

## **The Voyage**

by Katherine Mansfield

### **SUMMARY**

Katherine Mansfield's "The Voyage" takes place in New Zealand—in Wellington and Picton—near the turn of the twentieth century. The protagonist is a young girl named Fenella Crane, whose mother has recently died. At the beginning of the story, Fenella's father, Frank, accompanies her and her grandmother, Mary, to the wharf in Wellington. It is night, and the looming machinery of the wharf seems "carved out of solid darkness." They hear a loud boat whistle just before they arrive at the boat to Picton, which Mary and Fenella board. Shortly before the boat embarks, Frank and his mother embrace and bless one another. Their expression of emotion unsettles Fenella, and she turns away for a moment. Before he leaves, Frank gives Fenella a shilling, a large sum, which suggests to her that she will be staying with her grandmother for a long time.

Once the boat has taken off, Mary and Fenella make their way to the cabin that Frank has reserved for them. The stewardess recognizes Mary and greets her. She notices the black clothing Mary and Fenella wear, infers their loss, and remarks that "sooner or later each of us has to go." Fenella finds the cabin to be cramped and somewhat strange: there is a cake of brown soap that doesn't bubble and stiff sheets on her bed. Her grandmother retires to the top bunk, surprising Fenella with her nimble steps. Fenella falls asleep but wakes in the middle of the night to hear the stewardess speaking with Mary. The stewardess expresses her condolences as Mary explains what happened to Fenella's mother.

In the morning, the boat has arrived in Picton, and Fenella and her grandmother prepare to disembark. Out on the deck, the air is very cold. The sun has not yet risen, and the stars are still dimly visible in the sky. Mary sees Mr. Penreddy—a family friend who has been helping to take care of Mary's husband, Walter—and is pleased. Mr. Penreddy reports that he saw Mr. Crane just yesterday and that Mrs. Penreddy took over some scones for him last week. They arrive at the Cranes' home, ascending a path of white pebbles flanked with flowers whose scent fills the cold air.

When they enter the house, Mary invites Fenella to wait in a sitting-room while she speaks to Walter. Fenella encounters a white cat, and she warms her cold hands in its fur as she listens to her grandparents' pleasant voices. Her grandfather, Walter, invites her into his room, where he rests in bed. Walter, who has a rosy face and long white beard, invites Fenella to kiss him. Over his bed is a framed piece of text that reads: "Lost! One Golden Hour / Set with Sixty Diamond Minutes. / No Reward Is Offered / For It Is Gone For Ever!" Walter tells Fenella that Mary painted the text, and he gives Fenella such a merry look it appears that he is winking.

### **THEMES**

#### **The Dilemmas of Parenthood**

Fenella's father, Frank, embodies the challenges and dilemmas that many parents face. "The Voyage" takes place in the wake of the difficult decision Frank has made to send Fenella away to live with his parents. His wife has recently died, and—for reasons that are never made explicit—he has evidently judged that his parents would be better guardians of Fenella for a time.

This decision, having already occurred, is revealed through the details of the story. Frank is described as "nervous," and he walks quickly through the streets to accompany his mother and daughter to the Picton boat that will carry his daughter away from him. The

parting is clearly painful for Frank. When he says goodbye, Fenella grabs at his coat lapels and asks him how long she is going to stay away, but “he wouldn’t look at her. He [shakes] her off gently,” and gives her a shilling. This is a large sum for Fenella, and it helps her to understand that she will be gone for a long time. Frank’s pained, nervous temperament in this passage implies that his decision to send Fenella away was a dilemma that required him to weigh the good outcomes against the bad.

### **The Pain and Unpredictability of Growing Up**

In “The Voyage,” Fenella is in the midst of a difficult transition from the innocence of childhood to the experience of adulthood. The tragedy of her mother’s death looms in the background of the story, animating Fenella’s emotions and thoughts. Though Fenella’s age is never made clear, she is undoubtedly a young child who struggles to understand the enormous changes taking place in her life. Thus her confrontation with the loss of her mother is inevitably framed as a painful process of maturation.

The pain and unpredictability of Fenella’s loss emerge through the story’s details. When Frank says goodbye to his mother at the wharf, their expression of emotion is “so awful that Fenella turn[s] her back on them,” presumably upset by the reminder of her mother’s death and its grave consequences. The unpredictability of her situation is highlighted when she asks her father how long she will be away; Frank does not reply directly, instead offering her a shilling and a farewell.

Fenella’s grandmother acts as a mentor in Fenella’s maturation. Mary has placed Fenella in charge of her swan-necked umbrella, and she continually reminds Fenella to watch out for it and be careful with it. The umbrella takes on a greater meaning, for Mary is testing Fenella’s capacity to be responsible. Thus the umbrella becomes symbolic of adult responsibility, more of what Fenella will have to take on in the ensuing stages of her life.

### **The Impermanence of Tragedy**

The immediate backdrop of “The Voyage” is one of tragedy. Fenella’s mother has recently died, prompting an uncertain move to Picton to live with her grandparents. Despite the sorrow and uncertainty that characterize Fenella’s lot at the beginning of the story, the conclusion suggests that the initial tragedy will not permanently dictate Fenella’s life and that her fortunes may take a felicitous turn.

Fenella’s arrival at the home of her grandparents seems to herald a new, brighter future for the child. There, Fenella sees a path of “round white pebbles” and “sleeping flowers” on either side. The “sweet smell” of the picotees perfumes the morning air. Inside, Fenella finds a tranquil cat with “white, warm fur,” and the cat welcomes her timid stroking as she listens to “grandma’s gentle voice and the rolling tones of grandpa.” Her grandfather is warm and seems to wink at her beneath his white puffy hair and above his long silver beard, and the home seems altogether peaceful and welcoming. This harmonious setting suggests that Fenella’s future here will be a good one.

## **CHARACTERS**

### **Fenella**

Fenella is a young girl whose mother has recently died. At the start of the story, she walks through the wharf of Wellington late at night with her father, Frank, and her grandmother, Mary. The dimness and unfamiliarity of the setting metaphorically convey the great uncertainty Fenella faces as she leaves her father to live with her grandmother in Picton.

Fenella struggles with the enormous changes in her life. As Mary and Frank tearfully embrace and say goodbye, Fenella finds the sight “so awful” that she turns away. It appears that the gravity of the situation—both her mother’s death and her departure from her father—is overwhelming, especially when it rises to the surface in the emotional expressions of her father and grandmother.

Fenella is wearing all black, an indication that she is in mourning. Her bereaved state elicits the condolences of the stewardess on board the Picton boat, who calls her a “poor little motherless mite!” On board the boat, she displays her conscientiousness. Mary tasks Fenella with the care of her umbrella, and Fenella does her best to look after it, both on board the boat and after they arrive in Picton.

Despite the tragedy Fenella is facing, she is receptive to joy and delight. When she and Mary arrive at the home of the Cranes, she takes pleasure in the fragrant flowers, the soft-furred cat, and her grandfather’s kind welcome.

### **Frank**

Frank is the father of Fenella and the son of Mary and Walter. He appears only at the beginning of the story, when he accompanies Fenella and Mary to the Wellington dock. He appears to have a close relationship with his mother, and he appreciates her care of Fenella. As they embrace before her departure, Frank says, “God bless you, mother!” He cares deeply for Fenella as well, and their parting is emotional, too. When Fenella asks him how long she is going to stay with her grandparents, he will not answer her directly or make eye contact with her, an indication of the pain of their parting. He gives her a shilling, a significant sum, and quicks takes his leave.

Frank has purchased a cabin for his mother and daughter to stay in so that they will be more comfortable on their journey. Given that Mary rarely affords herself this luxury, Frank’s accommodation of Mary and Fenella is indicative of his generosity.

### **Mary Crane**

Mary Crane is Frank’s mother and Fenella’s grandmother. Her age is not specified, but she is rather sprightly, hopping lightly up to the top bunk on the boat so that Fenella, who is an inexperienced traveler, can have the bottom. She appears to love her son very much, and as she parts from him at the Wellington dock, she cries and says, “God bless you, my own brave son!”

Mary is a caring and conscientious person. She takes her granddaughter after the death of her daughter-in-law. She puts Fenella in charge of her pretty umbrella, giving her something to do and focus on, perhaps to distract her from her grief over her mother. As Mary and Fenella prepare to disembark the boat, Mary asks Fenella to leave her banana behind for the stewardess, a friendly acquaintance of hers. This is another indication of Mary’s thoughtfulness. In the final moments of the story, more of Mary’s thoughtfulness is revealed. The printed text that is framed and hung over the Cranes’ bed reads “Lost! One Golden Hour / Set with Sixty Diamond Minutes. / No Reward Is Offered / For It Is Gone For Ever!” Walter tells Fenella that Mary devised the text, indicating that Mary values the preciousness and transiency of each passing moment.

### **The Stewardess**

The stewardess works on board the Picton boat. She is very kind to Mary, whom she knows from her prior voyages. She quickly understands that Fenella and Mary are in a state of bereavement, given their black attire, and she offers anything she can by way of

comfort. When the stewardess returns to check on Fenella and Mary, Mary tells the stewardess about what happened to Fenella's mother. Mary advises Fenella to leave her banana behind for the stewardess since she did not eat it herself.

### **Walter Crane**

Walter Crane is Mary's husband, Frank's father, and Fenella's grandfather. He is described as being like a "very old wide-awake bird" with his fluffy white hair and long silver beard. He is kind and welcoming, smiling broadly and asking Fenella for a kiss.

### **Mr. Penreddy**

Mr. Penreddy is a friend of the Cranes. He comes to collect Fenella and Mary from the Picton dock when their boat arrives and drive them to the Cranes' house. Mary is happy to see him. He reports that Walter was doing well yesterday and that Mrs. Penreddy brought him some scones the week before.

### **The Drover's Wife**

by Henry Lawson

#### **SUMMARY**

Like many stories by Henry Lawson (and like those of Anton Chekhov and Katherine Mansfield), "The Drover's Wife" has remarkably little action: The plot, such as it is, suggests the absence of action that characterizes life in the Outback (the dry, sparsely settled, and inhospitable areas distant from the few major urban settlements of Australia) during the long intervals between recurrent natural disasters, such as floods, bushfires, and droughts. This indicates a technical aspect that Lawson mastered in his short stories: the construction of a coherent fiction on the flimsiest of plots. One of his aims was always to use a slight plot.

In its simplest form, the plot is limited to the discovery of a five-foot black snake in the woodheap, watching it go under the house, and waiting through the night for its reemergence so that it can be killed. The variety and violence of life in the Outback are indicated by the omniscient narrator's allusions to memorable episodes that have punctuated the drover's wife's life, which is frequently marked by her solitude from adult companionship. (She has not heard from her husband for six months as the story begins.) She has two boys and two girls ("mere babies") and a dog, Alligator, for company; she has two cows, a horse, and a few sheep as possessions; her husband is often away driving sheep and cattle, and has been away for periods of up to eighteen months. During one of his absences she contracted fever in childbirth and was assisted by Black Mary (an aboriginal midwife); one child died when she was alone, and she had to carry the corpse nineteen miles for assistance.

Times were not always so desperate. When she was married, her drover husband took her to the city, where they stayed in the best hotel. Soon after, however, they had to sell their buggy; her husband, who started as a drover and rose to become a squatter (a small-scale cattle raiser on government-owned land), met the inevitable "hard times" of the Outback and returned to droving, with its isolation, low pay, low status, and long absences from home. The wife's only connection with the few pleasures of her life is *Young Ladies' Journal*—a bitter irony under her circumstances.

However, her life in the bush (another name for the Outback) has not been wholly uneventful: A nephew died from snakebite; she battled a bushfire; she coped with a flood,

even to the extent of digging trenches in a vain attempt to avoid a dam break; she shot a mad bullock; she treated pleuropneumonia in the cattle (though her best two cows succumbed); she has had to control crows and magpies; and she has always had to be “the man” in getting rid of sundowners, bushmen, and “swaggies” (itinerants). Clearly, the snake poses a threat to her children, but she has successfully handled crises of far greater significance in her years in the Outback.

Still, for all her impressive practicality, she has been tricked: Only the day before, an Aborigine bargained to collect a pile of wood in exchange for a small amount of tobacco; she praised him for doing a good job and then, when the snake was first seen, discovered that the “blackfellow” (the term then used for Aborigines) had built a hollow woodpile. She was hurt and cried, but she has “a keen, very keen, sense of the ridiculous, and some time or other she will amuse bushmen with the story. She had been amused before like that. . . . Then she had to laugh.”

## THEMES

Lawson’s stories are almost all authentic illustrations of the several hardships and few small pleasures of proletarian domestic life—especially in the country. “The Drover’s Wife,” which appeared in his very first book, is of major significance because it so clearly and impressively states one of his pervasive themes, that the lives of people in the Outback are molded by the environment so that they, too, become hardened, desiccated, silent, and of necessity even predatory. However, in spite of all this, the occasional blossoms of the bush have their equivalents in the tender, soft, beautiful, yet temporary moments of life of the drovers and squatters.

The opening paragraphs of the story indicate Lawson’s approach to his theme; the lean, starved, drab minimalism of life in the bush is conveyed by the description of the drover’s house: “The two-roomed house is built of round timber, slabs, and stringy-bark, and floored with split slabs. A big bark kitchen standing at one end is larger than the house itself, veranda included.” The individuals who live there are also gaunt and hardy, for the children are described as “ragged, dried-up-looking,” and the mother, who has a “worn-out breast,” is described as a “gaunt, sun-browned bushwoman.”

Further, this identification of people and place is brought out in the second paragraph, where one finds one of Lawson’s best descriptions of the bush itself with all of its negative connotations: “no horizon, for the country is flat. No ranges in the distance. The bush consists of stunted, rotten native apple-trees. There is no undergrowth, nothing to relieve the eye save the darker green of a few she-oaks that are sighing above the narrow, almost waterless creek. Nineteen miles to the nearest sign of civilization—a shanty [shack] on the main road.” This is the bush at its grimmest, yet in many ways it is the real Australia, for only one-tenth of the continent is arable, fertile land: The “sunburnt country” is the typical land, the land of Australian literary and cultural mythology. In great measure this was Lawson’s achievement. He knew the country at first hand, his stories pictured it in all its drab, horrendous realism, and his popularity assured acceptance of the image that he presented. Some readers and critics have taken a somewhat different approach: One considers stories such as “The Drover’s Wife” to be social satire redeemed by a strong sense of nationalism, and there is some merit in this appreciation.

Essentially, this story is a study of human adaptation to adversity and environment that shows the strength of individuals isolated from the main currents of civilization. In a way, too, it is a strong statement for the cause of feminism, and reminds the reader, perhaps, of the California rancher’s wife in John Steinbeck’s “The Chrysanthemums.” However, the

emphasis is less on the delineation of character than on the description of the oppressive nature of the eternal round of disasters and trials that bedevil people in situations that resemble that of the drover's wife.

## STYLE

Clearly, a story that has slight action, such as waiting for a snake to reappear, must have some compensatory elements (especially in the absence of any direct characterization) to account for its popularity and fame. In part these are stylistic, in part technical. First, Lawson makes Tommy, the drover's young son, a representative of his father, a foil for the drover's wife. Though still a child, he sees the emptiness of his mother's life and the hollowness of the family existence, so that the story ends when he says, "Mother, I won't never go drovin'; blarst me if I do!" and she hugs and kisses him "while the sickly daylight breaks over the bush."

Even the use of "Mother" is significant. Instead of the more usual "Mum" or "Ma" in country children's speech, there is the more polite, tender "Mother," which suggests a child's desire to be separated from the harshness of the bush. (His "normal" language is revealed in the double negative and "blarst.") This epiphany occurs, significantly, at dawn. The daylight, though, is "sickly," with all that this connotes.

Alligator, the dog, is developed as a character in the story. (His name is another irony in a waterless environment.) When the snake is first encountered by Tommy, Alligator "takes small notice" of Tommy's stick and "proceeds to undermine the building." He is an equal, a colleague, and "they cannot afford to lose him." He felt, readers are told, "the original curse in common with mankind" and approaches the snake as if it were a representative of the intruder in Eden in this least Edenic of places.

The structure of the story is of some interest. It opens near sunset as a storm approaches. At midnight the drover's wife reminisces about her life; at about 1:00 a.m. and 2:00 a.m. she remembers past difficulties on the land; and near daylight Alligator catches and shakes the snake, which then has its back broken and head smashed and is thrown on the fire. In the nightlong vigil, Tommy and Alligator are her company and comfort; all three share a vital interdependence. Animals, like people, are friends and foes. After the initial reported conversation between the drover's wife and the children, there is no dialogue until Tommy's announcement at the close of the story that he will not become a drover; this is more than an accidental taciturnity—it further emphasizes the isolation of the Outback and of the drover's wife, even within her own family.

## **A Devoted Son**

by Anita Desai

## SUMMARY

Desai's short story begins with Rakesh performing an act of obeisance to his father. Rakesh has earned the top spot in the national examinations. Since Rakesh is the first son in the family to receive an education, news of his achievement sets off a flurry of excitement. His parents hold a celebratory party, and everyone in the neighborhood attends. Joy abounds, but some of the neighbors maintain Varma (Rakesh's father) has given himself airs. Aside from this, the neighbors remain amazed at Rakesh's accomplishments and his devotion to his parents.

In due time, Rakesh earns his MD and wins a scholarship to study in the United States. There, he pursues his medical career at prestigious hospitals. When he returns, he

marries a village girl of his mother's choosing. After his marriage, Rakesh is hired to work at the city hospital, where he quickly rises to the top spot as the director. Before long, he leaves to start his own clinic.

By this time, Varma has grown older and is retired from his job at the kerosene dealer's depot. Meanwhile, Rakesh's mother dies after suffering an illness. It is said that she died happy because Rakesh himself ministered to her in her last moments.

All in all, everyone agrees that Rakesh is the perfect son, husband, and physician. There seems to be no end to his virtues.

Trouble eventually looms in the household, however. Following his wife's death, Varma begins to develop symptoms of depression. Although Rakesh continues to devote his time and efforts to his father's well-being, the latter refuses help. Varma, although pleased by his son's devotion, eventually becomes irritated by Rakesh's presumption. The son, claiming the authority of a physician, begins to limit the old man's consumption of desserts and fried foods, claiming that those foods do nothing to promote health.

What results is a power struggle between father and son. Varma grows more miserable as the days progress. He begins to despise meal-times, as he must subsist on the blandest of foods. Rakesh, meanwhile, remains unyielding. To outwit Rakesh, Varma bribes his grandchildren to bring him treats from the village shop. However, he is soon forced to stop after Rakesh finds out and accuses him of corrupting the young child's morals.

Varma's only comfort centers on complaining to his old friends. As time continues, Varma's condition deteriorates. Eventually, his days are filled with ingesting a seemingly endless supply of pills Rakesh has prescribed for him.

The story ends on a sad note. When Rakesh brings his father a tonic, Varma sweeps it out of the son's hands. The bottle crashes to the floor, and Varma lies back down again, begging to be left alone to die.

## SUMMARY

"A Devoted Son" appears in Desai's acclaimed collection of short stories, *Games at Twilight, and Other Stories*. Unlike her earlier novels in which female characters dominate the texts, this story is about male characters. Focusing on a father-son relationship in a traditional Hindu family, the story looks at the problem of old age from two different angles. The setting of the story is realistic. Developed with a sense of humor, the story presents a fine study in human psychology and love.

The title of the story refers to Rakesh, who is always reverential to his parents, touching their feet in devotion. A brilliant student, after getting his M.D. in India he goes to the United States on a scholarship and pursues his career in a most prestigious hospital, winning the admiration of his American colleagues. His love and devotion to his aging parents compel him to return to India, get married to an uneducated village girl in deference to his parents' wishes, start working in a city hospital, rise to the position of a director, and finally set up his own clinic and come to be recognized as the best and the richest doctor in town. People can hardly believe that a man born to illiterate parents could rise to such heights of glory and yet remain devoted to them.

The conflict between the father and the son begins when, after his retirement and the death of his wife, the old man frequently falls ill with mysterious diseases that even his

physician son cannot diagnose. Worried about his father's health, the son begins to supervise his father's diet. All the mouth-watering sweets, fried savory snacks, and rich meals are forbidden. Instead he is forced to eat boiled foods and take numerous kinds of pills, powders, medicines, and tonics. The old man is shocked with disbelief at his son's tyrannical attitude, for who could ever imagine "a son who actually refused his father the food he craved?" He feels starved and complains to his neighboring friend of his son's attitude, but nobody believes him.

In the last scene, when his son brings him a new tonic to make him feel better, the father reproachfully smashes the tonic bottle on the floor and expresses his wish to be left alone to die. The father's final act of rebellion makes the reader wonder whether the son's almost tyrannical control of his father's life is justified in the name of filial devotion. Viewed in this light, the title of the story becomes ironic.

## THEMES

### **The changing relationship of parents and children**

When Rakesh gains local fame for his intelligence and medical abilities, his father is very proud. He brags to his neighbors that not only is his son very accomplished, but also the first thing he does when he sees his father is stoop to touch his feet in respect. However, in the father's old age, now on the receiving end of Rakesh's medical care, their relationship changes dramatically because they have very different goals. Rakesh's medical knowledge drives him to want to take care of his father in the best medical way possible. He takes away unhealthy foods like fried foods and sweets and forbids everyone from sharing those with his father. He dictates how much time his father should spend outdoors and in which position he should rest.

His father simply wants to *enjoy* the remaining days of his life. In the end, Rakesh no longer fully respects his father's opinion, as he holds his medical expertise higher when making decisions on his behalf. His father grows increasingly upset with the treatment. As their roles shift at the end of the father's life, the dynamics of their relationship change greatly.

### **Gratitude**

In the beginning, Rakesh is clearly thankful for the sacrifices his father has made on his behalf, at every opportunity showing visible respect to him. When it is his turn to care for his father during his illness, Rakesh likely expects from his father a sense of gratitude for his ability to medically care for him. After all, he instructs the servants in his father's diet, position of rest, location, and quantity of food. His father does not show gratitude for his medical knowledge, instead growing increasingly angry about this treatment. Their contrast in perception is captured in this exchange:

"Lying all day on his pillows, fed every few hours by his daughter-in-law's own hand, visited by every member of his family daily—and then he says he does not want to live 'like this,'" Rakesh was heard to say, laughing, to someone outside the door.

"Deprived of food," screamed the old man on the bed, "his wishes ignored, taunted by his daughter-in-law, laughed at by his grandchildren—*that* is how I live."

Rakesh perceives his father as being treated with great care and laughs that he could possibly consider his situation differently. He thinks his father owes him more gratitude, while his father sees only deprivation and thinks that his son should be giving him more things to enjoy in his remaining days.



## Loyalty

Despite his rise in the medical community, Rakesh remains loyal to his family. He returns home from his time in America without having found an American wife, as many of his mother's friends had predicted. He agrees to an arranged marriage (to an "uneducated" girl, no less) and remains loyal to her. In his father's final days, he is there with what he believes to be the best medical care possible, and he ensures that his wife also attends to his father's needs.

In the beginning of the story, it brings his father a great sense of pride that his son, who has such talent, chooses to work locally and continues to return home to his father. Although his father does not receive his son's medical expertise well at the end, Rakesh's efforts are sown in loyalty and respect for his father.

## Freedom, especially in treatment of the elderly

In the end, who should get to make decisions about the care of the elderly? Should the elderly have a voice in their medical care? Should they be forced to take medicines and have their diets restricted for their own health? Or should people listen more to how the elderly wish to spend their final days—eating and doing what they want? Which becomes more important: quantity of days or quality of days? The ability to make even simple decisions is often taken away from the elderly, with medical experts like Rakesh making almost every decision on their behalf. In this way, his father represents the voice of the elderly everywhere, crying out to be heard in their efforts to *enjoy* life, not simply to exist longer.

## CHARACTERS

The two main characters of "A Devoted Son" are Rakesh (the son) and Varma (the father).

**Rakesh** is a clever young man who does well on his exams and grows up to be a rich and successful doctor. From his point of view, he remains a devoted son who does everything he can to take care of his father. In his father's old age, he supervises every bit of food his father eats and medicates him for every little complaint.

**Varma** is Rakesh's father. At first he is proud of his son's accomplishments, but as he ages and Rakesh takes tighter control over his health, Varma begins to resent his son and see him as a tyrant. As Rakesh monitors his father's diet, Varma complains that Rakesh never lets him eat or enjoy the things that he wants. Varma feels helpless and controlled and begins to begrudge his son and see him as his captor.

While Varma and Rakesh are the main characters, there are some other characters that appear less prominently. These include:

**Veena** is Rakesh's wife. She is described as compliant, unimaginative, and docile. She follows Rakesh's orders regarding his father's diet, and Varma imagines that she gets perverse pleasure out of this tyranny.

**Bhatia** is an old neighbor and friend of Varma. He lives next door and often joins Varma to sit outside and complain about the hardships that the two of them are facing.

**Varma's wife** is briefly mentioned at the beginning of the story, but she is never named. She dies well before Varma does, and this contributes to his unhappiness.

**Rakesh's children** are also never named and really only appear in the story as vague references. Varma is briefly able to convince one of them to sneak him extra food.

**Varma's neighbors** also briefly appear in the text, mostly to highlight the jealousy that the community feels about Rakesh's success. The only neighbor who is named is Bhatia.

## ANALYSIS

The short story "A Devoted Son" is fundamentally about the relationship between a son and his parents. Desai questions the responsibilities and obligations of this relationship as well as the moral dilemmas which arise from those responsibilities and obligations.

The eponymous son is conspicuously perfect. He is loving, dutiful, obedient, and successful. He is a source of tremendous pride to his parents, so much so that the neighbors stream into the parents's house "to congratulate this Wunderkind" and tell the father that his son has "brought (him) glory." The son excels in his studies, wins a scholarship to study in America, and then returns home to marry the "plump and uneducated girl" that his mother has chosen for him. All the while, the son, Rakesh, bows down to his father and touches his feet.

Later in the story, however, the son keeps his sick father alive by taking away the food he likes and feeding him pills. The father is told off by the son when he doesn't follow the son's instructions as a doctor might rebuke a patient for not following his instructions. The father becomes resentful of his son, and angrily insists that he be allowed to die. This dramatic change in the relationship between the father and the son raises questions about independence. The son, when he was younger, dutifully sacrificed his independence to please his parents, even marrying the girl his mother chose for him. The father, in contrast, refuses to give up his own independence, even if it is ostensibly for his own benefit.

Perhaps Desai is suggesting that such fathers, those who expect their sons to be so dutiful and obedient, are hypocritical: they expect their sons to willfully renounce their independence but are themselves unwilling to do so. This hypocrisy is highlighted at the end of the story when the father essentially takes on the role of the child, and the son, conversely, takes on the role of the parent.

In turn, this hypocrisy raises other questions. What, for example, are the obligations and responsibilities of a father to his son and of a son to his father? Perhaps the father's obligation is to allow the son a degree of independence so that the son can become his own person rather than merely a manifestation of his father's wishes. And perhaps the son is responsible, in part, for the father's quality of life when the father grows old, sick, and frail. Perhaps the main point that Desai conveys is that the son can only become the man his father allows him to be. If the father fails to meet his obligations to the son, then the son will inevitably fail as regards his responsibilities towards the father.

## QUOTES

When the results appeared in the morning papers, Rakesh scanned them barefoot and in his pajamas, at the garden gate, then went up the steps to the verandah where his father sat sipping his morning tea and bowed down to touch his feet.

The initial sentence has one key detail: When Rakesh reads the results, he immediately goes to his father and bows down to touch his feet. This shows great respect in Indian culture, and Rakesh is indicating to his father that although his position in life is about to change through the news he is about to deliver, nothing has changed in their relationship. In fact, the father takes pride in communicating this to his neighbors at the party that follows:

To everyone who came to him to say “*Mubarak*, Varmaji, your son has brought you glory,” the father said, “Yes, and do you know what is the first thing he did when he saw the results this morning? He came and touched my feet. He bowed down and touched my feet.” This moved many of the women in the crowd so much that they were seen to raise the ends of their saris and dab at their tears

Rakesh also demonstrates his fierce loyalty to his mother:

As for his mother, she gloated chiefly over the strange fact that he had not married in America, had not brought home a foreign wife as all her neighbors had warned her he would, for wasn't that what all Indian boys went abroad for? Instead he agreed, almost without argument, to marry a girl she had picked out for him in her own village, the daughter of a childhood friend, a plump and uneducated girl

Rakesh spends some time in America (or, as his father takes pride in calling it, “the USA,” as only ignorant neighbors still call it “America”) and remains true to his culture. Surely he meets and many educated women who would stimulate his intellectual drive, but he follows his mother's wishes and agrees to the arranged marriage with an uneducated girl. He is following his duty as a son, as he always has.

Thereafter his fame seemed to grow just a little dimmer—or maybe it was only that everyone in town had grown accustomed to it at last—but it was also the beginning of his fortune for he now became known not only as the best but also the richest doctor in town.

People become accustomed to Rakesh's successes. He becomes incredibly successful working in the city hospital, rising to the top of its administration and then becoming director. He leaves to set up his own clinic, and the dazzle of his career and intelligence isn't quite so impressive as he spends his entire career developing his work. As is often true in life, even the extraordinary can become mundane via familiarity.

It was Rakesh, too, who, on returning from the clinic in the evening, persuaded the old man to come out of his room, as bare and desolate as a cell, and take the evening air out in the garden, beautifully arranging the pillows and bolsters on the divan in the corner of the open verandah. On summer nights he saw to it that the servants carried out the old man's bed onto the lawn and himself helped his father down the steps and onto the bed, soothing him and settling him down for a night under the stars.

Now that his father is sick, Rakesh wants to take care of him as well as possible. He pays attention to the small details, making sure he has fresh air; he hires servants to make sure he can make it from inside the house to his outdoor bed. He arranges his pillows to try to make him comfortable. And all of his efforts please his father—initially.

What was not so gratifying was that he even undertook to supervise his father's diet.

This is when things begin to shift. While Rakesh has his father's health at the forefront of his care, his father simply wants to enjoy the rest of his life, whatever time that may be. He wants to enjoy fried foods and sweets, but Rakesh refuses to allow him to eat any of it and forbids any servants or grandchildren to give in to his father's requests. His father grows increasingly upset about having to spend the last days of his life hungry and eating vitamins. Rakesh doesn't relent and presses his medical expertise onto his father, completely ignoring his wishes. This creates quite a conflict and distances their relationship. In the end, when Rakesh goes to see him,

Old Varma tucked his feet under him, out of the way, and continued to gaze stubbornly into the yellow air of the summer evening.

He no longer feels that his son respects him because he will not allow him to enjoy the rest of his life, so he no longer wants the respect offered by the touching of his feet.

He gave one push to the pillows at his back and dislodged them so he could sink down on his back, quite flat again. He closed his eyes and pointed his chin at the ceiling, like some dire prophet, groaning, "God is calling me—now let me go."

The story ends with the father trying to reclaim some control over the end of his life. He is tired of the pillows and tired of the medicine, which he smashes in anger. He only wants to die in peace, in a way he has some control over.

### **Critical analysis of the short story "The Teddy-Bear's Picnic" by William Trevor and an analysis of the character Edwin.**

A critical analysis of "The Teddy-Bears' Picnic" and of Edwin's character could look at Edwin's "ruthless" and "fearless" traits and how he applies those to his wife and the world at large. We might discuss how attending a picnic with teddy bears represents such a betrayal of Edwin's beliefs." Edwin's wife Deborah tells him that the picnic is "only fun." Of course, what ultimately happens at the picnic is deadly.

As you know from reading [William Trevor's](#) story, "The Teddy-Bears' Picnic" starts with Edwin declaring, "I simply don't believe. Grown-up people?" From the get-go, we learn that there's tension between Edwin and his wife Deborah. Edwin thinks it's ridiculous that Deborah and her friends want to "sit around" with their teddy bears. As the couple continues to drink and argue, we find out that Edwin is a stockbroker, and he hasn't had "the easiest of days." Having a hard day at work is something many adults might relate to. Perhaps it relates to Edwin's contempt for the picnic. Immersed in the adult world of stressful labor, Edwin does not want to be pulled back into childhood. Indeed, at the picnic, what does Edwin think about all the people there? He thinks: "None of them had grown up, none of them desired to belong in the adult world." We also know that Edwin "could not bear to lose and would go to ruthless lengths to ensure that he never did." Later on, we find out how Edwin "acquired the reputation of being fearless: there was nothing, people said, he wouldn't do." The uncompromising, merciless descriptions of Edwin set up a contrast between him and his wife, who's described as a "pretty little thing." It also sets the stage for his fatal encounter with Mr. Ainley-Foxleton. It'd be interesting to talk about the differences between Edwin and Mr. Ainley-Foxleton. Think about how Mr. Ainley-Foxleton is portrayed at the picnic. How might that make him a target for Edwin? More so, how does the fatal ending underscore Edwin's desire for dominance and control? What is it about the picnic, Deborah, and Mr. Ainley-Foxleton that causes Edwin such inner turmoil? The answers should hopefully tell us even more about the kind of person Edwin is and the type of story we're dealing with.

### **In "No Place to Park" by Alexander McCall Smith, the main character in the story is the crime writer. What factual information do you know about him?**

George Harris, the central character in *No Place to Park*, is a crime [fiction](#) writer. In this short story, we learn a few pieces of information about him as a person. George is skilled in writing fiction about gruesome murders. However, he is getting a little tired of the genre. That is why he takes up the critic's challenge of writing about parking violations. George's other passion is surfing. He likes the excitement of this activity even though it scares him a little. In fact, one of his surfing acquaintances was recently killed by a shark. His death has been on George's mind ever since. George lives in a small bungalow with Frizzie, his girlfriend of five years, near Cottesloe Beach. She runs a tie-dye shop in Fremantle. George is a native of Perth. He has a lot of hometown pride. He always strives to paint his city, its people, and particularly its police department in a positive light in his writings.

As a writer, George takes his work seriously. Although he writes fiction, he always conducts extensive real-world research before he starts writing. George is an empathetic man. He feels bad for farmers who receive parking tickets because they have so many struggles making a living growing and selling their produce.

## **The Rough Crossing**

by F. Scott Fitzgerald

### **SUMMARY**

#### **Part 1**

The story “The Rough Crossing” by F. Scott Fitzgerald opens with a descriptive introduction of the American piers in the night, which are compared to midway points or crossing places. The world of the ship is described as a separate world, within which “one is no longer so sure of anything.”

Aboard the ship are Mr. and Mrs. Adrian Smith. Adrian is thirty-one and a somewhat famous playwright; his wife, Eva, is twenty-six. As they lean on the rail of the deck, Adrian pronounces themselves, their children, and the children’s nurse escapees from all the people who want to take his wife away from him—because they know he does not deserve her. His words please Eva, and she comments that she prefers this ship to the bigger ones they traveled on during their honeymoon seven years ago.

The couple notice a girl who seems familiar to Adrian. She is barely eighteen years old and is dark-haired and beautiful. Sensing her husband’s attention wandering, Eva asks him to reassure her about the good time they will have during their one-year stay in Paris. She mentions the pearls he bought for her birthday and claims she will never be mean to him again. As he replies, she notices he is already taken by the adventure of the voyage.

As the stewards announce imminent departure, a young man arrives to board the ship at the last minute. The ship departs, and the omniscient narrator informs readers that a hurricane approaches and that this liner will be caught in the storm two days from now.

#### **Part 2**

Two days later, Adrian and Eva visit the ship’s smoking room for the first time, even though they did not originally plan to do so. The bar is full, and people are engaged in numerous activities. There is a sense of nervous energy peculiar to being in the middle of an ocean with not enough to do.

Adrian notices the young girl he saw before and is again taken by her beauty. He and Eva have discovered that she must be Miss Elizabeth D’Amido, and Adrian has also since heard her called Betsy in passing. She is in a group of young people, among whom is the young man who almost missed the ride. His name is Butterworth.

One of the young men approaches the couple, professing admiration for Adrian and his work and asking if they would like to join the group and participate in the deck-tennis tournament. Adrian agrees but insists the young people join their table, even though it is smaller. The young people arrive, and soon Miss D’Amido finds a way to sit next to Adrian. She states boldly yet respectfully that she has been in love with him since she first saw him at the performance of one of his plays. This makes Adrian feel special. Eva, on the other hand, is not enjoying herself—she fails to see why one needs to meet new people all the time.

After a half-hour, she leaves to check on children and, coming into her cabin, finds a steward sitting on her bed. She reacts angrily, believing him to be suffering from seasickness. As the steward is being removed, Eva starts to feel unwell herself, blaming it on the sick man. Adrian comes in later and tells her he will be playing doubles with Miss D'Amido, which hurts Eva, who feels Adrian should have asked her to play. He claims the thought never occurred to him, even though his expression shows guilt. He soon leaves Eva on her own.

The next morning the sea seems calmer, and Eva feels well enough to come out and observe the match, alongside many other prostrate passengers. Miss D'Amido is elegant and plays well while being filmed by other passengers. Butterworth informs Eva that the steward she saw in her cabin is being operated on for appendicitis and that due to the storm coming, the ship's party will be held that evening.

Adrian and Betsy win the match and Adrian goes off to celebrate, somewhat apologetically leaving Eva alone on the boat deck but sending her a cocktail. She spends the time imagining what lies ahead for them—a villa in Brittany and the children learning to speak French. She suddenly feels aimless and pointless on this ship.

That afternoon Eva is in the bar with Butterworth, who claims she is his idea of a Greek goddess, but Eva is preoccupied with Adrian and where he might be. He and Betsy have gone to the forward deck to feel the spray of the ocean.

At that moment, Adrian and the young girl are exchanging intimacies: first he takes her arms and then kisses her forehead. She convinces him to kiss her by playing upon his sympathy. She cries as he then urges her to go to her cabin. Back in the bar, Adrian makes Eva leave. She is resentful of the time he spends with "the younger set," and they have a discussion in which he behaves evasively while the ship heaves. Adrian is impatient to leave the cabin for the party. Eva is slow from drinking and seasickness, and after a nervous exchange, he leaves her. He goes to Betsy's cabin, professing he is "sick for her," and they kiss. For him there is something in her youth that he feels he has lost.

Adrian meets Eva going to the bar, noticing she looks lovely. They learn the storm is picking up and that several people have been badly hurt by the ship's lurching movements. The gala dinner is an awkward affair, as the tables and people slide all over, and the ship roars. After missing Adrian for most of the night, once he appears again, Eva is half-drunk and refuses to leave with him. She is convinced Adrian has left again to pursue Betsy and drinks more, dejected and alone. In this state she goes out to the deck, feeling the need to make some sort of propitiating gesture to make things right, so she takes off her pearl necklace, kisses it, and flings it into the ocean.

### **Part 3**

The next morning, the ship is caught in the eye of the storm. As Eva wakes, her head hurts terribly, and after calling the ship's doctor, she and Adrian learn she became terribly drunk the night before and caused a scandal by wandering around the boat and insulting a stewardess. The doctor forbids her to drink and informs them that the sick steward died during the night. Eva tells Adrian she has thrown her pearls overboard, and he says he was in his cabin alone during the night, as Betsy collapsed during the party. The couple is told of more victims of the gale, both aboard their ship and on other vessels, which helps bring their troubles into perspective.

In the afternoon, the dead steward receives a burial at sea. Eva weeps for him, and something in her breaks. She has Butterworth bring drinks to the cabin and invites several

of the young men to join them. Adrian observes her with dismay, wondering if this is her revenge on him for pursuing Betsy. Finally he orders Butterworth, the last one remaining, to leave the cabin, and Butterworth accuses him of bullying Eva. Eva states that she wants a divorce and is determined to send a wire to Paris immediately so as to have a lawyer ready. Adrian lets her go.

After a while, Adrian goes out to find her, fearing that something might have happened. The ship swings wildly, and Adrian is thrown against a lifeboat on the deck. He sees a giant white wave rise above the ship and, in that very moment, notices Eva standing nearby. As the wave crashes over them, he manages to grab hold of her, and he loses consciousness.

#### **Part 4**

Two days later, the action moves to the train to Paris. Eva and Adrian are showing the landscape to the children, and their daughter professes she misses the ship. For Adrian, the events at sea already seem distant, but Eva can still feel the ship's rocking. Betsy D'Amido comes along the corridor and greets them, telling them of the two waves that crashed over the wireless room on the ship. Adrian does not let on that they were there and answers briefly and drily. He tells Eva that what happened was a nightmare, not reality, and promises to buy her new pearls. The story finishes with Adrian sitting close to Eva, saying that the couple on the ship were some other Smiths, of whom there are many in the world.

#### **THEMES**

##### **The Emptiness of Fame**

One of the story's two main characters, Adrian Smith, is a somewhat famous playwright. We are told at the beginning of the story that he is not a very great celebrity, but important enough to be bathed in flashlight by a photographer who had been given his name, but wasn't sure what his subject did.

A short while later, a minor character by the name of Stacomb approaches Adrian and says, "We all know your—your plays or whatever it is, and all that—and we wondered if you wouldn't like to come over to our table." Both of these instances demonstrate that many people only pay attention to Adrian because of his fame. Had he not been famous, neither the photographer nor Stacomb would have paid him any attention.

Furthermore, although the exact nature of their relationship is left ambiguous, we are given the sense that Betsy D'Amido also only cares about Adrian because of his fame and wealth (and perhaps his looks). Certainly she does not care for Adrian as Eva does, a fact that is made apparent at the end of the story, when Betsy goes to look for her fiancée and Fitzgerald tells us, "She passed gracefully along the corridor and out of their life."

Finally, it should be noted that Fitzgerald may have given his protagonist the ubiquitous last name "Smith" to emphasize that he is not special. Smith is an incredibly common name, and Fitzgerald uses it to signal the unremarkable nature of his protagonist. The only thing that elevates Adrian, Fitzgerald suggests, is fame. Unfortunately, however, fame is a vapid experience. Only Adrian's children and his wife, Eva, look beyond his superficial status and care for him in a manner that is truly affectionate.

##### **The Conflation of Wealth and Happiness**

The Smiths are a wealthy couple and often seem to conflate wealth and happiness, at least at the beginning of the story. This is made apparent when Eva says, "You know, I made up my mind when you gave me my birthday present last week"—her fingers caressed the fine seed pearls at her throat—"that I'd try never to say a mean thing to you again." Here, Fitzgerald implies that many "mean" words have passed between Adrian and Eva in the past, but Eva suggests that Adrian's gift of the pearl necklace has helped to fix that problem. In other words, Eva seems to believe—or at least to want to believe—that expensive gifts and other signs of wealth will literally bring her happiness. This belief, however, quickly falls apart. Within twenty-four hours, the couple is feuding because Eva believes Adrian is having an affair (he is, although readers are never told exactly how far he takes his relationship with Betsy D'Amido). Furious at her husband's transgressions, Eva drunkenly throws her pearls into the sea: Deliberately she unclasped her pearl necklace, lifted it to her lips—for she knew that with it went the freshest, fairest part of her life—and flung it out into the gale. In this moment, Eva seems to realize the folly of her error, at least in part. She still cherishes the pearls—she describes them as representing the "freshest, fairest part of her life"—but she also seems to realize that they will not bring her happiness. In order to be truly happy, Fitzgerald suggests, she must mend her relationship with Adrian.

### **The Upper Class's Insensitivity to the Lower Classes**

Like the conflation of wealth with happiness, the upper class's insensitivity to the lower classes is a common theme in many of Fitzgerald's works, and it is especially ugly in "The Rough Crossing." The most important and disturbing instance of this idea manifests itself in the relationship between Eva and Steward Carton. One night, while angry at Adrian, Eva returns to her room to find Carton, who is unnamed at this point, sick in her bed. Rather than take pity on the poor man, Eva feels only anger and revulsion: A steady pitch, toss, roll had begun in earnest and she felt no sympathy for the steward, but only wanted to get him out as quick as possible. It was outrageous for a member of the crew to be seasick. Completely unsympathetic, Eva is repulsed by the man's sickness and barely seems to recognize his humanity. She goes so far as to say, "I was all right and it made me sick to look at him. I wish he'd die." Later, the man does die—of appendicitis—and it is implied that his death is partially Eva's fault. While the doctor attempts to care for the sick man, Eva makes a drunken scene, and resources that could have been used to save the man's life are instead deployed to pacify her unruly behavior. The morning after the man's death, we finally learn his name: James Carton. Significantly, this information has been withheld until Eva is able to recognize the man's humanity.

## **CHARACTERS**

### **Adrian Smith**

Adrian Smith is a sociable, successful man of thirty-one, initially described as a minor celebrity. He is, in fact, a successful Broadway playwright, recognized by several people on board—including Betsy D'Amido, who first saw him at a rehearsal over a year ago. At the beginning of the voyage he talks enthusiastically of escaping from New York and spending the crossing to France with his wife, Eva, but as soon as he sees the other women on the boat, he is immediately distracted. He soon begins an affair with Betsy and starts to neglect his wife, who is seasick and disinclined to participate in the social life on board. However, in the midst of a storm at the end of the voyage, in which he is knocked out, he thinks only of saving Eva. The next time he sees Betsy, on the boat-train, he treats her with indifference and agrees with Eva to forget all about what happened during the crossing.

### **Eva Smith**



Eva Smith is Adrian's wife. She is twenty-six years old, attractive, charming, and talented. She wants to spend the voyage alone with her husband and is rather bored with all the new people attracted by his celebrity even before she is jealous. She becomes seasick and soon begins to resent Betsy and the "younger set" with whom Adrian is spending all his time while she is confined to their state room. When she is certain that Betsy and Adrian are having an affair, she decides to divorce her husband, but forgives him after he demonstrates his courage and concern for her during the storm.

### **Elizabeth "Betsy" D'Amido**

Elizabeth D'Amido is about eighteen years old and is described as "a dark little beauty with the fine crystal gloss over her that, in brunettes, takes the place of a blonde's bright glow." She is the cynosure of all male eyes on the boat, acknowledged as the prettiest girl on the crossing. Elizabeth, known as Betsy, is part of a group of young people who join the Smiths in the smoking room. She quickly manages to sit next to Adrian and tells him she is a great admirer of his work and has seen his latest play four times. She and Adrian arrange to be partners in the deck-tennis tournament, and later that day, she kisses him and tells him that she has been in love with him ever since she first saw him over a year ago at a rehearsal. She begins an affair with him, which she seems to have planned all along and to regard with relish. After the storm she appears briefly on the train to the Gare du Nord, pale, wan, and feeling awful after the storm at sea.

### **Stacomb**

Stacomb is a young man on the boat who says he admires Adrian's work, though he doesn't seem to know precisely what it is. He invites Adrian to join his table in the smoking room and asks to enlist him in the deck-tennis tournament. He is described as glib, soft, and slouching in demeanor.

### **Butterworth**

Butterworth is another fellow passenger of the Smiths, described as a flat-nosed young man. He spends a lot of time talking to Eva and seems to admire her, telling her that she is his idea of a Greek goddess. Eva humors him because her husband is ignoring her. At the end of the story, it turns out that Butterworth was in need of money, and Adrian cashed a check for him. Eva assumes he will never see the money again.

### **James Carton**

James Carton, the steward, appears to be seasick and sits down on the bed in the Smiths' state room to rest. When Eva enters, she finds that the sight of him looking so bilious makes her sick as well and becomes angry with him. Eva later learns from Butterworth that Carton has appendicitis, and the ship's doctor will have to operate on him. Later still, she discovers that he has died and is to be buried at sea before they reach France.

## **The Mother's Help**

by Ruth Rendell

Place

This incident was a key one in the following events of the story, his parents told every one they know and convinced them that Danielle could move the car and explained what happened to Charlotte after that.

There was a development of the relationship between Ivan and Nell where Nell felt attracted to Ivan who had a masterful and ruthless character where Nell was a weak woman who needed passion and care from others, and soon she fell in love with Nell and founded her self lying to Charlotte saying that she had a boy friend waiting for her and telling him every thing about Danielle and his passion in cars, and the more Charlotte was absent from her home busy working for a long time the more Danielle and his father were attracted to the small beautiful Nanny

1- The first part of the story took place in the house of Ivan and Charlotte a detached Victorian villa and the garage converted coach house with a door which pulled down rather like a roller blind.

2-The second part took place in a bigger house .It had a large cellar with steps leading down to it , a dark dusty little room with a heavy door was built between a chimney bay and a wall which is called a broom cupboard .

#### Main characters

1- Danielle the little boy.

2-The parents Ivan the father , Charlotte the mother.

3-Nell the Nanny or ( mother's help).

#### Sub characters

1- neighbors .

2-Danielle's Doctor.

3-The Coroner.

4-Denise .

5-Emma (daughter of Nell and Ivan).

The story took place in a house where a child (Danielle ) suffered of the inability or unwillingness to speak not because he was deaf but it was because he's the only child as his father would like to explain.

Danielle is an intelligent child he was interested in vehicles which was very important in the development of the events of the story.

An important accident happened while Danielle was accompanying his father and Nell ( mother's help) or the Nanny when suddenly Danielle climbs into the front of the car and

he hits wrong buttons tugged off the handbrake and the car leaps forward, almost hitting his father.

The screaming of Nell when she was hearing her husband telling what Emma done to her this was a scream of despair she realized that her end is the same of charlotte's.

What you think love may turn to be your end

Not every thing glows is Gold.

The Mother's Help

Charlotte began to get suspicious about the relation between her husband and the Nanny when she decided to spend more time home , accidently Nell cut her wrist (life line as palmists would like to call) when Danielle ran up behind her and threw his arms round her legs while she was cutting up vegetables for his lunch.

Charlotte decided to take Nell to the hospital accompanied with Danielle when suddenly Ivan appeared and decide to drive the car to the hospital when Charlotte step off the car to shut the door of the garage , Ivan was shouting on her because she left it open, and In what seemed as an accident Ivan took off the handbrake and stamped his foot hard on to the accelerator and run over Charlotte, Nell was shocked and cried hysterically she was shocked and surprised of what has happened but Ivan the strong character convinced her not to tell the police the real events of the accident and to tell them this was because of Danielle's missing with the car as all the people around them was convinced because of what Danielle had done before.

She's a prolific English crime writer , she is famous for her psychological thrillers and murder mysteries

Her first novel "From Doon to Death" was the first to feature chief Inspector Wexford .More police novels followed and the Wexford stories quickly became very popular and were adapted to make along running television series.

Rendell has received various awards including the Crime Writers' Association Cartier Diamond Dagger for life time achievement and the Sunday Times award for literary excellence.

In 1996 a CBA award given to her by the Queen to recognize her service to her country.

She continued to play an part in the work of the House of Lords as well as writing both under her own name and under that of Barbara Vine

And as it is said what you plant you reap The Second part of the story was a repetition to what happened to Charlotte but with different characters .

Denise a 23 old year young women appeared in the scene she played the same character as Nell .

Emma the daughter of Nell and Ivan a hyperactive child played the same roll of Danielle( the child which was manipulated by his father and he used him to explain his crime).

Again Ivan tried to take advantage of the accident of trapping of Nell by her daughter by telling this to their relatives and neighbors of what happened as he was planning to get red of his second wife.

And this was obvious when Ivan was telling the guests for there seventh wedding anniversary that he had no control on his children they never obey his orders (Danielle when he didn't listen to his instructions not missing with cars and now Emma who locked the cupboard on her mother)