Morality of the Self

In fact, the insane person is the one who has completely failed to establish any kind of union, and is imprisoned, even if he is not behind barred windows. The necessity to unite with other living beings, to be related to them, is an imperative need on the fulfillment of which man’s sanity depends. This need is behind all phenomena which constitute the whole gamut of intimate human relations, of all passions which are called love in the broadest sense of the word. (Erich Fromm 35-36)

It is not surprising to know that Drabble’s characters seek salvation through love while she calls herself a “moralist”. I will be analyzing her novels from the 1960s – *A Summer Bird-Cage* (1963), *The Garrick Year* (1964), *The Millstone* (1965), *Jerusalem the Golden* (1967), and *The Waterfall* (1969), considering the individual morality of her protagonists in this chapter. Her characters confront moral dilemmas because of the opposition they feel between reality and illusion of art and life. The moral development of her characters comes from their struggles to come out of their solipsistic shell into the real world of community through love and affection. I argue that the protagonists in these novels adumbrating portraits of pioneering women who were searching for their gender identities during the England of the 1960’s which was the time when English society was undergoing sweeping changes. With the benefit of insight, Drabble herself, looking back on the vision of her novels of the sixties, especially when compared with the broader scope of those of the next two decades, has said that it was, “a very narrow vision resulting from a very narrow life” (Milton 49). I plan to elaborately analyze her novels of the 1960s, and intend to examine and concentrate on the psychological issues of their resulting moral problems arising from the protagonists’ inability to attempt anything meaningful or to sustain contact with
anything beyond their own self. As an example, Rosamound is able to face her dilemmas, solve them and attain happiness only when she allows the other into her little world. She is forced to face reality when she becomes pregnant. The only time that she realizes the world of the others is when she finds that she is pregnant. It is now that she understands about the importance of inter-personal connections. She says, with reality dawning on her, that she was “trapped in human limit for the first time in my life, and I was going to learn to live inside it” (58). Emmanuel Levinas is a philosopher who shares a moral vision with Drabble, and who also propounded on the importance of society and connections between individuals. Both Drabble and Levinas believed that people are bound together to form a society not by need, but by love, which arises from one’s need to connect with those around. Levinas discloses his moral philosophy in relation to the morals of an individual while also wishing for a healthy relationship irrespective of any pre-logical arrangement. He points out:

I find myself existing in a world of alien things and elements which are other than, but not negations of myself. The latter is a logical relation which brings its terms together into a neutral system in the light of which each can be understood impartially, as we can say. But the world as I originally experience it is not a logical system of this kind, in which no terms takes precedence over the rest. My primary experience is definitely biased and egocentric. I take precedence over the various objects I find around me, and in so far as my experience is normal, I learn to manipulate and control them to my advantage, either as the member of a group which I identify with myself or simply as myself alone. In general, these objects are at my disposal, and I am free to play with them, live on them, and to enjoy them at my pleasure. (Totality and Infinity 12)
The protagonists in these novels are well-educated women who face difficulties when communicating with the people around them, whether they are their parents, husbands or others around. The ways and means they employ to search for their gender identities with regard to their relationships with the various people in their lives and how they try to expand their own horizons and venture into new territories will be examined in this chapter. The thesis will also attempt to address the moral ambiguity and the ultimate moral path that is chosen by the protagonist to deal with the moral dilemmas which pervade these novels.

Drabble as an educated woman of the 1960’s is conscious of the predicament women were facing at the time. She feels the need for “a new pattern, a new blue print” that the newly educated post-war generation was facing in England. During this first phase of her writing career, Drabble brought some modern plots and themes to her novels that helped pave the way for contemporary women, young women who were searching for a suitable way of life and were defining their own gender role and life dreams. The way Drabble interlaces the body of work of her antecedents into her own work is an immensely helpful tool to understand her prose style and concepts. She writes about twentieth-century women in such a way that contemporary women can easily relate. As a matter of fact, Drabble has her own evolving picture of the middle class women. The nineteenth-century women writers wrote such realistic novels of contemporary women trying to gain control of their own lives in the nineteenth-century British society, that their audiences were inspired to try and emulate them. In the 1960s, Drabble penned stories that embraced and extended this realist tradition while also creating a strong image of the female protagonist she developed with her new positive role model.
Drabble’s women are not living traditional fictional lives with their stories ending with marriage. Drabble’s female characters are everyday middle-class British women in real-life situations. Her first five novels depict the lives of intelligent young women in their twenties, “entering the world of marriage and career” (Bradbury 377). Drabble creates heroines who are writers within the first five novels – like novelist Candida Gray, scholar Rosamund Stacey, and poet Jane Gray – but most of these are also written in the first person giving a woman’s perspective. In a deviation from the established tradition, Drabble allows her women to tell their own tales and, therefore, to take responsibility for their own actions, as will be discussed in this chapter. In her first five novels, written in the 1960’s, Drabble concentrates “on the moral and domestic dilemmas of her female characters” (Rubenstein 139), basing her characters’ lives on her own years and experiences of that time. In fact, she understood the stories she wrote because she is a mother and writer herself, and she writes from the perspective of a woman who is also a mother in most cases, and this is a new perspective that was path-breaking at the time. Drabble herself, like many of her contemporaries, is a mother who has a successful career as a writer, just like many of her middle class women characters. When the first five novels were being written and getting published, she was married and had to manage her writing while also taking care of her family and raising three boisterous young children.

Drabble’s first novel, *A Summer Bird-Cage*, is a first-person narration by Sarah Bennett, about her own life, and her elder sister, Louise, both of them have recently graduated from college. With the usage of the Bennett’s name, Drabble alludes to the Bennett sisters in *Pride and Prejudice* (1813) by Jane Austen. Besides Austen, she emulates and refers to another author who follows the realist tradition and who also happens to be distantly related, Arnold Bennett. This realist tradition is an aspect that characterizes most of Drabble’s works, starting with her very first novel, which she ascribes to Arnold Bennett whose biography she has written: “He leaves
me with a sense that life is full of possibility” (Arnold viii). Drabble’s work is also characterized by a similar sense of possibility. While the earlier Bennett sisters of Pride and Prejudice searched for the limited possibilities available to them, in which women were expected to marry and have children, Drabble’s Bennett sisters are able to look at the plethora of possibilities they offer as educated, twentieth century, women and decide for themselves what their lives should be. Drabble’s sisters indicate that the choices might be bewildering, but as educated women they are capable of making the right choices and coping with the consequences of such decisions. Drabble contends that the ‘feelings of rage’ women felt, when confronted by well-entrenched gender-based biases and prejudices in the English society of the sixties, were expressed in the novels of that time. In an interview with Kenyon she talks about the air of the writing of her early novels, “There were undercurrents of rage, though they were veiled … my Protests were mild, but I felt I had to express them…. Later in the sixties, the wit grew sourer. Men traditionally can have both domestic life and outside work; our greed for both had been awakened and was not being satisfied” (45).

Drabble admits that while writing about the traditionally privileged position of the men in the British society of the sixties, she herself felt “caught in a trap” (Kenyon 28). Such frustration resulted in her writing about women who challenged those prejudices and the traditions way of a biased society. In A Summer Bird-Cage, Margaret Drabble voices her concern over women who are unsure of what they want to do in life. As Ellen Cronan Rose observes:

> It seems clear, in retrospect, that what Margaret Drabble was doing in her first and perhaps her second and third novels as well was “using” the “wonderful material” she found in The Second Sex to try to understand the predicament girls face when they leave what Sarah
Bennett calls the “womb” of college-how and on whose terms to enter the adult world. (*Equivocal Figures* 3)

What she can do is the problem that keeps Sarah “strong together in occasionally ecstatic, occasionally panic-stricken effort, day and night, year in year out” (146). For the composition of this novel Creighton believes, “Evidently inspired, like several of her books, by Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Second Sex*, and taking its title from John Webster, the novel is an exploration of the bird-cage of female identity played out for circumspect Sarah in the lives of the “over-educated” women “lacking a sense of vocation” who surround her” (*Margaret Drabble* 39-40). Drabble thinks that a lot of women, though educated, bow to tradition and enter into marriage without any idea of how to cope and be responsible adults. To prove her point, she presents four couples, namely, Louise Bennett and Stephen Halifax, Gill and Tony, Stella Conroy and Bill, and Stephanie and Michael, and analyzes the lives of the four women with regard to their marital relationships, through the eyes of Sarah Bennett, the protagonist.

Sarah, after graduating with degree from Oxford, goes to Paris to tutor French girls privately, but it is ironic because when Sarah says she went to Paris to tutor young girls only as a means “to fill in time”, she herself does not seem to realize that this irresolution on her part makes her reject a university career, because as she sees it,

It’s all right for men, being learned and attractive, but for a woman it’s a mistake. It detracts from the essential seriousness of the business. It’s all very well sitting in a large library and exuding sex and upsetting everyone with bare shoulders, but you can’t do that for a living. You’d soon find yourself having to play it down instead of up if you wanted to get to the top, and when you’ve only got one life that seems a pity. (183-184)
Sarah is a woman who is “blessed with intelligence, good looks, articulateness, and humor whose sense of expectation, aspiration, and promise is coupled with a disturbing lassitude, an inability to know what to do as a female person” (Creighton, *Margaret Drabble* 39). Or rather, Sarah seems to have become trapped in the bird cage of her own female identity. As she thinks of it, marriage is only “one way of escaping the secretarial course-coffee bar degradation” (8). But she is unable to see herself married to a man like Stephen, and so is surprised that her sister Louise is marrying him. She objectifies one of the main topics of the novel, the difficulty of really knowing another person, even if it is one’s sister. As the story develops, even though Sarah comes to know Louise more intimately than before, she does not feel that she understands her any better.

As already stated, Stephen Halifax and Louise Bennett are the first couple in Drabble’s *A Summer Bird-Cage*. As Sarah words it, Louise is “far too intelligent to do nothing, and yet too beautiful and sexy to do all the first-class things like politics or law or social sciences and she was naturally afraid of subsiding into nothingness” (149). Louise has no clue as to what she wants to do and is not interested in any sort of career. After a year spent jumping in and out of people’s beds, she finds a job in an advertising firm but fails to hold on to it. She seems to be marrying the wealthy Stephen Halifax, a successful homosexual novelist, with the sole purpose of indulging in a lavish lifestyle and buying whatever she fancies. She is ruthless in taking advantage of her looks, being an “absolutely knock-out beauty” (9). She perceives love and marriage as not intertwined, but as unrelated matters to be used for entirely different purposes. Though she claims to love John, it seems it is not enough for her to marry him. She openly declares her views on marriage as a lack in doing better work when she says,
Oh, when I married him I thought we were going to be sophisticated all right, me marrying him for his money, and he unrequitedly but gratefully worshiping me, and me straight-forwardly and nobly and honestly admitting that I didn’t love him—and I never said I did, never—and me straightforwardly and nobly going off with John, and us all sitting and discussing these things cleverly over large drinks … (201)

Thus she marries money in her greed and chooses adultery to satisfy herself outside of marriage. But inevitably, she realizes that the misanthropic and cold-blooded usage of her marriage to Stephen is not making her happy at all. Stephen is also as shallow as Louise, in his own way. He is attracted by a particular brand of beautiful and high-maintenance girls, which results in his marriage to Louise, who has all the superficial attributes, like beauty, popularity and acceptability, but lacks real depth. Neither Stephen nor Louise achieves what they wanted to in their cynical marriage. Though the marriage breaks down because the two never communicated nor bothered to understand each other’s needs, Louise and Sarah attribute different reasons for the break-up. Louise speculates that Stephen might be in love with John and that, “when he saw that he had a chance of getting me, when I was what John wanted, it must have seemed to him a chance of evening off a lot of scores, and of getting a sort of vicarious satisfaction at the same time” (200). On Stephen’s part, his motive in entering into marriage with Louise, which was his hope of catching a little of her intensity and to absorb and reflect her vivacity, proves disastrous. He is also unable to tolerate her adultery with their close friend John and her indiscretions in letting it become common knowledge.

Stephen feels humiliated by the deterioration of his marriage and his wife’s adultery, which results in him falling sick, and suffering from writer’s block; he finds himself on the verge of a nervous breakdown. He turns neurotic and is in need of
“Somebody more interested in him than in herself” (148). She is in love with her life own life to such an extent that she declares, “I want my life, I want it now, I don’t want to give it to the next generation” (205). As Sarah tells it, Louise behaves like a schizophrenic child who refuses to recognize other people as human being. Her “narcissistic nonchalance” (14) leads her to totally ignore the very existence of her own sister Sarah. Though she criticizes Stephen’s behavior, she never introspects on her own behavior or motives. She calls Stephen “a nut-case, but the most selfish, the most specious, and the meanest kind of maniac that was ever let loose” (197). This is proof enough that their marriage has become meaningless and torturous. Though money and social status seem to be the main motivations for Louise’s marriage, she does seem to indulge in human emotions, interestingly. When Sarah questions her reason for marrying Stephen, Louise says,

I really don’t know. I thought he wanted to because he loved me; he used to go on and on about how much he loved me, and how I was the most beautiful woman in the world, which I was only too ready to believe, and how important it was that I should marry him… he made me feel it was my duty to marry him, so it wasn’t all money and self-interest, a tiny bit of it was a feeling of pity and obligation on my part… (198)

When, Stephen throws her out of the house after catching Louise with her lover, she confesses to Sarah that she hates Stephen and cannot stand to even look at him. The reason for her disliking him is her own inability to reconcile with the restrictions of her middle-class ambitions rather than her anger at Stephen.

Gill and Tony form the next couple in The Summer Bird-Cage. They meet as university students, fall in love, and hastily enter into matrimony just after their graduation. The difference between the two couples, namely, Stephen and Louise and
Gill and Tony, is that apparently the motive for getting married; Gill and Tony get married because they fall in love, but Louise and Stephen get married because only they want to appear successful and be recognized by society as such; Louise wants a lavish lifestyle whereas Stephen wants to hide his homosexuality. Love leads Gill and Tony to get married and they enter it in true wedded bliss uncaring of anything else. Another huge difference between the two couples and their marriage is that while one is based entirely on monetary and societal benefits that accrue, the other is based solely on love for each other, with no other factors weighing in. But they find poverty and practical problems difficult to handle and become severely disappointed with their lot, which leads them to quarrel with each other.

Tony demands that she “ought to be happy just sitting around in the nude and letting him paint me and cooking him the odd meal” (39). This result in Gill’s ever-increasing resentment. She starts to feel that Tony looks at her as a still life, which she intensely dislikes. She stoically tolerates his lack of responsibility and social conscience. Finally driven by humiliation and disgrace, she insults him. When she finds herself pregnant unexpectedly, she is really annoyed and she says,

Poor kid, I hated it so violently, it almost stopped me hating Tony –I felt it was a leech sucking my blood. Is that abnormal? I suppose it’s not, really. I did want a baby so, but I wanted it to be all proper and intentional with pink nurseries and flowers in hospital, you know. Not tied up in bits of old nightgown and smelling of turpentine. (41)

It seems that Gill’s fear of poverty matters more than her love for children. Faced with abject poverty and Tony’s callousness, she buries her love for children, gets her pregnancy terminated and leaves Tony. Thus, while Drabble’s first couple, Louise and Stephen, separate because of their materialistic greed, the lives of the second couple,
Gill and Tony, are torn apart by abject poverty. In both the couples’ lives, unforeseen circumstances and incompatibility play havoc, resulting in the couples breaking apart. When we compare the two women, Gill and Louise, and their marital discords, it is interesting to note that while Gill’s problems arise from poverty and lack of clear thinking without being clouded by emotions, Louise’s problems stem from lack of emotions and monetary greed. While Louise’s decision to break apart from Stephen is final, Gill has some feeble hope in her heart that there might be reconciliation with Tony. She still cares for Tony and expects him to do something to stop the final parting, because, with the least bit of encouragement, she would have stayed. But, in the end, she is forced to realize that mere love is not enough for a successful marriage, especially in a society where her own faith that “facts counted less than principles” (39) is proved grievously wrong.

The third couple is Stella Conroy and Bill, the latter being a lecturer at the polytechnic. They marry in haste and repent at leisure, as they say. Stella and Bill seem to be separated from the other two couples in that they lack neither love, unlike Stephen and Louise, nor does their poverty affect them, unlike Gill and Tony. In fact their love is strong enough that even when they complicate their lives by begetting two children, they somehow manage to make ends meet. In fact, their married life is treated as a warning by Louise, who vows not to marry a man without money, and also, not to have children.

It is interesting that even in a society filled with unhappy marriages; we do have a few exceptions, the couple Stephanie and Michael being one of them. They are one of the steadiest couples we meet in Oxford, with an expected career path laid out before them. But whereas most people would like to know the path their life is going to take, Sarah feels that she cannot be happy with that sort of marriage or life, which
is predictable with no excitement. Thus, where others would view Michael and Stephanie as an inspiration, in Sarah’s eyes, it is a disincentive for getting married as she thinks that such a life would be mundane and lacking in thrill. Sarah’s indifference and disinterest in marriage are further strengthened by the other couple’s belief that life can be set right and brought onto the pre-determined path with appropriate changes as and when necessary. Sarah thinks that “people can’t be changed, they can only be saved on enlightened or renewed, one by one, which is a different thing and not one that can be affected by legislation” (85).

Sarah’s narration of the four couples amply demonstrates her unhappiness with the lot of women, particularly educated women. In fact, Sarah is very unhappy with her own lot in life. And this unhappiness prevents her from articulating what she wants to achieve in life, even though she is ambitious and has a keen sense of the possible. Listing out her friends’ tastes, she thinks:

People choose their own symbols naturally, for Gill always has in her room vast masses of green leaves, any leaves, chopped off trees or hedges, whilst Stephen and Louise have dried grasses in long Swedish vases. Simone, the flower without the foliage, and Gill, the foliage without the flower. I should like to bear leaves and flowers and fruit, I should like the whole world, I should like, I should like, Oh I should indeed. (70)

Sarah, unlike Simone or Gill, refuses to accept less, she wants to have the whole world. It also amply proves her fervent passion and zest for life. Her expectations from life for herself are much more than most people have and so she wants to achieve something big, though she does not know precisely what. Maybe this sense of expectation is what is stopping her from settling down, content with her
lot in life. She acknowledges that she and Francis are in love. But she is not keen on marrying him promptly, as Tony and Gill have done. She pushes Francis into accepting the Commonwealth scholarship to go to Harvard and study political theory. Though she claims to be in love with Francis, she neither has confidence in her love for Francis nor is she confident of his love for her. But while introspecting, she realizes that it is her fault, rooted in her failure to understand herself. Sometimes she feels as if she is suffering from a sense of isolation, but she herself counters it instantly, claiming that her loneliness does not make her miserable. Sarah wants life to be about more than love and marriage; she wants something above and beyond that. She regards herself as emancipated. To her this idea that a woman being nothing without a man sounds insane. She wants to travel on the less-travelled road, exploring new areas.

Despite her perspectives on the importance of love and marriage to one’s life, Sarah wants to be a one-man girl. When compared to other women like, Louise and Gill, she is ready to experience a tough life in order to gain a sense of hope. As we have seen earlier, though Sarah expects a lot from life she is unable to decide or define what she wants. Her statements reveal different facets of her character. Even though she feels liberated she is also unsure of herself. She is full of such contradictions. For example, even though she would prefer to be thought of as a one-man woman, when faced with loneliness, she asks Jackie to visit her one night, thereby proving right those who felt that she was like her sister Louise in some ways. As far as her relationship with her family members is concerned, she seems to have been under Louise’s influence for a long time. Every time she is ignored by Louise, she feels disillusioned. She is aware of the emptiness of Louise’s nature, yet swallows her own disenchantment. Louise hurts her by baselessly sadistic remarks, which lead
Sarah to say, “Until I went up to Oxford I always believed that the defensive, almost whining position that she invariably pushed me into was entirely the fault of my own miserable nature, as I admired her fanatically” (20).

It seems as if Sarah is suffering from inferiority complex even though she is superior to Louise intellectually. But in her own mind she has always believed that Louise was superior to her, and so she helplessly implores her to “teach me how to win, teach me to be undefeated, teach me to trample without wincing. Teach me the art of discarding. Teach me success” (25). This leaves her grumbling at the inequalities and injustices of life, as she feels that it is often unfair. It is only at Oxford that she realizes her error in judgment and steps out of her sister’s thumb and her shadow. Another fact to her character is that she likes “people to be free and bound together not by need but by love” (31), though she very well aware that it is not easy. But we learn here that before she leaves for Oxford she becomes thoroughly dissatisfied with everyone in her family which leaves her restless and hating the very thought of living with them. This attitude of hers prompts her mother to say, “You just use home as if it were a hotel,… and then all you want to do is to get away to your horrible dirty friends and horrible poky little flats. All I am is a servant, that’s all I am, just a household drudge …” (64). Here, Drabble points out a tragic fact, it means the failure in parents-child relationship which affects everything adversely. Lacking meaningful relation with her parents Sarah is almost depressed over the structure less lives of the women like herself, which is evident in her words.

I looked horrifyingly pregnable, somehow, at that moment; I looked at myself in fascination, thinking how unfair it was, to be born with so little defense, like a soft snail without a shell. Men are all right, they are defined and enclosed, but we, in order to live must be open and raw
to all comers. What happens otherwise is worse than what happens normally, the embroidery and the children and the sagging mind. I felt doomed to defeat. I felt all women were doomed. (28-29)

Sarah is indecisive but her suffering is due to her misunderstanding of the new world. She refuses to define herself in terms of marriage or a good career: “I feel like someone living in a paper house surrounded by predatory creatures. They believe the house is solid so they don’t attack, but if I were to move they would see the walls flutter and collapse and they would be on to me in no time” (80). Though the focus of the novel seems to be narrow, it captures the sense of drift and dislocation that women just leaving universities feel. In a hurry to settle in life, they take wrong steps which bring misery to, if not ruin their lives. As Sarah sees it, the disintegration of Gill’s marriage exemplifies the folly of leaping into marriage, caught in the first heady throes of euphoric love. She dislikes Stephanie and Michael’s marriage, as she thinks that a life of domestic order is boring and lacks thrill. Louise and Stephen’s twisted motives in marrying lead to disaster. Louise jumps onto the marriage bandwagon in a futile attempt to live a life of luxury, by seemingly adhering to societal norms, only to taste defeat when they break up. She counsels Sarah not to marry for love as it brings grief to people. In reality, it is not love but her perverted nature and a life gone astray that brings ruin to her. It is the man and woman staying faithful to each other that is the binding principle keeping a marriage intact. To Sarah, the ‘principle of marriage’ does not bind “those who don’t want to be bound” (141).

Drabble examines the lives and modern marriages of women, and exposes the silent revolution in changing values, observing without any prejudice. She says, “I have lots of questions, endless questions. I don’t really pretend to have any answers, so I am not a teacher, I’m an explorer” (Poland 264). She tries to help her readers find
a form for their own future and also to determine their behavior, and their hopes by
her vivid depiction of the marriages of these women. This questioning of marriage
and domesticity on many levels in *A Summer Bird-Cage* is vastly different from the
attitudes towards marriage found in Austen’s *Pride and Prejudice*. As noted in *The
Oxford Companion to English Literature*, which has been edited by Drabble, *Pride
and Prejudice* ends with the marriages of the two eldest Bennett sisters, seemingly,
“an indication of their subsequent happiness” (787). Drabble’s *A Summer Bird-Cage*
shows clearly that her modern educated women address the same development in an
entirely different perspective. Her story starts with the marriage of the elder Bennett
sister and ends with its intensely emotional break-up, leaving the readers with the
persistent doubts of the other Bennett sister about whether her degree would be
considered useful or not since she is prevented from participating in the ‘first-class’
professions by the fact of her sex. Malcolm Bradbury declares that, the 1960s were a
time of change in the Western world.

In Britain, the liberal, moral, austere culture mood of what became
known as the ‘tranquillized’ Fifties was soon transforming into the
liberationist, amoral, provisional, counter cultural spirit of what – thanks
to Time magazine – became known as the ‘swinging’ Sixties. In fact
London was soon being declared the cultural capital. (Bradbury 340)

Drabble, in her role as a responsible writer, attempts to create some space for
the younger generation to venture further into more complicated situations. She writes
for the modern educated populace to provide a “new blue print”. Therefore, in order
to achieve her goal, she artistically mixes traditional structures with her new style of
writing to create a new answer, a new moral.
Drabble in her second novel, *The Garrick Year*, continues to deal with the everyday lives of British middle-class women who are disengaged from larger social issues and facing the problems of a domestic life in contemporary society. Here Drabble’s point of reference is the theatre life, particularly in provincial England, where the Shakespearean actor David Garrick was born, to Stratford, Shakespeare’s birthplace. She herself is now living with her actor-husband in Stratford. Her overt references to traditional writers are evident in her novels. For instance, Emma Evans’s first name is borrowed from Austen’s heroine Emma Woodhouse. However, Drabble’s Emma, because she is well-educated and has some job opportunities in hand, has the option of not marrying. Drabble combines her own knowledge of contemporary life and of her foremothers’ work to help show her contemporary female readers to sort out the baffling possibilities that modern life presents. This novel, *The Garrick Year*, is about maternity and its ramifications, talking expansively about motherhood beyond what Drabble’s nineteenth century ancestors debated frankly on topics such as breastfeeding and milk-laden breasts because Drabble has first-hand experience; as Emma states, “I decided that I would have to wean Joseph: my breasts were too big. They looked all right, but misrepresentative” (62). Most of her nineteenth century foremothers had no such experiences or frank discussions to draw from. Drabble brings her modern construct into the late twentieth century in a positive light by adding a human body to the concept, whereas her nineteenth century predecessors avoided discussing a woman’s body because of the societal restrictions of discussing such topics in a public forum in their society. In *The Garrick Year*, Drabble takes the cover off a marriage and examines the very tissue and structure of the couple’s lives. The heroine, Emma Evans, who did “a little sporadic fashion of modeling” (10), gets married to the egocentric actor, David. With him, she says, “I
felt that I was on the verge of some unknown and frightful land, black desert, white sand, huge rocky landscapes, and great jungles of ferns” (24). She says, when explaining why she married David, that she did not want to settle for an easy life, but wanted something “precipitous, and with David I felt assured at least of that” (25). Though they marry in haste and repent at leisure, the birth of their daughter Flora brings a huge change in their lives. Emma finds utter delight and relief in her devotion to her daughter’s well-being.

After three years of child-bearing and experiencing world of maternity Emma starts to feel the need to be engaged in a lucrative job. She is elated when she is offered an enjoyable job as a newsreader and announcer in a television studio. She regards herself to be the ideal candidate for the job. When David declares his decision to play a year’s season at a provincial theatre festival at Hereford, she reasons against the idea. His extravagant habits and her own inability to save frighten her. She says, “He used to shock me at times, with his taxis and his double whiskies: I wondered what would happen to him, if he had to do without. I am always trying to do without, just to practice, just in case, and this annoys him” (13).

Emma is unable to relinquish the dream of the television job. But in the egotistical David’s eyes, her desire to take the job seems silly and vain. He says, “You want the whole bloody nation to stare at you every night. Your vanity will kill you one of these days, you’ll drop dead from selfishness if you don’t watch it” (17). But she too has no respect for his profession. She thinks acting is not art but an entertainment. All actors are, in her view, “a pack of megalomaniacs” (17). Their arguments lead them in circles. Emma deplores her marriage, which has deprived her of many things. But in spite of the many blatant disadvantages of marriage, she does not want to give up on David. It is her awareness of the infinite compensations of
motherhood, her fear of being abandoned with the children, and her fear of public humiliation and loneliness that force her to stay with him. “I did not want to separate the children from their father; I did not want anyone to criticize David for leaving me; I did not want David to be alone in Hereford, not only because I knew that if he went without me he would never come back, but also because I knew that he too would be lonely.” (20) This unmistakably proves not only her concern for him, but also her anxiety at the thought of being criticized. In this regard Joanne V. Creighton in Margaret Drabble points out: “Like many a nineteenth-century literary heroine, and many a twentieth-century romantic one, Emma’s crisis of resolving reason and feeling is tested in her inability to respond to the natural, either inside or outside herself.”(48) Though she struggles against and yearns to escape the limitations of her domestic existence, she stoically accepts the basic conditions of marriage.

Emma is aware of her own failings too. She regards herself an “obstinate artifact of life” (37). When discussing their marriage, she says that, at first, their passion for each other was rooted in their foreignness. However, very soon they realized that neither selfishness nor eccentricity was charming and their passion came to be choked by the demands of domesticity. Her frank assessment of themselves is revealed when she says, “Certainly we both were a catalogue of the vices in wife and husband that should act as a permanent deterrent from matrimony” (26).

Unlike Louise of A Summer Bird-Cage, Emma is aware of her own faults. She even tolerates the French maid, Pascal, who disapproves of her as a housewife: “What a strange situation the domestic situation is, that it should oblige one to live with other people with whom one has no sense of connection of any kind. Pascal and I disagreed, I am sure, on every possible point, and yet we lived together, ate together, shared the same bath and the same life” (43). Her seemingly vacant statement about her French
maid and herself is applicable in the case of her and David too, gaining profound meaning. She thinks the house at Hereford is disgusting and the wardrobe too depresses her. At Hereford life seems to be on the verge of extinction to Emma. Her sense of dissatisfaction and her economic dependence on David add to her unhappiness. Her inability to forgive the matrimonial offences of her absent-minded husband and her constant boredom with life make her feel that her life has become a deserted place.

The breach between them widens every day and she grieves silently as David becomes bad-tempered. The humdrum life filled with eating, sleeping, shopping, feeding the children and drinking seems meaningless. Drabble believes that we all live in a world of opportunity, and the fundamental duty of every human being is to try and make something of it and to resist being swept away by the arbitrary. Emma’s failure to strive on when faced with the impossible complicates her life further. Providence or coincidence places Wyndham in Emma’s way at a time when she is seemingly suffering from mental instability.

Finding her own life dull and dreary, Emma is looking forward to some thrilling and exciting new experiences; her instant acceptance of his proposal to go out for dinner surprises even herself and gives way to anxiety, she questions her own wisdom in going out with another man alone. Her eagerness in going out to dinner with another man prompts her to contemplate the advantages and disadvantages of her marriage, her children, and also introspect about herself. She dislikes herself for being ready to go out with him. In the time between her acceptance and her first outing with Wyndham, she struggles with herself a lot.

Wyndham arouses in her “an unwilling admiration for his perpetual readiness” (92) and her association with him brings back the missing fire in her life. Though she enjoys her mild flirtations and spends time with Wyndham, she is nervous and feels
miserable. The idea of “having an affair” seems to enchant her but the actual affair does not make her happy, “The reluctance was wholly on my side, though there must have been something on his to make him put up with me: I simply could not bring myself to do it. Kissing I did not mind; in fact I soon discovered that anything above the waist, so to speak, I did not mind but that anything below was out of the question ...” (128). These words illustrate her state of mind. She allows him certain liberties with her but she wards off the more serious sexual advances. Her hesitation in making love with him indicates her internalization of the values of her culture. Their affair develops certain regularity and they are thrilled at facing the difficulties that are normally faced by young couples living at home with nowhere to go. Strangely, such problems seem to add to her interest in the affair. Wyndham becomes aware of her reluctance to make love to him only when she refuses to share his bed when they get the much-awaited opportunity. He begs her not to be so hard on him and tries to assert himself by talking of love. He gets wildly upset when she tells him that she associates love-making with babies and she does not want to have sex with him, but just wants to have a good time. She declares, “I only know one person and that’s David, and I don’t want to know anyone else. It’s horrible, quite horrible, knowing people” (132).

Wyndham tries to make an unsuccessful pass at her, loses his temper and shouts angrily, “You treat me like a fool, you eat my food, you drink my drink, you take my presents off me, and you treat me like fool ... You’re a child, I’m telling you, you think you can take everything and give nothing” (143). It is clear that Emma and Wyndham view marriage in entirely different ways. It is not a wild exaggeration to say that he sees marriage as a matter of convenience; whereas for her, it is the affair which is a matter of convenience. She seems to be more enchanted with the idea of an affair than the affair itself, and so, unable to change Wyndham’s wild mood, she tries
to shut the garage door on his face and quite unexpectedly they see David and Sophy making love. The two pairs find themselves caught red-handed. Disillusioned, Emma wakes up from her dream world and faces reality. Reviewing the past events, she renders a heartfelt apology to Wyndham, “Wyndham, I really must apologize. I had no right, no right whatsoever, to put myself in a situation where you might think – where you might expect – where I was any way committed to go; I thought I could. I wanted to. But there are more things stopping me than I realized, and I apologize for not having recognized them earlier” (160).

Her apology reflects her state of mind. She sets off on the affair with the sincere expectation of enjoying herself. She is blind to her own nature in the beginning. Finally good sense prevails over her and she apologizes to him, realizing her own error in judgment. Her surrender to Wyndham on her sick-bed might have been perhaps, due to the feeling that she owes a debt to him and she has to fulfill it. After the affair with Wyndham, she accidentally gets pinned against the garage wall by his car, as though in answer to her wish for retribution. She feels as though a moral error had been committed and punished. Mike Papini, an American friend visiting Hereford, makes a pass at her and tries to convince her that she is wasting her time with her shallow and egocentric husband David. The two overtures are of almost of the same nature and both happened within a week of each other, leading her to think seriously of the two men – Wyndham and Mike. She is aware of Mike’s many good qualities, which she herself values, and that Wyndham’s character causes her serious disquiet.

Mike’s invitation asking her to come to London and live with him astounds her. She tells him categorically that she has no intention of doing anything of that sort and that she cannot bear to be separated from her children. But I think that Emma
never thinks of avenging on her husband. Though she disagrees and argues with him most of the time, she does not hate him. Many times they fight over trivial matters. Their tastes and their very nature are quite different. His wild moods lead to yet another verbal battle and Emma declares, “You’re not fit to live with, if it weren’t for the children I’d leave you tomorrow” (125). In spite of whatever she says in the heat of the moment, she does not take any concrete steps to walk out of his life. She knows her own defects as well as those of David’s. Her craving for attention remains unfulfilled even after her marriage because David is a narcissist. He ignores the others around him because of his complete involvement in his acting profession and obsessive interest in himself.

This intense self-involvement and self-worship create a gulf between Emma and David. The thoughtful way in which Wyndham pays attention to her, perhaps, makes a huge impact on her and makes her go astray. At the same time her concern for David is plain for all to see though she never articulates it. She says, “There must be more unlikely people than David and myself who have become fathers and mothers, harnessed to this domestic machinery” (37). She is aware that there is something in their marriage which cannot be dissected and which is alive. This live thing makes their parting impossible:

Indeed, the idea of parting never crossed our minds. It was never anything but a question of his staying or of my going. This living thing, whatever it was, kept us still intertwined, so that whenever I felt myself suffocating, the more I knocked against him, each breath of his swelled against my own ribcage. We were not separate, at that point; we were part of the same thing still. (20)
She acknowledges the most remarkable fact that they are faithful to each other in spite of their incompatibility. Even her bad behavior does not drive David to any other woman, not till he meets Sophy, though he was a notorious womanizer before marriage. Even in the darkest days of her disillusionment and deep-rooted dissatisfaction, she does not invite anyone else into her life. She confidently says, “Even at the worst, I liked David. And although I did not see that I owed him very much, I certainly did not owe anyone else more” (27). Trying to contain her own discontent, she carries on in her life with David, who is always pre-occupied with thoughts of himself. Whenever she is provoked by circumstances or people like Sophy, she experiences a desperate longing to establish who and what she is. It is while attempting to do so that she lapses into self-pity and surrenders in her relationship with Wyndham. Her own failure to realize her youthful dreams and the promise of the vision of perfection causes her discontent. This dissatisfaction, along with her wild nature, complicates her life for a while.

At times, when Emma is faced with temptation in the shape of Wyndham, she overlooks the remote motive and goes astray for a while. But before it is too late she realizes her mistake. She accepts her own weaknesses, frigidity, hardness and triviality. David too apologizes to her for his uncaring and nonchalant behavior. Their wayward life, neurotic behavior, and infidelity make them feel that they have something in common. As Wyndham says, “People who get married give up the here and now for the sake of the hereafter” (161). Both, Emma and David’s inability to understand it creates problems in their life. Diana Cooper-Clark remarks, “Life is absurd and chaotic, shifting and contradictory. It contains great gaps between what one wants and what one gets, the ideal and the real” (6). Emma also faces the great gap between what she looks for and what she finds. Expecting to have a life full of excitement she marries David. Her expectations are proved futile, but motherhood
offers some consolation, saving her from real distress. Though marriage turns out to be much less than what she expected, depriving her of plenty, she sticks to the bond. However, she does not ever think of breaking her marriage vows, not even with the utter disappointment facing her and her general discontent which makes her frigid and morbid. Maybe in Hereford, the pleasure-seeking Wyndham places indirect pressure on her and so, against all the odds she decides to try for what she wants from life. For Emma, “Motherhood has of course infinite compensations, though I can well believe that some people are driven to a point where they cannot feel them” (10). It seems that she herself, have been at that point for quite some time. The clandestine excursions, long rides, and sweet nothings prove exciting for a while. In her quest for some excitement, which she misses in her married life with David, she loses what she has. Moreover after confronting emotional tension and mental torment she realizes that people who get married have to give up. This realization helps Emma to forge her marriage confidently into a mould which both she and her husband find comfortable. Creighton seems to believe:

Emma’s rationalizations, compromises and accommodations in her role as wife, lover and mother, together with her longings for an identity that defies existing female models, evoke sympathy and identification even from readers who see Emma shaped and limited by social and cultural forces destructive of healthy female selfhood (Margaret Drabble 50).

But to the researcher it is something purely humanistic in heroine’s act. I believe that beneath the surface of the novel there is a kind of attempt from Emma’s part towards exploration of her real instincts and a positive move toward keeping her inherited self morality which comes along with acceptance of life.
Drabble’s next novel *The Millstone*, is a story about a single woman having a baby. Here Drabble uses childbirth as a symbol of the paradoxical effect of experience on the heroine. Myer believes that Drabble’s purpose in writing this novel is to highlight the existing internal conflicts that the modern woman faces while playing her different roles in modern society. Myer believes:

Margaret Drabble, the creative writer, makes the imaginative leap of creating consequences which stem from the conflicts of Rosamund’s upbringing. She is reared in upper middle class affluence and status, but the principles she is taught are inherited from the Victorian nonconformists (all upside down, in modern society, as Rosamund has always perceived, yet by no means dead). (*Puritanism and Permissiveness* 39)

The heroine of Drabble’s *The Millstone*, Rosamund Stacey, desperately needs some sort of progress or development; she is more solipsistic than her forerunners, as she is more alienated from reality, humanity, and even from her true self. The first-person narration, which Drabble uses in this novel, is appropriately employed to convey the self-absorption of this deeply introspective character. Rosamund’s confessional story is actually a kind of self-analysis, as she endeavors to unify her fractioned self. Though she is highly efficient professionally, she is equally incompetent in her personal life, as love eludes her, “Eventually the idea of love ended in me almost the day that it began. Nothing succeeds like success, and certainly nothing fails like failure. I was successful in my work, so I suppose other successes were too much to hope for” (8). As a research student writing a doctoral dissertation on English poetry, the dichotomy Rosamund experiences between her personal and professional personas denotes a division between life and literature. In *The Millstone*,
Drabble aggrandizes a raging debate between art and life. Rosamund personifies this struggle perfectly, as she herself is totally divided between the literal and figurative realms of her own life-experience. Terrified of both love and life, she habitually finds reprieve from reality in the ivory tower of academia. Before getting pregnant, she lived in a fictional world rather than in the factual. In fact, her first love affair is based not on any real human feeling, but on gaudy fiction. Her pregnancy shows her that life and literature are vastly different. Even before giving birth, she has a premonition of how her whole world would change, and the new life experiences she would get. She thinks thus:

At times I had a vague and complicated sense that this pregnancy had been sent to me in order to reveal to me a scheme of things totally different from the schemes which I inhabited, totally removed from academic enthusiasms, social consciousness…, and the exercise of free will. It was as though for too long I had been living in one way, on one plane, and the way I had ignored had been forced thus abruptly and violently to assert itself. (77)

Rosamund gets introduced to this whole new world during her first trip to the ante-natal clinic. Ironically, her very first sexual encounter leaves her pregnant, which is of extreme importance in her secret war with her own unconscious desires, “it forces her, to some extent, to face up to her female identity, to the fact that she is a woman, a fact she has rather violently attempted to deny without always being aware of the intensity of this denial” (Spitzer 228). This forces her to contemplate a secret termination. But her somewhat half-hearted attempt at having the pregnancy terminated proves to be ineffective and so she abandons it. She starts to think that “a baby might be no such bad thing, however impractical and impossible” (16). Her
academic vocation, her devotion to her research and her lonely existence result in her thinking like a male chauvinist, and she almost forgets her own femininity and the needs accruing from being a woman. She is aware that there is something abnormal in her attitude, and tries to keep it hidden by arranging and limning romantic dates with her friends, Joe Hurt and Roger Anderson, in such a way that each thinks that she has a physical relationship with the other. Her pregnancy reminds her inescapably of the fact that she is a woman. She is a woman and she cannot alter it.

Oddly enough, I never thought it was a judgment upon me for that one evening with George, but rather for all those other evenings of abstinence with Hamish and his successors. I was guilty of a crime, all right, but it was a brand new, twentieth-century crime, not the good old traditional one of lust and greed. My crime was my suspicion, my fear, my apprehensive terror of the very idea of sex. I liked men, and was forever in and out of love for years, but the thought of sex frightened the life out of me, and the more I didn’t do it and the more I read and heard about how I ought to do it the more frightened I became. (17-18)

She regards her pregnancy, resulting from her first experience of sex, to be a punishment for the crime she has committed. Her perceived crime is her fear of sex, and her protracted virginity seems a sin to her, especially as she has been holding out on many male friends. So she believes that she is punished not because of adultery but because of her abstinence. As with most of us, her characteristic traits are dictated by her parents:

My parents did not support me at all, beyond the rent-free accommodation, though they could have afforded to do so: but they believed in independence. They had drummed the idea of self reliance
into me so thoroughly that I believed dependence to be a fatal sin.

Emancipated woman, this was me: gin bottle in hand, opening my own door with my own latchkey. (9)

Brought up with the belief that dependence is a sin, Rosamund lives an isolated life mistakenly thinking that she is living an independent life. Her withdrawal from the real world dulls her feminine instincts and this independent trait stops her from seeking help even in times of crises. In an attempt to live up to her mother’s expectations, she behaves foolishly. The prevalent feminist feelings and her over-confidence in her own ability to control any situation or manage any calamity causes trouble for her. Her mother imbibles in her the independent qualities of equality, endurance, and fortitude in adversity. This independence inculcated from a very young age teaches her to keep her joys and sorrows to herself.

My mother, you know, was a great feminist. She brought me up to be equal. She made sure that there were no questions, no difference. I was equal. I am equal. You know what her creed was? That thing that Queen Elizabeth said about thanking God that she had such qualities that if she were turned out in her petticoat in any part of Christendom, she would whatever it was that she would do. She used to quote that to us, when we were frightened about exams or going to dances. I have to live up to her, you know. (28-29)

George seems to be able to melt her frigidity and awaken the feminine instincts dormant in her. She finally experiences love and actually longs for his company, but she hides her feelings in the deepest parts of her heart. As she becomes overwhelmed by doubts concerning his intentions and, in an attempt to avoid intruding or prying, she lets him leave without saying a word about any further contact. Too many
thoughts leading her around in circles confuse her. Her diffidence and her attempt to
not cause any offence are mistaken by George to be coldness and indifference, and so
he does not bother to contact her again. She analyzes their every move and wrongfully
reasons that she has taken the “decisive move” as George has expressed no particular
liking or affection for her, but has accepted her only “through kindliness or curiosity
or embarrassment” (32). Thus, reason dominates emotion, and as her innate pride
prevents her from seeking him out, she resolutely starts to avoid places where she
might run into him. Though she is tempted to contact him when she finds herself
pregnant, she suppresses the urge and resolves to face motherhood singlehandedly, as
she has been brought up to do.

Sympathy or kindness even from a friend is unacceptable to her. After she
confides in Joe about her pregnancy, she wants him to leave, “before he sensed my
poverty, because Joe was capable of pity and of kindness” (43). When Roger voices
his concern and offers her his help, she pretends to be above it. No one knows, and no
one is allowed to know her true financial status. Her parents’ flat, where she lives,
gives people a false idea about her financial status. Isolated from the outside world,
she lives in her own incomplete world. When she decides to become a single mother,
Joe appeals against it, claiming, “it is an utterly ridiculous romantic stupid nonsensical
idea. I think you are out of your mind” (40). She rejects forthwith his contention that
she has a secret yearning for maternal fulfillment and conveys her anger at his
inference.

Like Rosamund, her sister Beatrice too was educated to be independent and to
consider herself the equal of anyone alive, but she starts to see the error of their
parents’ way of thinking. Considering Rosamund’s pregnancy as the most horrendous
mistake that would bring devastating grief to both mother and child, Beatrice warns
her of the problems in raising an illegitimate child in their society. She suggests adoption as a solution and also counsels Rosamund to stay detached from the baby. She believes, it’s a quite meaningless kind of involvement at that age and you will be the only one to suffer. But her advice is not appreciated by Rosamund; she becomes indignant and annoyed at Beatrice, and feels that nobody else has any right to offer her advice about her own child; and in the process, she realizes the depth of her own determination to keep the baby.

The determination at this stage cannot have been based, as it later was, on love, for I felt no love and little hope of feeling it: it was based rather on an extraordinary confidence in myself, in a conviction, quite irrational, that no adoptive parents could ever be as excellent as I myself would be. At the same time, the prospect of motherhood frightened me; I experienced the usual doubts about whether my child would like me, whether I would like my child, and so on, but simultaneously with these doubts I experienced absolute certainty. I knew for a fact that the child would be mine and that I would have it. Whatever Beatrice said, I would have felt it a cowardly betrayal to abandon it to the unknown, well-meaning ignorance of anyone else in Britain. (79)

She spurns her sister’s advice, deplores the indifference shown by her parents and brother to her predicament, and finally decides in favor of the child she is expecting. Her own excessive self-confidence and her blissful ignorance of reality help her in such decision making. She is apprehensive about the future, her own capacity to love the child and also the child’s love for her; however she is certain that the child would be hers and hers alone. Rosamund is torn between her apprehensions
about single motherhood and her own instinctive feeling that she and her child will love each other. This conflict indicates her strong motherly love for her unborn child. She decides to raise the child herself, even under extremely trying circumstances. Her ignorance and innocence stem from her solipsistic life, cut off from the real world. Her unexpected pregnancy brings her out of her ivory tower and forces her into facing reality. The sheer embarrassment and utter ridiculousness of her position proves to be too much to bear at times, but she brazens it out, refusing to pretend that she is Mrs. Stacey. Impending motherhood does not stop her from working. As an educated and enterprising contemporary woman, she works hard throughout her pregnancy, completes her research, gets her doctorate and finds a job. She does not think of herself as either innocent or as a helpless victim of unfortunate fate or of a conspiracy of malicious events. She holds herself accountable for the happenings in her life, as would any responsible adult, and she is ready to face the consequences without whining. She is not ready to relinquish her own personal dignity at any cost. Inexplicably, she feels that her pregnancy however haphazard and unexpected is connected to some sequence, to some significant development of her life. Drabble though believes that “people are at the mercy of fate” but she always guide them to continue in their endeavor. In her interview with Diana Cooper-Clark she remarks:

Well, we certainly do live in a world of chance, there’s no disputing that. The duty of the human will is to seek to make sense of it and to resist being swamped by the arbitrary and saying because it’s arbitrary there’s nothing you can do. You have to endeavor in the face of the impossible. That’s what we were put on this earth to do: to endeavor in the face of the impossible. (Critical Essays 26)
Rosamund is blissfully ignorant of the bond that links man to his fellow man until her pregnancy. A better and realistic measure of her progress is George Matthews, who has become nothing but a disembodied voice on the BBC radio, after the brief encounter that led to the almost immaculate conception of Octavia. Her running into him towards the end of the novel signals their insurmountable distance. Because of her blossoming womanhood, which has finally lived up to its promise through her pregnancy and motherhood, she has progressed far beyond her male counterpart George so that there is no chance of a reunion between the two. Rosamund too has romantic dreams. At times she imagines scenarios where George would arrive and implore her. Whenever Rosamund feels starved of adult affection, she yearns to spend time with George. After getting pregnant she is compelled to see him. But then second thoughts dissuade her. Denying herself the pleasure of his company she listens to him on the radio. She remarks:

I switched on the radio to listen to his voice announcing this and that: I still could not believe that I was going to get through it without telling him, but I could not see that I was going to tell him either. I would have the odd two minutes when I would think of him, and such grief and regret and love would pour down my spine that I tried not to think.

(61)

After all her suffering and heartache, Rosamund experiences the utter bliss of love at last, a profound spiritual experience, when she sees her daughter for the very first time, “I lay awake for two hours, unable to get over my happiness. I was not much used to feeling happiness: satisfaction, perhaps, or triumph, and at times excitement and exhilaration. But happiness was something I had not gone in for for a long time, and it was very nice, too nice to waste in sleep” (103). She believes in suffering in
silence and celebrating quietly, yet sees herself undergoing a remarkable change. She rapturously explains her newfound happiness to Joe. Her attempt to convey her happiness is somewhat dampened when he pungently remarks, “What you’re talking about … is one of the most boring common places of the female experience. All women feel exactly that, it’s nothing to be proud of, it isn’t even worth thinking about.” (103)

However, Rosamund thinks her pride is justified as she is not usually vain, and this is the first time in her life where she feels proud; and for the very first time, she has had an experience special to women everywhere. She holds firm in the face of several irritations in the maternity hospital like being handed the initial U for unmarried in her label. She forgets all such hardships when faced with the uncritical love of her daughter Octavia, and gradually comes to realize “that she liked me, that she had no option but to like me, and that unless I took great pains to alienate her, she would go on liking me” (115). Octavia’s sudden illness, her congenital heart disease plunges Rosamund from her ignorant bliss into indeterminate sorrow. Though she is tempted to share her fears and anxiety with George, she refrains from doing so. She is often reduced to tears, fearing for her daughter’s future and realizes that she is vulnerable, tender, and naked.

I could not rid myself of the notion that if Octavia were to die, this would be a vengeance upon my sin. The innocent shall suffer for the guilty. What my sin had been I found difficult to determine, for I could not convince myself that sleeping with George had been a sin; on the contrary, in certain moods I tended to look on it as the only virtuous action of my life. A sense of retribution nevertheless hung heavily over me and what I tried to preserve that night was faith not in God but in the laws of chance. (127)
The gravity of her daughter’s illness leads her to fear the worst. Though she sees it as a retribution for the sin of sleeping with George, a part of her thinks of it as a virtue and not a sin. Or maybe it is in keeping George ignorant of the birth of their child. In fact, self-denial is Rosamund’s predominant characteristic, so she soon learns to deal with reality in practical terms to protect Octavia.

Rosamund adamantly insists upon seeing her daughter, as is her right as a mother and starts screaming hysterically till they let her see the little girl. She totally forgets her own intellectual sophistication, and behaves only like a mother, anxious and scared. This trauma she suffers in the hospital changes her entire attitude and approach towards life. She is aware that the world goes on without her and she also realizes that her own skewed view of the world was because of her own background and upbringing. She remarks that she was blind about the facts of real life “I did not know that a pattern forms before we are aware of it, and that what we think we make becomes a rigid prison making us. In ignorance and innocence I built my own confines, and by the time I was old enough to know what I had done, there was no longer time to undo it” (7). She is just sad about her own ignorance which has resulted in a destructive pattern in her life. Having become wise and mature, she is aware of the impossibility of changing this pattern and she is stoic about both the justice of her fate and its inevitability. Rosamund is weak in the sense that she fails to act when appropriate. She wastes a lot of time ruminating before making her decisions. While she is with George, she sees him through the eyes of love, sheds happy tears, longs to spend more time in his company, yet does not show him her true feelings.
This diffidence, frigidity, and indifference of Rosamund keep her apart from George, but, in an attempt to justify her own actions, she paints George with the same brush. The awareness that she herself had made the ‘decisive move’, leading to the irreversible step prevents her from reaching out to him. She resists the temptation to confide the truth to him, to reveal her affection and to invite him to share her life, along with their child, when her pregnancy is confirmed, and goes on fighting the urge to do so even when she is tense and worried about the her ailing daughter’s health. Whenever she is really tempted to confide in him, something stops her. She thinks that her parents have a well-established, English morality. This morality, instilled in her from early childhood stops her from getting too close to father of her baby. George’s last visit reminds her of what she has done thus:

I remembered how often I had reached for the phone, in those first months, to ring Broadcasting House and ask for George; how consciously I had restrained myself from going to the pub to see him, from walking the streets he might walk; how I had lain in bed at the hospital and listened through my institution earphones for his voice, how I had wept and lain awake and wished to share the misery of my child’s affliction and the joy of her joy, how I had endured and survived and spared him so much sorrow, and I thought that now I did not see how I could go back on what I had done. (169)

In the battle raging between the two sides of Rosamund the one who is the quintessential woman who wants to cling to George and the other one the self-reliant and independent feminist the self-reliant strong woman wins. Though she wants to call George to share her worry over their daughter with him, she manages to control her instincts. Well aware that this is the final opportunity for her to untangle her troubled emotions with him, she decides to take the initiative and struggles to reveal her true feelings.
Though she is overwhelmed with her love for George, she refrains from revealing her feelings. She feels better when she broods over the sorrow and anxiety she has spared him from, forgetting about the joys of parenthood that she has denied him, in her attempt to justify her own actions to herself. Even unaware of the fact that he is Octavia’s father, George asks Rosamund to share his life along with the little girl. Yet they each are diffident about reaching out to one another. Rosamund’s ambivalence is particularly apparent in her final meeting with George. His surprising presence at the chemist’s confounds her and so she struggles, unable to convey to him her true feelings and longings; she wants to prevent him from leaving, but ends up lying to him about her daughter’s age. But soon afterwards, she re-assumes her former unflappable self and portrays the girl she was earlier, the one with so many lovers. She was free to do whatever she wants.

*The Millstone* seems to showcase the process of the characters’ development: “characters undergoing a process of change – developing, growing, softening, hardening”(8), as Drabble said in an interview. The protagonist is indifferent to the world around her for quite a while, until the birth of her daughter. Her only reality is her work, her research. She is averse to taking any help from anyone, so never engages even domestic help. But she is forced to face reality when she becomes pregnant. She is forced into the real world in the hospital, where she realizes that she will have to get the help of even strangers in future. She portrays herself in different guises with various people: an emancipated woman with Joe and Roger; an erudite modern woman not in need of a husband, with George; and a woman of independent means to many others; but in the end, she is forced to abandon all such pretensions to lead the life of an unwed mother. Octavia’s birth broadens her horizons. Her pregnancy leads her to realize that she is trapped in a human limit for the first time in
her life, and she was going to learn to live inside it. Though she fears that her independent lifestyle might be threatened in the beginning, as the pregnancy progresses, she finds more in common with other women, thereby finding herself at peace with herself as a woman.

Though Drabble claims to be not a preacher but an explorer, *The Millstone* does have a moral that a discerning reader can spot. The idea of a woman being self-reliant, independent and equal to men had been drilled into her from childhood by her mother, making her an erudite, competent and independent woman. Her independent lifestyle, her innate aversion to taking any help from anyone, keeps her isolated. She is imprisoned in her ivory tower, and this ensures her being totally cut off from the outside world. Her fear of sex born out of ignorance and indifference to it, results in her remaining a virgin far longer than most girls of her age. Leading the almost like a man, she develops an intense dislike to everything feminine, as is evident when she alludes to pregnant women as “bloated human people” (59). She thinks of women as just bodies and sees them as intelligently inferior beings. Her unexpected pregnancy alters her way of thinking. As Spitzer points out, “The pregnancy is crucial in Rosamund’s secret war with her unconscious desires; it forces her, to some extent, to face up to her female identity, to the fact that she is a woman, a fact she has rather violently attempted to deny without always being aware of the intensity of this denial” (11).

Rosamund’s pregnancy deprives her of her innate self-sufficient lifestyle and forces her to seek others’ help. She feels trapped in a human limit and experiences the bond that links all human beings together. Ellen Cronan Rose states, “Rosamund discovers her womanhood at the end of *The Millstone*, which is both her achievement and the measure of her superiority over the father of the illegitimate child” (*Equivocal Figures* 12). She is able to honestly assess herself, from a realistic and practical viewpoint.
Motherhood is a milestone, a turning point in the life of women. It brings the greatest joy in human experience and also forges one of the deepest bonds. Rosamund too experiences it, even though she breaches the society’s accepted behavioral codes by discounting marriage, which is a pre-requisite according to society. As an unwed mother, she seems to view motherhood as a millstone around her neck, though she is ready to face it. Drabble explains this apparent contradiction in her interview with Nancy Hardin: “It was a kind of double reference. The child was both a millstone and a salvation because once it became obvious to Rosamund that she couldn’t suffer any more harm from the child, the millstone was lifted from her.” (280). Though Rosamund thinks that her independence might be threatened at the outset, she discovers plenty in common with other women over time. In her case, the child was both a millstone and also a means of salvation because when it became clear to her that she couldn’t suffer any more harm from her baby, the millstone was lifted from her. As a matter of fact, Hardin remarks that:

In a number of respects The Millstone presents a twentieth-century version of a moral fable. It is contemporary in its reliance on existential themes and on the burdens of chance falling on the individual. Yet it resembles the earlier moral fable in that it can serve as an object lesson for young women of the present time—a lesson in freedom as possibility. (25)

To conclude, her clinic introduces her to the social truths through the broad segment of society she meets there and the range of human misery symbolized by the mothers at the clinic. We can safely say that in The Millstone, Drabble explores the life of an unwed mother, presents both the ecstasy she feels on becoming a mother and the agony she faces when her daughter falls ill, and leaves the rest to the readers’ imagination. She experiences something beyond the self through Octavia, a positive feeling about the other, the human community
In *Jerusalem the Golden*, Drabble’s fourth novel, the focus is on the contemporary woman moving away from her roots, having longed to be free of her native place, and then later coming back to it when life becomes difficult. Throughout the novel, as the story unfolds, the reader can discern Drabble’s attempt to mediate between the conventional humanistic vision which emphasizes morality and the modern view which leans towards individual freedom and choices. Speaking about the novel, Drabble says that it “is about being culturally deprived. And it’s also about the particular kind of dour northern life that I was brought upon ... I still have this feeling that I was permanently squashed by that environment, and those attitudes” (Myer 14). Clara Maugham, the main character in this novel is the product of the northern part of England. She longs to escape the dreary winters which have led her to yearn for sunshine. Drabble emphasizes the parent-child relationships and the impact they can have on their children. Drabble also holds that the relationship between the parents influences the children; if the parents are in a happy marriage, the children grow up to be healthy, well-adjusted adults. But, if like Clara’s mother in this novel, one parent feels unhappy and trapped in the marriage, then the child is terribly affected, and carries the scar of such an impact throughout his or her life. For instance, Clara pays a terrible price for her mother’s bitter attitude to life.

Mrs. Maugham’s living in the suburbs in a northern town, stifling her own aspirations and gifts, leaves her frustrated and embittered which affects her relation with her daughter. She becomes a controlling mother, who does not care for the desires of her children, but imposes her own wishes upon them. Though Clara’s mother considers ostentation to be an insincere pretence and stoically adheres to the dictates of society, she is also very inconsistent in her behavior, which is confusing for her children. Mrs. Maugham’s intense morality and self-established authority result in a huge rift between herself and her children. So, her children grow up with no
emotional ties to their mother, who is referred to as the “bloody minded sadistic old hypocrite” (70). Her bitter and matter-of-fact approach to life have made her stone-cold. Even the sudden demise of Mr. Maugham does not leave her helplessly in tears. Undaunted and seemingly untouched by her bereavement, she walks away from the cemetery after laying him to rest.

Clara is so appalled by the inhuman and cold attitude of her mother that she breaks down, sobbing hysterically after the funeral; she is troubled by her mother’s meanness and lack of love, and for the fear that she would die in an ugly place. She begins to hate her own mother because in her eyes Mrs. Maugham is devoid of humanity, warmth, and honesty. Her acute embarrassment and deep disturbance lead her to see the world differently. Mr. Maugham’s attitude towards his children is no better. Though he is an expert mechanic, he seems to be bothered by inexplicable bitterness. He is able to find neither the time nor the need to entertain the children. Though his children initiate many overtures in order to try and reach him, his utter lack of feelings and total apathy result in his turning away from them every time. Clara thinks of her mother as the generator of misery and says, anyone who lives with her mother will lose her taste for happiness.

Clara is denied parental love; she is kept at a distance by a mother who views her intelligence as a moral weakness, a sickness, and she is repelled by the intolerable attitude of her disagreeable father; so she longs to escape, because she hated a life which is not filled with feeling, warmth, and honesty. Talking about her home town, she wonders how people can actually live there in this way:

She hated her home town with such violence that when she returned each vacation from university, she would shake and tremble with an ashamed and feverish fear. She hated it, and she was afraid of it,
because she doubted her power to escape; even after two years in London, she still thought that her nerve might snap, and that she would be compelled to return, feebly, defeated, to her mother’s house. (30)

It reveals the extent of the stress Clara has undergone, whose unhappy childhood in an insalubrious family environment leaves an indelible negative impact on her sensitive nature. She becomes a very embittered woman because of parents’ indifference to her while growing up, and as an adult she feels nothing but hatred towards them and their home. The very idea that she might not be able to overcome the negative influences of her tyrannical mother fortifies her resolve to escape from her home, but that still leaves her worrying on many sleepless nights. So she finds solace in the figurative world. The story of the sewer and the seeds affects her deeply:

She looked upon herself tragically, defiantly, with all the hopelessness of fourteen years, as a plant trying to root itself upon the solid rock, without water, when a little older yet, when conscious of some growth, she had to concede that she must have fallen happily upon some dry sandy fissure, where a few grains of sand, a few drops of moisture, had been enough to support her trembling and tenacious life. Because she would live, she would survive. (30)

This citation paints a vivid picture of the unshakeable changes that happen in her while growing up, particularly in her mental state. As a young girl in primary school, she hears the story of how seeds fell at different places. This story makes such a tremendous impact on the young Clara that she relates various life events to the story. She begins to compare the random pattern of seeds scattering to human souls. At fourteen she sees herself as a young and fragile sapling fighting to flourish in a barren wasteland. A few years on, she feels as if she is a small plant tenaciously
holding on to life with the support of a few drops of moisture. However over time, she becomes confident and believes that she will survive. She also thinks that time alone will not bring growth with it, but that she has to grow by will and strain, searching for sustenance like a young sapling searches for water and sunlight.

Clara, like the heroin, of Drabble’s first novel Sarah, hates her home and longs to escape it. Though she has the looks and brains equal to Sarah, she is the product of “stony ground,” the provincial parts of Northern England, where there is no hope. Limited by her mother in almost all aspects of life. She feels contempt towards her mother. When she is eleven years old, she secures a place in the local grammar school, but her mother’s inborn lack of confidence in education results in her not being allowed to attend the same. The local Battersby Grammar School, which she attends, is a desolate place, in a decayed building. But she likes this school because she feels that any place apart from her home is better. She likes the school and her keen intelligence and notable memory-retention power attract the interest of Mrs. Hill, her science teacher. This interest evinced by Mrs. Hill results in Clara tasting the power of her own potential for the very first time in her life. She tastes for the first time affection.

Clara’s mother is so devoted to the principle that beauty is levity and a sign of sin that she would have been ashamed to have it in the house. So, naturally, Clara has never thought of her own beauty and also never thinks of herself as beautiful but her newly acquired attractive interests startle her, and she grows conscious of her own beauty. She states envisioning a better future for herself and also, some sort of revolt against her mother and her beliefs. She does her utmost to ensure an unceasing inflow of love letters from her admirers, and also finds the gathering of such admirers a very gratifying pursuit. By virtue of the fact that she is “a constant recipient of billet-doux
from the boys of the neighboring brother grammar school” (55), she becomes the focal point of attraction. Her physical appearance proves to be a great asset, and she enjoys the mild flirtations. She wishes to acquire “a taste for men, like a taste for the other desirable sophistications of life such as alcohol and nicotine” (60). She also wants to get on with her classmate Higginbotham passionately. She strains herself to entertain but when it happens, it turns out to be a disaster. Her personal shortcomings lead to a sense of failure as the boy does not find her interesting.

Clara’s friendship with Walter Ash gets stunted as she becomes fed up with his insolvable jocularity. His apathy alarms her; though she is under tremendous pressure from her friends to join in a school trip to Paris. She is hesitant to approach her mother for permission to go on knowing well her mother’s inborn disagreement to any enjoyable projects. Their social life has been abnormal since the beginning. She enjoys freedom at school and the prospect of spending a week in Paris at Easter seems to her fantastic. Bracing her spirit against the inevitable refusal, she broaches the topic with her mother and her mother’s instant consent dismays her. Though free, she refuses to drink in Paris. The acute loneliness of her status causes her immense grief and she wants a change, to morph into something new. To that end, she commits to carry out one of her most cherished secret desires, that is, to see Montmartre bathed in moonlight as she finds it difficult to go out at night, because it had been prohibited. At Montmartre she meets a stranger, an Italian who invites her to go to the cinema with him. Just like Emma Evans of *The Garrick Year*, Clara too allows him certain liberties, though her conservative upbringing does not allow her to take her flirtation beyond the limits dictated by society. This experience, however limited, gives the greatest joy of her young life.
Despite her extremely dissatisfying relationship with her family, even as a young girl, Clara had harbored a tender but distant hope that some day she might find herself somewhere where she might win. Her longed-for closer bond with her family is realized when she gets admitted into London University, as a direct result of her hard work and intelligence. J.M. Neale’s hymn ‘Jerusalem the Golden’ had exalted her to a state of enraptured and fierce ambition, combined with desire when she had listened to it as a school going girl. To Clara, in the University “all people who were not from Northam seemed, at first sight equally brilliant, surrounded as they were by a confusing blur of bright indistinct charm” (8). Clara in her third year of the university meets the Denhams. Her accidental meeting with Clelia Denham in a poetry reading session and the unexpected slight she receives from her help to bring them closer.

She watches the conversation with rapturous attention and realizes that she is in the place for which she had been waiting for years. She is sure that she had reached something that she had been longing for. She experiences the contentment of instant recognition and she is overwhelmed with excitement. She has a deep-rooted aversion to the very idea of entertainment, probably due to her Northern upbringing, and also she is very skeptical of her own capabilities as an organizer. Yet she extends a hearty welcome to Clelia. She is impressed by the friendly and honest temperament of her guest and listens to her avidly. She also finds Clelia to be extraordinarily stimulating company. Clara is impressed enough by Clelia to divulge her life plans, which is to stay on in London for the rest of her life. But Clelia, a wise woman, counsels her to get a Diploma in Education, and to visit her old and lonely mother during the holidays, unlike many of Clara’s other friends who advise her to ruthlessly cut herself off from her controlling mother completely.
The Denhams’ house offers a vibrant alternative to her understanding of her own drab, colorless home. On Clara’s very first visit to the Denham’s house, this house symbolizes the earthly paradise of her imagination. The lovely house that is a beautiful home and the people who make it a warm and welcoming home, dazzle her. She surmises that their warmth, their strong emotions and their strange lifestyle tire her. In the Maugham’s home everyone led an isolated and self-contained life whereas the Denhams are involved with each other through certain connections. The intense feelings, the unflagging concern for each other, the keen affection the family shares, all come as a revelation to Clara who grew up in a house where the only feeling was utter indifference. She compares her own condition with a live sample. She had never in her life seen or heard of such a mother. A mother capable of such pleasant concern. She had heard of it only, in fairy tales.

While Mrs. Maugham is a cold and indifferent woman who never took care of her children or her family properly, in contrast Mrs. Denham is a loving and nurturing woman. Clara is always surprised by the open warmth, sincere love and honest affection that surround the Denham family. She feels like she has ventured into a new world as she had never before met such warm and pleasant people. When she looks at the family albums, she is touched by the evidence of sincere love that has been present at every stage of their lives. The photos reveal a new world, a small rich world. For quite some time, even the affection between sisters and brothers seems unnatural, though not totally insincere to Clara, as she had never in her life experienced such a view of sisterly fondness.

The affection and mutual admiration amongst the Denham siblings remind her of Christina Rossetti’s ‘Golden Market,’ a poem written about passionate and erotic relationships, and she reasons, “literature did not lie, after all; nothing was too strange
to be true.” (143) Clara’s acquaintance with Clelia results in drastic changes in the way she lives her life. She spends almost all her free time in Clelia’s gallery, finding it demanding and too strong. Though she changes in many ways, some things remain the same; she is unable to overcome her inhibitions. She meets the handsome Gabriel for the first time just after coming back from spending her holidays with her mother in Northam. But even before meeting him she has a feeling that she would be falling in love. The inhibiting atmosphere in her home has an unhealthy impact on her psyche, and she looks forward to falling in love with Gabriel with a fatalistic pleasure.

Gabriel is so handsome and sexy that she finds it difficult to take her eyes off him. Like Clelia, he too possesses a pleasing personality and arouses a new feeling in her. Her first ever visit to his house is very revealing. His wife Phillipa does little to maintain the house. Though Phillipa looks as if she had just stepped out of the pages of the fashion magazine, as a wife, she seems terribly inadequate, according to Clara. Because her clothes are excessively ephemeral, Clara thinks that all her belongings should also be styled the same. Their furniture is broken, stained, and the ceiling is grimy and dirty, which surprises her, especially as Phillipa herself is so well-dressed. She is also intrigued by the cold and somewhat nervous tone Phillipa adopts when talking to Gabriel. She discerns some sort of a terribly appalling strain between husband and wife: “They looked at each other with something like hatred; they looked at each other with despair.” (164) She feels glad at seeing the signs of affection in Gabriel, so she does not feel any guilt when returning his kisses with ardor. She readily agrees to meet him when asked.

The smell of the polish pervading the office and the cigarette ash of the day strewn around fail to dissuade them, and they end up making love on the mock parquet tiles in the office. The lovemaking leaves her feeling very happy and he feels intensely
familiar. She does not even bother to find out everything about him. Her first sexual encounter with him finds her very excited and also leads her to experience the same sick feeling and nausea which she had felt on the day of her first visit to the Denhams’:

It was the sickness and strain of finding too well what she had been looking for. She feels triumphant but mingled with her triumph there was a certain alarm. She felt that she was being supported and abetted by fate in some colossal folly that circumstances were conspiring maliciously to persuade her that her own estimate of herself that high and grandiose self-assessment of adolescence was right. (194-95)

Clara revels in being Gabriel’s mistress. She is left wondering sometimes if she derives more pleasure from the situation than from the man. She likes the secrecy. As a school girl Clara had read the fable ‘The Golden Windows’, which goes like this: a little boy sees a house with golden windows from a hillside, searches for it, and finally finds it to be his own poor house, which looks golden in the reflection of the sun’s rays; the moral of the story seems to be “one must see that beauty in what one has, and not search for it elsewhere” (39).

She continues to like the fable as an adult, though she does not follow its moral in practice. She finds it very difficult to accept Northam with its dull and dreary options. She burns with a desire to cast off her past and enter a new world. Her furtive relationship with Gabriel leads her into this different world she longs for. But quite soon she realizes that it is not love that binds them together though she had grown up without experiencing any kind of love. She realizes that she craves not his company but other unfulfilled desires and needs that are buried deeper in her heart. It slowly dawns on Clara that it is not one man that she needs, but through him to enjoy lots of other stuff, to experience other ways of being. She wants to feel more attached to the world, more rooted.
Clara, who finds it difficult to use words of endearment successfully overcomes her inhibitions to move onto what she thinks is the path of progress. She accepts Gabriel’s invitation to spend a week with him in Paris without any hesitation. The sudden arrival of his brother, Magnus, on the final day of their trip flusters her for a while but she overcomes her self-consciousness when she finds herself accepted without reserve by him. Her continued craving for the company of people like Magnus, Peters and others, her anxiety that all of them will leave abandoning her, and the way she enjoys the drinking binges demonstrate amply that she is still not satisfied. She is searching for something without knowing what it is. As she is able to assert her dominance on the gathering she is very happy and also feels that she was very close to happiness in her new life. She kisses Magnus at his request, and thus experiences kissing a man for the first time, “She kisses him, on the lips and she felt that in doing so she was forcing her nature beyond the limits of its spring that it could not bend back, that it would break rather than bend so far, or bend so far that it would bear the shape of the curve for life” (225).

Clara goes to Paris with Gabriel because she imagines herself in love with him, and because his wife neglects him, she feels justified in having an affair with him. Yet in Paris, when his brother asks her to kiss him, she does so. In doing so she stretches her own moral fabric too much and it loses its very structure, just like a spring stretched too long loses its shape. So, she can never regain her original moral shape, even if she wants to. She cannot stretch it any further, nor can she bend it back to its original shape. She finally faces the fact that maybe she has made a fool of herself makes her sad. Hurt that Gabriel has shaken her faith by leaving prematurely, she decides to shake his faith and to end her affair with him. She becomes reckless and decides that she does not care whatever happens to her in the future. She names her new philosophy of life, the
“extraordinary flavor of non-chalance” (232). Like a dislodged flower or an insubstantial seed, she drifts off without any danger of settling back on solid ground again. Right or wrong, she thinks of herself as a liberated woman, free from all of society’s restrictions and fears. Drabble says, “Clara Maugham is certainly looking for another pattern of life that she can go into, and in the book, I have ambivalent feelings myself about whether she’s found something that suits her. She’s going to turn into something fearsome, I think, I rather dread her future” (Hardin 277).

Growing up oppressed in the repressive atmosphere of her home and her vindictive mother’s unbending rules, Clara hates her life in Northam and nurtures an unswerving desire to escape from this horrible place. While doing so, she errs a little. After her first sexual encounter with Gabriel, she decides that she had experienced physical love. But soon after, she changes her mind and says that it was all nerve. She is brutally honest when she tells Gabriel that he is only a means of self-advancement in her eyes. This development might seem decadent to many people but Clara thinks of it as progress. Even at fifteen years of age she had tried to use sex for social advantage. When Walsh took her to a bookshop, which offered an alternative to her own oppressive home, she wanted to kiss him out of joyous gratitude.

Gabriel’s wife Phillipa is a dreadful woman and an unsuitable wife who, by utterly neglecting her husband and family, indirectly drives him to another woman. She never cooks proper meals for her family. She only makes a special effort and cooks properly when she has guests coming to dinner. She likes to be by herself or to go out in company. Gabriel does not understand the reasons for her depression but he tries to adjust and to help her come out of it. Even trivial things like breaking a nail or a wrinkle in the bed make her nervous and she weeps at nothing. Her neurotic fastidiousness causes an intolerable hurting emotion and Gabriel tries to console her.
She does not lift a finger to help herself, but she sits, silently suffering and weeping inconsolably for no reason; his anxiety that he might bear some responsibility for her state engages him considerably. The only moments of joyful contentment that Gabriel can remember are the moments of the births of their children. His efforts to help her to change for the better fail utterly, and living with this feeling of failure exhausts him. He spends half of his life in keeping the truth from the neighbors.

The incommunicative, inconsolable, and irresponsible wife drives Gabriel to despair though his busy social life, and professional success give his life some sense of fulfillment. He is a good man who takes his wedding vows seriously to abandon her. She keeps telling him that she neither likes him nor wants him, and that he can leave if he wants to. She is totally indifferent to his physical presence or absence in their home from the day their third child was conceived. His love for his children saves their marriage, and he stoically bears the torture of her indifference. The utter failure of his efforts to show her the path of reason leaves him to seriously consider his future, and he decides it would be impossible to live without a woman forever. It is at this point that he meets Clara, who, he thinks, returns his love with all her heart. Their unexpected kiss and her warm response turn his admiration for her into a kind of love. Her passionate reaction rouses his vanity and he feels as if he has been made over again, a new man. But still he is uneasy; his suspicion that his infidelity might be treated with total indifference from Phillipa, which will lead to the breakup of their marriage, frightens him. But his desire for Clara proves too strong to fight and he decides to go to Paris with her. He rightly thinks that the foundation of their affair is their mutual need. This mutual need and understanding are to him greater than love. Yet, in spite of Clara’s company and the sexual satisfaction he gets from their affair he:
could not sleep; he lay there restless, thinking of his wife, of his children, of his bank balance, and wondering to himself, irritably, sadly, why he had not arranged to have his car serviced while he was away. He had lost the ability to sleep; sleeping and waking seemed to him more and more to overlap, so that he dozed in the day, and dreamed restlessly all night, listening for the cries of children in his dreams. (205-6)

Neither his own fatigue nor Clara’s company is able to give him peaceful sleep. He keeps brooding about his family which shows his deep attachment towards his wife and children. He is burdened with a neurotic and frigid wife who has deprived him of life’s pleasures. Frustrated, he looks for female company and finds Clara. He soon realizes that Clara is a vehicle of escape to him and that he needs her to maintain his sanity. Soon after returning from Paris, he calls Clara on the phone at Northam, where she is taking care of her dying mother. She immediately responds to his invitation. Finding the perfect excuse to break free from “the frantic loneliness of Northam” (154) and her dying mother, she rushes back to the sophisticated world and resumes her affair with Gabriel.

In Jerusalem The Golden, the protagonists seem to view themselves as victims of fate and circumstances; for instance, Mrs. Maugham’s disappointment in her marriage results in her utter lack of interest in life and family, which impacts everyone around her negatively, especially her helpless children. Phillipa commutes her own disappointment into a weapon with which to torture Gabriel, and Clara rebels against her circumstances unable to bear them. Gabriel accepts the situation stoically and endures the unhappiness of living with Phillipa but manages to find an escape in Clara’s company. Clara, just like Frances Wingate in The Realms of Gold, feels no
affection or connection towards her mother, and decides to disown both her heritage and home environment. Her search for life and survival leads her from northern hardship and dreariness across a familiar British landscape, to a more open world.

Obsessed with the desire to escape from her dull home into a better world, full of light – the vibrant city of London in Clara’s estimation she uses her feminine attributes to achieve her objective. She is drawn decidedly by the outward appearance of things and never bothers to find out what lies beneath the surface glitter which initially dazzles her. For example, the gleaming Denhams’ house bedazzles her and hooks her. Like the little boy in the fable ‘The Golden Windows,’ she mistakes the surface glitter to be gold and sees it as an earthly paradise, another Jerusalem the Golden. Whether it is truly a paradise or not, she decides to proceed on her chosen path. But Margaret Drabble values moral salvation much more than mere survival. She talks about the importance of being loyal towards your roots and she explains about this book that:

If you become cultured and leave your roots, have you betrayed something in yourself that can never be reborn? Have you killed a vital part of yourself? And I think when I say that Clara was getting harder and harder throughout the book, I’m suggesting that she was killing something in herself. (Myer, “Conversation” 16)

In my opinion, the conclusion of the novel echoes Clara’s social success. Though we may recognize and sympathize with the dire straits of Clara, who desires to escape from her barren home environment, in the end we might disapprove of her flight and the price she has had to pay, that is, her humanity and caring for those around her. Drabble is accomplished enough to portray the moral complexities of her characters, but the novel itself displays the moral failure of her protagonist. Because Clara, in her
quest for self-fulfillment, closes her heart to her past and also turns a blind eye to her sick mother; in doing so she kills the moral source of her own human spirit.

The last novel Drabble wrote during this phase is The Waterfall. It is the story of a woman who is cut off from humanity and any contact with the outer world. For someone like Drabble who has a strong moral vision, this book might be called “a wicked book” (Hardin, Interview 293) because of the immoral choices her protagonist makes. The Waterfall is her last book of the 1960s and the last of her novels to focus intimately on young, educated women deciding on major life choices which are generally related to personal contacts and personal morals. Malcolm Bradbury calls this book “an exemplary book of the 1960s” because of its attempt “to reconcile a modern, self-skeptical, post-existential modern text with a traditional one” (13).

Maybe it looks like a wicked book because initially Jane does not look like one of Drabble’s typical moralistic creations. Once Jane is able to work through her depression and begins to manage the house and her children successfully, once again, life gets better for herself and her family. As mentioned earlier, Drabble’s novels amply demonstrate her frustration caused by the precarious position of the esteemed institution of marriage in modern society. She presents marriage in all its glory and deals with all its facets in her novels. Jane Gray, the protagonist in The Waterfall, gets fed up with the pretentious prestige of her parents and their deliberately deceptive nature. To escape the fate of her parents, she marries Malcolm who is a guitarist. She is enchanted by his music, and imagines herself in love with him. She evinces her interest in him which, she realizes later on, is not based on true feelings, but is ephemeral. She misleads him and presents a false picture of herself, though not intentionally. After a year-long engagement they marry, but soon after, she realizes her misjudgment. She tries to honestly analyze her own character and her attitude towards marriage but fails to understand what expects from marriage:
it is a curious business, marriage. Nobody seems to pay enough attention to its immense significance. Nobody seemed to think that in approaching the altar, garbed in white, I was walking towards unknown disaster of unforeseeable proportions… I was prepared to take the world’s calm view of marriage too, distrusting and ignoring the forebodings that even then possessed me: in such a mood, assured that it is a moral event or a commonplace sacrifice... (98)

The negative tone in the above citation suggests that Jane is not very unhappy with the contemporary society and its attitude towards the institution of marriage. She voices her concern at the pragmatic attitude of people towards marriage, which to her seems to be the most significant event in one’s life. Many people seem to view it as a normal event or a commonplace sacrifice. She herself does not seem to give any serious thought to it before embarking on her own marriage. She uses it more as an escape from her parents, though she is unaware of doing so. While walking down the aisle towards the altar as a bride, she has an intuitive feeling that she is walking towards disaster. She distrusts and ignores such forebodings as superstition, and passively emulates the confident nonchalance of those around her as it has proved useful on many earlier occasions. Ignoring the premonitions, she considers marriage very calmly and proceeds towards it.

Sometimes Jane thinks that she got married only because her cousin Lucy got married. Lucy is a major influence on Jane. Jane says, “She was my sister, my fate, my example: her effect upon me was incalculable” (114). For years together, several serious suitors were hanging around helplessly, begging for Lucy’s hand in marriage. She revels in their devotion and their distress, and thrives on their courtship. She becomes a stronger woman by inflaming their unrequited love. Though she plays the
most brutal game of withholding her sexual favors for quite some time, she takes up a job when she graduates from Cambridge. The challenge of the real world quashes her exuberant nature and she marries a handsome racist. Jane is surprised by the changes of maternity in her. Lucy and her husband achieve domestic bliss instantly and live together harmoniously without bothering to step out for any sort of entertainment. Despite some petty differences, they seem to be well-suited. Jane studies Lucy’s house in the hopes of finding the secret to their happy marriage, the secret to being a contented woman and living happily with a man. Maybe, Jane gets married as monogamy seems safer, more honorable, and more innocent, than an endless stream of lovers and endless re-alignment of one’s partners.

Marriage takes away Jane’s busy life and reduces her to the tedium of inactivity from the outset. She thinks of activity as evasion and inactivity as an obligation. Malcolm too has his part in the collapse of their marriage. Having won Jane to be his wife, he then really does not cherish her, even at first, or try to keep her happy. In the first flush of marriage she thinks she alone is to be blamed for the deterioration of their marriage. After a while, she realizes the real nature of her rather effeminate and homosexual husband who shuts himself off in the top floor of the house. He is an utter failure in the bedroom as he is unable to excite her sexually, and this frustration results in form of schizophrenia, and she finds her life dull and dreary:

Wait for me, Malcolm would say to her, and she would wait silently, her whole self weeping with bitter vexation, for a night, for a week of solitude, it was all the same: and when her own body cried out to him wait, wait, he would not wait, he left her there each time, abandoned, forsaken, desolate, until mutely, in silent pride, she died, and pushed him from her, into a cold and stony death. (70)
Sexual incompatibility drives them apart. The pointless, painful and unfulfilling sexual encounters result in her getting totally turned off by the very idea of sex, becoming frigid; and so she finds her miscarriage a very convenient excuse to explain her lack of interest in sex. Drained of any form of comfort from Malcolm, she faces desolation, and hardness of heart. Though she dislikes the idea of living with a man and cooking his meals in return for house-keeping money, she stays with him, because she feels duty bound to do so. Just like her parents before her, she wants to deceive the world as she does not want to be seen as a failure. Even her pregnancy does not make her happy. She is dreadfully afraid that it would bind her to Malcolm. The birth of her first child does not change her in any way.

I could have turned myself into one of those mother women who ignore their husbands and live through their children. But with me, this did not happen; my ability to kiss and care for and feed and amuse a small child merely reinforced my sense of division I felt split between the anxious intelligent woman and the healthy and efficient mother—or perhaps less split than divided. I felt that I lived on two levels, simultaneously, and that there was no contact, no interaction between them: On one level I could operate well, even triumphantly, but on the other I could only condemn myself, endlessly, for my inadequacy and my faults. My body, healthy, indestructible, said to me, look, you can do it, you could do that other thing too; but my mind hovered somewhere near it, shut out, restlessly unattached, like a bird trying to return its familiar cage, like a living soul trying to re-enter its dead habitation. (103-104)
Incompatibility and indifference in one way or another depresses Drabble’s protagonists, like Emma Evans in *The Garrick Year* and Rosamund Stacey in *The Millstone*, but the entire pattern of their lives changes with the arrival of children and they overcome their depression. They ignore their disappointing husbands and forget their dreary lives, finding solace and fulfillment in their children, and live for them. But Jane’s case is different. She is educated and intelligent but has no plans for a career. Though she becomes a mother, she finds no great joy in being one; she finds it difficult to reconcile to what she thinks of as her plight. She fails to become a nurturing earth-mother. She thinks of herself as a strong, healthy and intelligent woman who is also an efficient mother. But lack of coordination and understanding between Jane the woman and Jane the mother result in a split between her heart and mind. Though her heart and body plead that she can perform both the duties, her mind absolutely refuses. Therefore, she remains blind to the intensely rewarding and instinctive joys of motherhood. Born and brought up in a highly traditional environment by a conventional family, Jane is constrained to believe in the possibility of moderation of the passions but she thinks that they are irreconcilable propositions. Jane’s mind is depicted in a clear way in these lines from the text:

> She often thought that one of the reasons for the total disaster of her sexual life was her own inability to reconcile the practical and the emotional aspects of the matter. The difficulties of both seemed to her to be so great that she wondered how anyone could ever happily overcome them: and the thought of overcoming both at once, so that one might in one instant experience love without pain, without terror, and without danger, seemed beyond the realms of human possibility. Human contact seemed to her so frail a thing that the hope that two people might want each other in the same way, at the same time and with the possibility of doing something about it, appeared infinitely remote. (42)
It shows the mental condition of Jane and the state of her mind. Because of her inability to reconcile to the practical and the emotional aspects of her sexual life, she faces her biggest problem. Most married women subdue their own thoughts, desires and nature or most of the marriages would end in frustration and divorces. Jane marvels at how other women manage to reconcile the practical with the emotional. Disastrously mismatched in her own marriage, she is unable to comprehend how two people experience the same feelings and desires about sex at the same time, so as to achieve fulfillment. Jane and Malcolm drift apart and neither of them tries to save their marriage.

Though Jane was highly critical of her parents’ marital life and their dissembling, she is forced to emulate their hypocrisy in her own marriage. But she fails utterly when her attempts to keep her sexual disinterest hidden from Malcolm prove futile. Her laziness and indifference drive him away to another woman, which she finds not upsetting, but a huge relief. It proves to be a blessing in disguise and she is left to lead her life in splendid seclusion, keeping their marital status a secret even from her parents and in-laws. She holds herself responsible for the wreckage their marriage has become though Malcolm is perhaps more responsible as he is the cause of her sexual dysfunction. It is not just willful violation of the marriage code but the clash between her body and mind and her incorrigible nature that ruin her married life. She knows her own faults and tries to correct them but fails miserably. However, she candidly admits that but for the dysfunctional sex, they would have stayed together, faithful and affectionate. Jane shuts herself off willingly and doesn’t even speak to anyone for weeks together. Her efforts to find a new interest in life fail.

Finally, she finds an escape in writing but her inability to compose a decent poem at will upsets her. After Malcolm leaves and before Bianca’s birth she writes prolifically. Her nature is such that she will not reach out a hand to save herself even
if she were drowning. She does not want to set herself up against fate. She submits to her fate meekly. When Malcolm finally leaves, it is not a surprise but a secrete sense of pleasure, relief and freedom that overwhelm her. But, unexpectedly, everything seems a little bit colder to Jane without Malcolm. As a girl she had visualized an empty, solitary, neglected, and desolate life for herself, and her imagination comes true. She decides to deliver her baby without any sort of help. Impressed by the story of a pregnant woman who was stranded by some unimaginable stroke of fate in a hut in the snowy wastes of Alaska, she does not call the midwife. She dislikes to see and to be seen by anyone. But better sense prevails and she finally rings the midwife and her cousin Lucy during her labor. A long waiting and solitude get resolved into some sort of “hopeful expectation” (10) which leave her happy. She has no idea of what to expect, but is sure that deliverance is at hand. Jane’s desire to not inconvenience anyone is brought out in her plea to Lucy to go home when she comes to help Jane at the time of delivery. As Lucy comments, Jane seems to be spoiled with solitude. She protests when Lucy says that James will be with her. She fears that it may annoy him.

Ignoring Jane’s protests, Lucy leaves her husband James to look after Jane in her house. The presence of James in her room makes the new delivered Jane think of love, which she eluded her till date. It shows her yearning to experience love. James’s presence gives rise to certain feelings in her that she finds inexplicable. These feelings bring a sense of satisfaction which she associates with love. She tries to imagine what lovers experience when they are together, and she assumes that lovers are above desire or need. As a child, she couldn’t appreciate the marital life and its dishonesty as she saw it, of her parents. The hollowness of her mother, the bragging nature of her father, their misleading statements had made her react.

She had tried to change her background and make a new adjustment in her own life. A young girl she had hated her hypocritical parents and their dishonest social attitudes. She used to feel lost in that atmosphere, but quite unaware of having
done so, she seems to have learnt the art of pretence. This pretence, this secrecy, comes in handy when her marriage is in shambles. Fate deals a blow to her innate longing to have a happy and healthy marriage, and destroys her hopes. She hopes her husband would share in maintaining a façade, like her parents had done, but when her hope fails, she retreats into isolation.

While Jane is quite prepared, mentally and physically, to spend all the evenings for the rest of her life alone, Lucy’s husband, James, intrudes. His unexpected guidance and his concern for her welfare make her happy. She finds some sort of restful enjoyment in his commands that she eat or drink. She starts to look forward to his visits and lets him realize that his visits make her happy. She gets into the routine of expecting him, and accepts his unsolicited appearance without surprise. She slowly becomes addicted to his visits, and she is aware that she likes to have him there. When he expresses his desire to share her bed, she allows it to happen without any hesitation at all. Jane is well aware of her own beauty. She knows that she is beautiful with a true sexual beauty. But she has always looked at it as a menace, a guilty burden because it has only brought misery to her till now thus:

her whole life had been overcast by the knowledge of it, so studiously evaded, so nobly denied, so surreptitiously acknowledged. It had seemed to her a cruel and disastrous blessing, a responsibility, wild like an animal, that could not be let loose, so she had denied it, had sworn that black was white and white was black: but now, for all that, it sat there by her bedside, eloquent, existent, alive, despite the dark years of its captivity. (37)

Jane purposefully ignores the sexual part of her life. She thinks of it as an untamed animal and wants to keep it under control. She is cognizant of the disaster it might lead to, if let loose. Perhaps, the fear that it would turn her into another Lucy of her
student days prompts her to deny it but James’s presence by her bedside alters her thinking and she is not a mere lump of wood.

She herself is surprised at the miraculous change that has happened to her. She finally realizes that all her marital problems were caused by Malcolm’s inadequacies, and this realization sets her free. James’s loving words, care and concern melt her heart, and sorrow for all she had missed wells up in the form of tears. She begins to live for him. Joan S. Korenman’s comment that, “Jane is the first of Drabble’s protagonists to enjoy sex” is not without full justification. Jane is never frigid. Malcolm’s failure as a partner results in her aloofness. But she experiences “the trembling, the waiting, the anguish” (70). Jane likes everything to take its natural course without being impeded by anything. She thinks that human emotions, desires, and passions should not be suppressed. That’s why she lets James becomes emotionally closer to her. She states:

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

She can even recall the occasion when she had declined a drink despite her strong wish to have it, just to keep those around in the dark about how much she loves to drink. But she admires James for his honesty when he helps himself to some Scotch for the second time. She sees “in such simple acts of selfishness the lovely flower of moral courage, so long sought” (63). She is certain that she loves him because of the things she had never had. In utter thrall, she surrenders herself to him, and in her
saner moments, she submits herself to self-criticism. When he is with her she broods about his looming departure, and when he is absent, she anxiously counts the minutes till he arrives; she suffers from separation angst even when he is with her. Neither his presence nor his absence gives her any peace of mind. The fear that she would lose him, keeps her from expressing her anxieties. Despite the knowledge that she and James could never belong to each other, she decides not to care about what the future might entail as long as the present is hers. She is obsessed with him, thinking of him constantly. Her body remembers him instinctively, she needs his touch and love and support.

Forgetting her other duties, she devotes her life to James; she wants him more than any other thing. At times James, caught up in his love for her, takes Jane too far, and then she finds it difficult to get back to the place where she earlier lived. Her relation with him holds her in thrall and makes her a helpless creature:

She could not move but had to lie there, tense, breaking, afraid, the tears unshed standing up in the rims of her eyes, her body about to break apart with the terror of being left there alone right up there on that high dark painful shelf, with everything falling away dark on all sides of her, alone and high up, stranded, unable to fall: and then suddenly but slowly, for the first time ever, just as she thought she must die without him forever, she started to fall, painfully, anguish, but falling at last, falling, coming towards him, meeting him at last, down there in his arms, half dead but not dead, crying out to him, trembling, shuddering, quaking, drenched and drowned, down there at last in the water, not high in her lonely place. (150)
She feels that the inner battle raging between her strong mind and her willful body which is in thrall to James’s sexual attitude, leading to an inner violence, is in no less significant than the outer violence. She is aware that her sexual passions and appetites are not normal, and that her powerful emotions can destroy her. But her need to maintain the secrecy results in her own isolation. She is so scared of her own new sexuality and the attendant strong urges and emotions that she starts to fear human nature itself. She acknowledges that it is sheer madness, yet she becomes a helpless victim to this infatuation. Her very survival is dependent on James and his visits. When he suggests that they travel to Norway to his grandfather’s house, and that she can pass herself off as his wife Lucy, she treats it lightly and brushes it off as an impossible fantasy. She is surprised when she realizes that he is actually serious about it. Malcolm calls upon Jane unexpectedly, evincing his desire to come back to her surprises her, but she rejects it outright. She has no intention of taking him back as the last thing she thinks about is his return. Though he is distinctly conciliatory in his approach and intention, she disregards his appeals, because she has no interest in returning to the half-life she had with him. She wonders what he would feel when he finds out that she has no memory of the past days with him. She wants to live in her new world and enjoy every moment of that.

When he keeps calling her throughout the day, she announces that she would never see him again, that she is prepared to divorce him, and that she would kill herself if he came anywhere near her. She keeps his renewed attentions and his visit that night from James so that she can continue her affair with James undisturbed. But when they both get injured in an accident, their secrecy is shattered. This incident brings Jane from her isolated world of splendid fantasy into facing the real world. But their bondage would not remain for long. When Malcolm leaves her, fate drops James
into her life and he wins her heart with his sincere care and concern for her welfare, brings to life everything that was dead inside her with his touch, and rescues her from isolation and depression. Jane is of the opinion that all the social, sexual and moral views of an event are usually contradictory in nature. She seems convinced that it was not loneliness or the feeling of something missing that drew James to her, but a miracle. Drabble in her interview with Hardin also affirms it in this way, “Human beings are at the mercy of fate. By accident Jane happens to meet the one man who really knows what she is up to and who truly loves her. People who have good luck meet the right person. Some people look forever and they try but they never get” (283).

The accident bursts the illusion of romantic love under which she was blithely living and she is forced to take an unblinkered view of all her actions. She finally realizes that her desperate need to escape her isolated world had thrown them together and also that lack of morals had bound her and James together and not love by any means. Jane, who had once looked at James as her savior, now feels that “what he had given her had been no miracle, no unique revelation, but a gift so commonplace that it hardly required acknowledgement” (205-6). She thinks over the idea of calling off the whole affair and going to London and back to Malcolm. She starts to think sympathetically of Malcolm. Yet, she considers him responsible for the many positive changes in herself and the not so positive changes in her life. Ramifications of their illicit relationship create a ripple effect of chaos in their lives. But their affair changes Jane’s rather dreary life drastically. She reiterates James’s role in her life as he has brought her back to sanity and helped her to rejoin the human race as a strong and productive woman who is ready to shoulder her responsibilities as a mother, wife and poet. She believes that he has changed her vision and opened a new path in front of her. She starts to clean the mess she has made of her life, in more ways than one,
starts to pen poetry, decides to get her poems published, sets up her house again, and finally achieves normalcy. Despite her leaning towards a possible reunion with Malcolm, she continues her affair with James, though not with the same fervor.

In her interview with Poland, Drabble stated that she is an explorer and not a teacher (35). Drabble explores the life of Jane, who, although married to a man of her choice, Malcolm, fails to do justice as a wife, though as it later emerges, her husband is to be blamed for that. The sudden arrival of James into her life brings her back to life, rousing her from a half-alive solipsistic existence into a living, breathing woman with a zest for life and many unfulfilled desires. She tries to justify her emotional relationship with James. Ascribing everything to fate, she says she was not left with any choice.

Drabble says that the people in contemporary world face more conflict because they are neither in the bound of traditional ideologies nor fully liberated. She believes that the writers of the time have the responsibility to provide blueprints for modern man. Initially, after isolating herself from everyone, Jane seems to have no desire to do much except to provide proper care for her children, which is a solid sign that she can improve, with time to heal herself. And, justly, in due course, the condition of her new house reflects her different and mature view of life.

To conclude, I believe that Drabble uses water as the symbol of love in *The Waterfall*, because it refreshes all living things and nourishes the humanity of modern man and woman as well. So, Jane starts the process of cleaning the house of her mind so that she can see her poems of love for others printed in their hearts. Drabble wishes her readers to take right actions by reading her novels and reach their dreams while being true ethically.


