisfaction.

Kate Brady has come back to London. In London Baba and she used to meet regularly to discuss their plight. “Her life like a chapter of the inquisition” (*CGT* 387). Eugene always wants her to stay indoors all the time and nurse his hemorrhoids (illness). It shows his weakness and illness of mind.

Here in London again Caithleen becomes; the victim of the old, old story – she meets the person and falls in love. Another blunder is committed by her without thinking and without learning the lesson by past experience. It becomes the cause of her tragedy.
Kate has a son, named Cash. She is not happy in her married life with Eugene. She has become the victim of weakness, timidity and guilt she feels. If only he (Eugene) would give her the last chance, she would change reform, make her so ugly that she would be out of the reach of temptation. It means she is not getting Eugene is love for which she has been craving. In London, in the company of Baba. She has become the victim of temptation.

There is tense relationship between Eugene and Kate. Eugene loves and likes to have leisure. He hasn’t been working because he has saved money from the previous project. It is enough amounts for them to see through a few months. He has directed the documentary pictures and getting money always to buy leisure. But Caithleen is no happy with him. Her joy of seeing him has diminishing. So she is more conscious of the risks than of the pleasure. She is getting interest in other men. It is the effect of Industrialization, urbanization and commercialization on the young Irish girl Baba. Such women are ready to leave their husbands for wine and cigarettes. “They had met at a party, and they were attracted to each other the way hundreds of people are out of hunger” (CGT 391). The word hunger itself shows that there is no spiritual love or dignity of love but only physical need like animals. There is no real love and attachment in their married life. Baba says about Caithleen’s life. “She was not in love with him and therefore not party to anything wicked” (CGT 392). O’Brien has shown symbolically, by using the images of snow falling, howling they could hear “the spatter of snow falling on the green house. The wind began to howl” (CGT 393). This is the prediction of Calamities in their future life.

One day Kate wants to meet Baba. Eugene wants to go with her, but Kate doesn’t like it. But any how they set out. They take bus. Kate wants to say something to Eugene, but he was not listening her. His eyes
are attracted and centered on a beautiful Indian woman. Eugene says, “I should have some Indian children” (CGT 394). This is very insulting for Kate. She immediately says, “If you sat on the other seat I’d have more room” (CGT 394). Her words cut like a lancet through the fog filled chatter. Then she stops short on the route. They look at each other for some time. It is the last look of pity that passed between them. “Each turning to the other had felt the ghost got out.” --- “I was only joking”, (CGT 394) she said. “He did nothing but smile, a bitter, cunning, tell you nothing smile” (CGT 394). This event is the climax of tragedy.

Kate deceives him and lies with Eugene. She goes to meet her new friend- Duncan in the mahogany-brown pub. She tells him, “everything at home is getting worse, bleak” (CGT 397). Her friend says, “we are guilty, and no doubt. But who is to judge us? It happened” (CGT 397). Duncan is also married person. According to him- ‘The world is hard’. He has a leaden wife and school bills for five children, and a town house and a country house and a job to keep. They spend some time in the pub and decide-“no harm must be done, to anyone” (CGT 398). There are guilty and uneasy feelings in her mind. She returns home with guilty feeling. Her new friend Duncan is in politics. That night at home Eugene is very indifferent. He suspects her. He doesn’t like her way of behavior. Kate goes into her bedroom stealthily. That night she couldn’t sleep. She plans a new, heroic role for herself. She has decided to expiate all by sinking into domesticity. She finds that Eugene has written a sentence on the slate of Cash. “Now and then he thought all women could not possibly be bitches, but not for long, reality was always at hand” (CGT 401). This is insulting sentence for Kate. She takes it to be a memento for herself. Eugene is not interested in her. He is keeping silent. It is hurting Caithleen. They shared the same bed. But they are indifferent to each
other. O’Brien has described this situation of indifferent married persons in the following way.

Once, she stayed on in the morning and in his sleep he touched her and drew back suddenly, as if he were an animal who had just touched an electric fence and received an appalling shock. For the first time she looked old, really old \((CGT\ 403)\).

It means both of them have lost interest in married life. They want separation. They feel they are enemies.

One day Kate says to Eugene, “We’re like enemies. We’re not like man and wife at all” \((CGT\ 404)\). This remark of Kate insults Eugene. He says, “I must congratulate you on your simpletons, cunning, and your simpleton’s servile ways” \((CGT\ 404)\). He makes this harsh and sarcastic remark on her. And shakes his head and looks at her grimly, the look of a grave-digger. Then he says, “It’s your nature to lie, like your lying lackeying ancestors.” “Excuse me, I detest vulgarity” \((CGT\ 405)\). This shows that Eugene dislikes her. He wants to be detached himself from her. So he says, “you live your life, I live mine. That is fair, isn’t it?” \((CGT\ 405)\). From this event, they start to live separately.

Kate tries to forget everything and wants to unite with Eugene. She wants to be one with him. So, two days after the above incident she comes to meet Eugene at the railway station. It is convenient for him and anywhere suited her. She expresses her deep feelings in the following words.

She went over what she must say to him: that he sack Maura, take Kate herself back and move them into the country to a small white house with a vegetable garden and grazing for two cows. She would grow good and protective and cling to him. --- It would be their last home, their stronghold, their
coffin. Her mind was made up. It was what she must do (CGT 453).

She has decided in her mind to be one with Eugene in any case. She wants to settle down in her new home. It would be her last home like coffin. So, she moves nearer (Eugene). He shifts away. Her eyes are filled with tears. He avoids looking at her. She feels that he has renounced her, through his mind, and through his body. She has realized the truth of life.

She had always thought that people who had once loved one another kept the faintest trace of it in their being, but not him. He was free of her. Marked of course, but free in a way that she was not. She was still joined by fear, --- by sexual necessity, by what she knew as love (CGT 454).

This is anti-climax of her life.

Kate says to Eugene, “It’s like a volcano, you and me, it settles down and then it flares up again” (CGT 454).

Eugene shows no wish to listen. He interrupts her and says, “you know, the first time I began to fall out of love with you – oh, years and years ago-was the day it hit me like a bomb that you never cry for anyone but yourself”( CGT 454). Eugene accuses her that she is very greedy. She has destroyed his life. Because of her, his life has become sad and tragic. Then she asks him – “Does anyone?” “Show me the man or woman who does” (CGT 454). She wants to remind him his fault that he has chosen her for his own needs too. She says, “His little dictatorship demanded a woman like her-weak, apologetic, agreeable, self-interest was a common crime” (CGT 455). O’Brien has shown the nature of men. It is the theme of the novel. In the paternal society men behave like dictators. They want weak, apologetic and agreeable women. Such men have made the life of women very miserable.
Eugene is not ready to accept her. He takes Cash with him and goes away. Cash has all become his child. He slips into the crowd and becomes one of the many people, apparently going or coming to something important. Caithleen is left alone. This shows that there is no important given to the sacrifices done by women. She is totally neglected.

She knew danger as she had never known it; the danger of being out in the world alone, having lost the girlish appeal that might entice some other man to father her. --- She had not the energy to coax and woo, and feed and love, and stroke and cosset, another man, beginning from the very beginning again (CGT 455).

She expresses the deep feelings of neglected women, which is one of the themes of novel.

She remembers her life in the convent and thinks how safe, how wooden how unscathed she was then. Now she is alone. She feels lonely and rejected lonely woman in this harsh world-the world of men.

She becomes very angry frustrated and mad. Something breaks loose inside her and she starts to scream and bang the glass. She hurls insults. She lashes out with words. Then some people hold her and she is admitted in a hospital. This is disastrous. She has lost grief on herself. She starts to lose her sense. She becomes almost mad.

Thus this trilogy is the tragic story of Kate and Baba’s story is an interlude.

These novels are tragedies of motherhood or mothers. Not only girls suffer but mothers also suffer. As Caithleen says,

I don’t hate him, I don’t love him. I put up with him and he puts up with me. Baba, once you have the child, it will be all right. You’ll both find it is the most important thing in the world to you. A woman need children. I’d have more myself.
--- Baba said, “T.D.L.” on this – Kate said, “Total Dead Loss” (*CGT* 464).

Because of her experience and suffering, Kate has become religious. She wants to pray. She is seeking help from God. Baba says about this – “She hadn’t said a prayer for years; and even I thought it a bit steep that she should be asking help of someone she’d ignored for so long” (*CGT* 462).

This shows helpless condition of Kate. She couldn’t understand life properly. Baba’s condition also shows suffering of women. One day Baba says to Frank, “I’m going to have a baby”. “He grinned, a terrible pathetic grin. It was like telling someone his mother was dead” (*CGT* 467). But actually it isn’t the child of Frank. So, Frank abuses Baba - “you cow.” “There is a way to deal with you and whores like you. I’ll kick arose off you when I get you home” (*CGT* 468). Then he gets cooled off. He tells Baba, he has decided to let her stay on as his wife. This shows the adjustments in their life. Then he wants to know whose child it is, because he wants to go around and kill that person. But Baba lies and says, “He’s a Greek and he’s gone home” (*CGT* 470).

Baba’s friend Durack used to go to brothel. He loves and likes ‘vicarious living.’ He loves ‘insertion at various angels.’ He always uses unparliamentarily words. He doesn’t want that Baba should be pregnant. When he comes to know that Baba is pregnant. He does not like the news. He wants to keep this news secret. So, Baba abuses him. Baba and Durak both have decided to keep a dark secret. This shows their immoral character. Baba calls him ‘poor devil’. So, Baba calls this dark secret as Biblical Bond. She says, “In the eyes of the world it (child) would be his and mine.” --- “God only knows how many lies I told. It would have his name” (*CGT* 471). This shows the cruelty of parents which is one of the
themes of novels of O’Brien. Not only males as fathers are cruel but females as mothers are also cruel. They are pleasure seekers.

The relationships are deceptive. There is no friendship or concern for each other. Money has become important factor. It is outcome of industrialization and urbanization. Baba describes the situation of her friend Durack in the following words.

They were allies in nothing, only making money. When it comes down to fundamentals, he had no one. All by himself and that brothel he went to. There were just us, him and me. Allies, conspirators, lairs together (CGT 471).

Baba criticizes the life of women in the Ireland. The perception of O’Brien about women’s life in Ireland which is the central theme of these novels comes through Baba. Baba says:

I was thinking of women and all they have to put up with --- All this poking and probing and hurt. --- Oh, God, who doesn’t exist, you hate women; otherwise, you’d have made them different. And Jesus, who snubbed your mother, you hate them more (CGT 473).

These lines focus the central theme of the novels and all the three novels are bound by (connected by) these lines.

2.4 Epilogue

Epilogue is Elegiac in its nature. It is full of sadness. It fills gaps. It connects the events in the trilogy. There is no certainty and bliss in their life. Baba is very sad and nervous. She has lost her friend Kate. Kate is no more in this world. Baba has ordered for two flunkies. Kate is dead; by accident or by suicide or by something else.

Baba, now a woman, a mother of a child, is married or wedded wife of Frank and lover of many men like Durack. She has forgotten things. She has a habit of reading news papers. She loves the story of
Esmeralda. At present she has been living with Durack – her man and she is his wife. The name of her daughter is Tracy. She doesn’t like her mother. Tracy rejects her. She is illegitimate child.

Baba tells about Kate and Kate’s mistake. Kate fought for her child Cash with her husband Eugene.

Baba’s husband Durack is property dealer. But he is deceived by friends. Baba doesn’t like bondage. She loves free life.

Baba and Cash has to take ashes of Kate and scatter between the bogs and the bog lakes and the murmuring waters. Kate died in waters-by drowning – may be accident or may be suicide.

Kate’s death is like an end of certain motherhood. Before her death, she has been living in a cottage-type house – out of London. She has been running a bookshop in a theater.

Baba’s new husband Durack doesn’t like Kate. Durack thinks that Kate is a reason of Baba’s adulterous life. But reality is different. By nature Baba is adulterous. Baba thinks that men are fools in some ways and traitors in another. Baba tells us about the dream of Kate. Kate always wanted to tear her heart out and stamp on it. It shows that she doesn’t like her life. Then there is a funeral procession – a coffin and hearse for Kate. There should not be questions because most of them have no answers.

The nature of this epilogue is somewhat elegiac. Its tone is full of sadness. Some part is narrative ballad. These twenty pages take review of the tragic story of Caithleen to fill the gaps. Baba is the narrator. She is expression her deep sorrow and concern for her once friend Caithleen. She indirectly tells the readers that Caithleen is dead. It is not clear whether it is natural death or accidental or suicide. Baba says, “It goes on, by Jesus, it goes on” (CGT 511). She is at Waterloo, the railway station where Kate gashed her wrists. It is tragedy of Kate. She except that “a
male Florence Nightingale might kneel and bandage and swoop her off to a life of certainly and bliss” (CGT 511). But no one comes for her rescue.

The tragic story has taken place nearly twenty years ago. Much weeping and gnashing in between has taken place. So, Baba is nervous as hell. She has got a letter. It is elegiac. There is a lunatic woman in a felt hat. She is cursing people- ‘Lunatics unite’. This is very symbolic picture of female tragedy. Baba is concerned with tragic life of Caithleen and her own.

According to Baba, “people have minds like sieves. Except when it comes to gain” (CGT 512). She wants to drink a large gin and blur the old perceptions. She wants to forget past but it is impossible for her. The tragic events linger in her mind like ghost. She tells one event. Once Baba has availed herself of the service of two flunkies. They were from foreign parts, Pakistan or may be even somewhere farther. This shows the death of Kate. Baba is sad and frustrated. She expresses her agony -

She asks, “oh, Kate, why did you let the bastards win --- why buckle under their barbaric whims?” (CGT 513). Baba is terrified by tragic end of Caithleen. She thinks that Kate will appear to her some night. She will repent. She says, “People are fucking gangsters” (CGT 513).

The following description is symbolic, “Next to the welsh hills there is a pack of wolves baying at a crescent of gold that is supposed to be a package of cigarettes” (CGT 513). Baba’s mind obsessed by Caithleen. She feels that Caithleen has become the victim of gangster (men). There is a reference to the witness women servant in the hotel. She is a poor. About her Baba says, “the waitress looks as if she came from the blackest hole on earth” (CGT 513).

Baba feels that history repeats. There is a cycle of events. It means tragic events always take place. Baba reads local newspaper. It is full of
crimes. She feels it is a plethora of crimes. There is a story of one Esmeralda, who threw Lysol on her common law man and was a wizard at the old art of evasion. A great procrastinator was Esmeralda. In the court she excelled herself. Esmeralda is an example of revolutionary woman. So Baba likes her.

Baba has forgotten everything, even her own telephone number and by weekly dinner parties. This is the effect of tragic death of Caithleen. Baba tells about her own life. Durack her man and she is his wife. He used to call her ‘Little mother’, for the one illegitimate kid that Baba had, a girls that had a will of her own and mind of her own from the second she was born. The name of her daughter is Tracy.

Baba and Tracy, the relationship of mother and daughter is love-hate relationship. Baba says about her illegitimate, “vomit the milk I gave her, rejected me, from day one, preferred cow’s milk, solid anything. She left home before she was thirteen, couldn’t stand us” (CGT 515). Baba narrates another incident about Tracy- at five years of age, she walked into Baba’s bedroom and said, “you better love me or I’ll be a mess” (CGT 515). When I told her, she was illegitimate, she just looked at me and said, “I’ve always know”, --- I forgot her too” (CGT 515). Because of her daughter’s behaviour. Baba is insulted. She is shocked. Even she has forgotten her daughter also. Here we find the tense relationship between Martha and Baba as well as Baba and Tracy.

According to Baba, Kate herself is irresponsible for her own tragedy. It is Kate’s mistake, the old ‘umbilical love’. Kate wants to twine fingers with her son, Cash, throughout eternity. Which is not possible. Such wish of mother becomes the cause of tragedy. This is the tragedy of motherhood. Kate wants to keep her son with her – in her own possession. But Eugene never allows her to take Cash with her. It becomes the cause of her tragedy. It is focused by Baba in this epilogue.
Baba tells about Caithleen’s fight with her husband Eugene to get her son. According to Baba she (Caithleen) got the old loneliness tenacity.

In this way Baba praised the velour of Caithleen. Another event is told by her. It is the thirty fifth birthday of Durack her friend. Durack is property dealer and development. He was to be one of the richest men in the British Isles. Baba says about him. “They made him a partner. Sleeping fucking partner. Hardly any money coming in now, but of course they bamboozled us with sheets and figures that Galileo wouldn’t understand” (CGT 521). Baba has used very harsh words for her husband and friends.

Baba doesn’t believe in Church. There is reference to Pope John Paul II. The Pope has been saying “Though shalt not sin” (CGT 522). Then Baba says about him. “He’s still for keeping women in bondage, sexual bondage above all, as if they weren’t fucked up enough with their own organs” (CGT 522). This very harsh criticism on Church and Irish Catholicism. “The pope is all for bevies of children within wedlock, more children to fill the slums and buses and smash telephone Kiosks” (CGT 522). Baba often thought of asking him in jest if he thinks there is copulation in heaven. This is very harsh and insulting opinion expressed by Baba. Then Baba narrates next event. It is about ashes of Caithleen. “Her son and I will have to take her ashes there and scatter them between the bogs and the bog lakes and the murmuring waters” (CGT 523).

The mother and river water have become once again united. It is power symbolic image. Caithleen’s mother also died by drowning. Baba expresses her hope- “I hope she rises up nightly like the banshee and does battle with her progenitors”. --- “Death is death, whether it’s by accident or design” (CGT 523, 524). Caithleen’s death is indirect referred. Baba narrates:
She was talking swimming lessons --- Alone and convert as always not knowing whether it was deliberate or whether she just wanted to put an end to the fucking torment she was in. Probably realized that she had missed the boat, bid adieu to the aureole of womanhood and all that (CGT 524).

This is very touching end of the protagonist Caithleen. It is narrated by her friend Baba.

Here the tragic end of womanhood as well as motherhood is told. Baba remembers another event once Kate had come to visit Baba on 55th Birthday of Durack. Baba says:

Kate came early she was to spend the night with them, because she lived out of London, ran a bookshop in a theatre and had a little, cottage type house with gate and roses and bantams and all that. Kate and Durack were tearing into one another, daggers drawn. It was all about roots, values, not losing one’s identity and so forth. He was mad for roots. Even got books on genealogy, trying to prove that he went back to Brian Bory, on his mother side (CGT 525).

The theme of identity and theme of losing identity as well as theme of roots and values is focused. In Ireland 1960s, there were burning issues which is referred by O’Brien.

According to Baba- Durack always mistrusts Caithleen, because She and me were pals before he entered the arena, and somewhere, I think he blamed her for my big adulterous epoch, little knowing that I’d commit adultery twice a day if I could --- poor Durack, I don’t think he ever had a voluptuous fuck in his life, certainly not with me (CGT 525).

Baba frankly tells about her adulterous nature. She calls Durack as poor Durack. Then she makes general remarks on men.
According to Baba, “men are fools in some ways and traitors in another. Reverend mother always eyeing you and telling you about widows and divorced women and women with cancer, wanting you to join in lugubrious confraternity” (*CGT* 527). By nature Baba is cynic. She has no humanity. She is not broad minded. Baba expressed and told the tragic situation of Kate.

According to her “she raved out some dream, some apocalyptic dream. --- She wanted to get through the last big breach. --- She put her hand to her heart and said she’d like to tear it out, stamp on it, squash it to death, her heart being her undoing” (*CGT* 530). Here Kate’s intention of suicide is expressed by Baba. Then the last event and concluding remark is made be Baba.

There is funeral procession (coffin and hearse) for Kate. Baba is thinking of Durack’s motto - “there are some things in this world you cannot ask, and oh, Agnus Dei, there are some things in the world you cannot answer” (*CGT* 532).

*The Country Girls Trilogy* centers around unhappy family relationships, sexual repressions, spoilt children, poverty, problems of land due to colonialism and most prominently with the issue of women’s liberation.