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WOMEN IN THE SHADOWS: A STUDY OF OBJECTIFICATION IN *IN A KINGDOM BY THE SEA* BY SARA MACDONALD

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ABSTRACT

This research uses qualitative method to explore the elements of objectification in Sara Macdonald's novel "In a Kingdom by the Sea". This article aims to illustrate the suffering and pain women are facing in everyday life through the objectification by men. They are considered scapegoats and men can use their power and influence over them without taking care of their personal choices, feelings and emotions. The author has presented a clear picture of the modern society where women have equal rights to men apparently but deep down, they are treated just like objects and things which can be used and replaced according to the choice of men just like in a patriarchic society. The author skillfully weaves a comparison between the challenges faced by women in modern society and those experienced by women living under male-dominated oppression. This paper relies on the Objectification theory of Nussbaum to examine the power structure in the selected novel. To achieve this aim, the novel was examined through the lens of objectification theory outlined by Martha Nussbaum and Rae Langton. The analysis of the text was carried out using ten specific characteristics of objectification. Macdonald's novel textualizes the situation with utmost clarity. The novel does not only surrender to the normative patriarchal structure but offers the possibility of negotiation and change.

KEYWORDS: objectification; patriarchic; equal rights; suppressed; power structure

1. INTRODUCTION

Sara Macdonald is the author of eight books published by Harper Collins. Although she has written for years, her work is only now seeing publication. She says that her life is the life of a gypsy without roots. Being the wife of an army official, she has been moving all over the world. The protagonist of "In a Kingdom by the Sea" also represents this way of life. The novel under discussion is the result of author's one year stay in Pakistan. The novel primarily addresses social realities and patriarchal practices in Pakistan, while also drawing comparisons to the author's own society. The novel gives ample examples of women subjugation, subservience, and objectification. The men exercise their power, influence and authority over women and reduce their status to an object. In the man dominated world, the women have no choice, and they are treated just like objects. This research examines key female characters in the novel to investigate the objectification of women within society.

This article highlights the pathetic condition of women in the modern society with reference to Sara Macdonald's *In a Kingdom by the Sea*. Although women today appear independent and possess equal rights with men, they continue to experience both physical and psychological challenges. They are often objectified, with their personal choices, feelings, and emotions often disregarded. The protagonist of the novel is living a happy married life, but her husband has always cruelled her by not giving her proper time. Although she is free to work, meet friends and visit places of her own choice. When Mike is about to lose his good reputé at his workplace by developing an affair with an employee, he takes her wife Gaby with her to make his position clear and secure. On the other hand, her sister had been exploited sexually by her stepfather and to keep herself safe from this exploitation further she had to leave her house, mother, sister, friends and her favorite place. Same as them, their mother also experiences male supremacy. She develops relationship with a man, but he leaves her when she gets pregnant and never comes back. She gets married to another man who promises taking care of her daughter just like her own daughter, but this promise proves false. Due to some sever physical issues, she is unable to meet her husband's sexual needs, but he remains selfish by using power over her to get his sexual satisfaction.

2. OBJECTIVES

For this research, the researcher has proposed the following study objectives.

1. To explore the meaning of objectification of women
2. To examine the ways in which female characters are objectified by male characters in the chosen novel
3. To explore how the suppression impacted the social and personal life of female characters

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

In the feminist theory, objectification is the central notion. We can define it as: treating a person, as an object. Nussbaum has categorized objectification into seven sub types named: instrumentality, denial of subjectivity, denial of autonomy, inertness, violability, fungibility and ownership. Nussbaum's hypothesis describes that women objectify themselves following others and thus they begin to engage in sexual objectification. They believe that their bodies are a separate part and not a part of themselves. In this way they have internalized themselves into self-objectification. Sexual objectification occurs when a person is viewed primarily as an object of someone else's sexual desire. Objectification occurs when someone is not valued for their character or dignity but is instead treated as an object or thing. His emotions or thoughts are not valued. Women are mostly the targets of objectification and become an object of sexual pleasure and fulfillment.

Feminists and civil rights activists have stimulated a lot of discussion in this area and still there is much work to be done about it. Rae Helen Langton, an Australian British professor of philosophy at the University of Cambridge, ratified Nussbaum's theory of objectification of women. She has broadened it by adding three more subtypes. They include a reduction to the body, reduction to appearance and silence. Her conception of the objectification of women is a prominent topic of discussion within feminist philosophy. According to the theory, people are considered only objects, and they are not valued for their ingrained worth and nobility. In all the viewpoints on objectification, Martha Nussbaum and Rae Langton's theory is hanged. Nussbaum's perspective on the topic advocates that objectification hurts a person's self-esteem and self-respect. She explains objectification as treating a person only as a tool for someone else's pleasure, ignoring their own needs and reducing them to merely an object. Nussbaum further explains that this type of reduction causes psychological and emotional harm, and the objectified person feels himself weak, vulnerable, and dominated. Langton's focus is on the distinct part of objectification. She explains that the objectified

person's ability of communication is damaged, and he is unable to give his worldview. The objectified treatment compels the person to remain silent and subordinated. Nussbaum and Langton both have slightly different concentrations, but both highlight the negative effects of objectification. Nussbaum advocates the psychological harm of objectification which subverts the objectified person's sense of self-esteem and dignity.

Many prominent critics contradicted her work. Ackerly (2000) is one of them who promoted Third World feminism in the women's movement. In the past, the focus of feminism was on the basic components and methods like gender, group, languages etc. They continue to experience this bias, and their advantages are still being denied. Langer (2001) has highlighted the poor condition of working-class women of nineteenth century. The brutal treatment of their male members, make them work to support them. They become unable to sustain their rights. Tandon (2008) says that working-class men gain power over women and deprive them from their rights because sexism creates such conditions which become beneficial for men. Socialist criticism explains that the class system structure creates oppression. Balraj (2015) says that the beauty of women became the cause of their honor and they were respected for their ability to handle others through the objectification of their bodies. In contrast, the men were always praised for their courage, bravery and martial expertise. Atwood (Quran & Anwar, 2020) explains that the enigma which makes a man esteemed in the society is his mental sharpness while the women are esteemed for her physical features. Fredrickson writes, "Sexual objectification is just one form of gender oppression" (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997, p. 174).

4. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Objectification theory is a theoretical framework in psychology. The text describes how viewing women and girls as objects can lead to mental health problems, self-objectification, and dissatisfaction with their body image. Below are several main elements of objectification.

1. Sociocultural Factors: it means the way in which societal norms, values and institutions contribute to the objectification of a specific group, particularly women. This culture promotes negative attitudes and behaviors.
2. Self-objectification: this is the process of internalizing societal objectification. A person considers himself an object for others. He does

not feel like himself as a person with thoughts, feelings and experiences.

3. Body shame: body shame means negative emotions and attitude a person develops towards his own body. It often stems from societal beauty standards, objectification, and internalized criticism.
4. Appearance anxiety: these are the feelings of apprehension, worry or fear which are related to someone's physical appearance. It involves a person's thoughts about his being judged, evaluated, or rejected based on how someone looks.
5. Mental health issues: Objectification can lead someone towards mental health issues such as depression, anxiety, low self-esteem, self-blame, and hopelessness.

This qualitative research is based on the objectification theory proposed by Martha Nussbaum and Rae Langton. Sara Macdonald's novel *In a Kingdom by the Sea* has been examined through the lens of objectification. Objectification theory refers to the practice of viewing or treating women as mere objects within society. While discussing about the gender, the objectification means mostly, the behavior of men with the women. These items are viewed as basic objects intended for enjoyment, primarily evaluated on their attractiveness and sexual allure. Their skills are knocked off, and gender inequality becomes normal in society. These are a few negative impacts of objectification. Nussbaum and Langton's framework of objectification help to understand the negative impacts of objectification in society. This philosophy strongly opposes the system of repression of women. It encourages the patriarchic society to value the women and acknowledge their skills and abilities and give them equality in the society.

Martha Nussbaum writes, "I suggest that in all cases of objectification what is an issue is a question of treating one thing as another. One is treating as an object what is really not an object, what is in fact, a human being" (Nussbaum, 1995, pp. 256,257). She describes seven features which show how a person is being treated as a thing.

1. Instrumentality: the objectifier uses a person as a tool for his own purpose.
2. Denial of Autonomy: it means that the objectifier makes choices for the objectified as he thinks that the objectified is not able to take decisions.
3. Inertness: inertness refers to the inability of the objectified to act or control his own destiny.
4. Fungibility: fungibility means that something is interchangeable with another thing like that.

5. Violability: violability means that it is possible for the objectifier to act against or do not value the objectified.
6. Ownership: ownership means that a person has a complete hold over the objectified and it can even be sold or bought.
7. Subjectivity: it means the denial of feelings and experiences of the objectified and they do not need to be considered.

Rae Langton has built upon and extended Nussbaum's framework. She adds three more features in it. She says, "I take this to be a particularly helpful about what 'object' amounts to. In the notion of treating as an 'object' and this is any view at least half the story. The other half, as we shall see, rest not on what an 'object' is, but on what treating as, amounts to" (Langton, 2009, p. 226).

Langton proposes the following three features:

1. Reduction to body: it means that a person is being treated or identified with his body or body parts.
2. Reduction to appearance: it means that a person is being treated in the way he looks or appears to the senses.
3. Silencing: it means that the objectified is being treated as it is something which is lacking the ability to express or the capacity to speak.

5. PLOT BRIEF-SUMMARY

In a Kingdom by the Sea by Sara MacDonald is a brilliantly constructed work with subtle layers of emotion about family bonds and wartime secrets. The writer has created extremely well-drawn characters. The storytelling is both thoughtful and compelling. Interesting concepts are deftly interwoven. No doubt it is a compelling tale about family history, love, deception, passion, and heartache. The plot moves along well, and the characters are believable and fascinating, drawing into their world. It is atmospheric and detailed with vivid imagery to engage the reader in the plot's secrets and mysteries.

It's a story about emotions, betrayal, a self-absorbed spouse, and a nearly shattered married existence. Gabby is the key character who tells the entire story. The story takes place between two contrasting cultures: a Western society represented by London, and a tormented, violent, and at times dim but beautiful and captivating city of lights, Karachi. Gabby leaves London to live in Karachi with his self-obsessed husband, who works as a director for Pakistan Atlantic Airlines. Gabby receives a letter from her sister after a lengthy wait, telling her of a dark secret buried in their past, a disturbing reality that wrecks Gabby's cherished, idyllic past and makes her feel shadowy in the terrifying Karachi.

At the same moment, another betrayal, a bomb explodes in front of her as her spouse admits his being in love with someone else. In times of great stress and anxiety, Pakistanis with their ever-loving, welcoming, and reassuring nature assist her in getting back on her feet. Gabby emerges from this situation differently, stronger, and more resolute as a result of the atrocities of the Taliban war, bombing, and target killing she witnessed in Karachi. She returns to London, knowing that Karachi has taken a piece of her.

But something occurs on the journey back, and she wakes up in a hugely different world. As hidden truths come to light, the story strikes a satisfying balance between current events and historical context. Gabby is on a self-discovery journey as she overcomes emotional difficulties and finally discovers her true self. At the same time, floods hit Pakistan, making the situation scary and bleak throughout the country. The political situation in Pakistan, and the difficulty of day-to-day existence there, contrasted with the independence and relative safety of life in London. The rural paradise of Cornwall is the most complex and engaging issue in this story.

In a Kingdom by the Sea takes place in three distinct locations: London, Cornwall, and Pakistan, all of which she vividly and wonderfully depicts. The depictions of Pakistan and Cornwall are as vibrant and colorful as the cosmopolitan individuals who propel the story forward constantly. The writing style is poetic and effortless. The plot is suspenseful and full of mysteries. The plot moves along well, with nothing detracting from the exhilarating complexity of Gabby's predicament, and it's a fascinating study of couples in their fifties who discover that their relationship, life aspirations, and childhood memories are not what they thought they were.

6. OBJECTIFICATION OF WOMEN IN *IN A KINGDOM BY THE SEA*

There are multiple ways in which this theory can be applied to the novel.

1. Female characters as objects: the authors have analyzed how the female characters are portrayed and treated as objects by the male characters. The analysis also reinforces harmful gender stereotypes.
2. Beauty standards: the article examines how the novel portrays beauty standards and their impact on female characters' self-esteem and self-worth.
3. Self-objectification: the study investigates how female characters internalize societal beauty standards and objectify themselves, leading to negative outcome.

4. Power dynamics: the study shows that how objectification reinforces power imbalances between male and female characters and perpetuating gender-based oppression.

The plot centres on two sisters whose family life is disrupted when a long-hidden family secret comes to light. The novel has been set in different countries but mostly in various parts of United Kingdom and Pakistan. The story revolves around the two half-sisters named Gabby and Dom. The narrative highlights how women are objectified in a society that is not typically viewed as patriarchal. Here women have equal rights with men and are free to take decisions about themselves. The different female characters experience harassment, betrayal and assault which serve as an example of objectification in the novel. The novel emphasizes that the females enjoy equal rights in the society, but the oppressive power structure still practices objectification of women. Although betrayal and exploitation are the primary themes of the story, there are also aspects of objectification present throughout. The narrator, who is the protagonist also, works as a translator in London. She is in her fifties and lives alone as her husband works in different countries and he comes to stay with her only for a short period of time. Her two sons also live abroad due to their studies. The novel reflects that her husband treats her as an object just to save his reputation in his workplace. When he falls in love with a girl at his office, younger than her, he leaves his wife ignoring their years of happy married life.

I turn on my back. 'Is this why you asked me to come out to Karachi, because you thought you were in danger of doing something stupid, something that might ruin your career?' (Macdonald, 2019).

The above-mentioned statement shows that Mike just wanted to save his reputation as well as job in Pakistan by calling his wife to Karachi. There are no emotional reasons or love involved here between them. Moreover, she leaves her business, career, and social life behind in London to join her husband, but he does not take it seriously. He leaves her alone behind in the hotel room at the time of her emotional crises to attend a conference and to enjoy vacation with his girlfriend.

Her elder sister is also treated as an object by her stepfather. Dominique, who was a teen at that time was raped by her drunk stepfather. Her mother has some severe physical issues which makes her unable to sexually satisfy her husband and it results in raping an innocent teen girl whom he used to look after like her own daughter. Following this event, Dominique went to stay with her aunt and was only

permitted to come back home after she was married and had children of her own.

I fought, Gabby, I really fought. I kept saying, 'Please don't. Please don't, Papa,' but he was too drunk. He was someone else. He wasn't Papa. He was someone else. It was over in a minute (Macdonald, 2019).

Dominique was being treated like an object many times in the novel since her childhood. Before her birth, her biological father left her mother and never returned. Her mother threw her away from home after she was raped by her stepfather. Mama didn't blame her husband for all that instead, she saved her marriage and punished her daughter. She had to leave her house, friends, sister, city and everything she loved. When she became an adult, she had a Turk husband, who left her after childbirth. She was alone and could not manage the little baby by herself. After some time, the paternal family of the baby took him. Then she got relief at last. Years later, that baby who was grown up came back again and extorted her just for the sack of money. After getting married and having children, she found herself alone once more and raised her two children without their father.

The novel's settings of Cornwall and Karachi symbolize the double essence of objectification. Cornwall represents traditional Western customs, whereas Karachi highlights a blend of allure and cultural intricacy. MacDonal used vivid imagery to portray the surroundings of Gabby:

"The Cornish coast was a familiar blanket, comforting yet confining, whereas Karachi was a wild tapestry of colors and chaos" (Macdonald, 2019).

This juxtaposition highlights the protagonist's shift from one form of societal impact to another.

The sea, a recurring element, symbolizes both an escape and a domain of ambiguity. Gabby's reflections by the sea, *"The waves whispered secrets of freedom, yet warned of the depths below"* (Macdonald, 2019), emphasize her inner struggle between being treated as an object and her desire to explore her self-exploration.

7. GABBY'S CULTURAL AND SOCIETAL EXPERIENCE

MacDonal paints Gabby as a character imprisoned between two clashing cultural realms. In Cornwall, she faces traditional norms of gender and wifehood. The relocation to Karachi offers a striking contrast, as explored in passages where Gabby awes at *"exotic bazaars and trips to the breath-taking Kashmiri mountains"* (Macdonald, 2019). This shift puts her exposed to a separate set of societal conventions, which in turn puts her preconceived notions of identity to the test.

Gabby's move from Cornwall to Karachi displays the varied cultural standards she meets. During her time in Cornwall, Gabby adheres to the traditional social norms imposed on her, but her experiences in Karachi expose her to a diverse cultural paradigm. MacDonald explains that Gabby's time in Cornwall involved a predictable routine, with her daily life shaped by established habits and the unspoken norms of her community. In Karachi, the ambiance was vibrant and unpredictable, compelling her to redefine her sense of self (Macdonald, 2019). Gaining a clear understanding of the difference is essential for recognizing the diverse ways in which objectification runs in various cultures.

Nussbaum (1995) contends that objectification takes various forms throughout cultures, but its core nature lies in the dehumanization of individuals, reducing them to mere objects for the advantage of others. Gabby's experience serves as a prime example of this phenomenon as she navigates the cultural norms in Karachi, facing both objectification and extreme scrutiny from her foreign environment.

Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) found that when it comes to their bodies, women tend to adopt the viewpoint of an outside observer. This is because of the conventions that society has proven. In her own self-reflections, Gabby makes this point quite clear. In the narrative, she is depicted as having a sense of freedom while at the same time being regarded as an object by the world in which she is now living: *"She felt a strange mix of freedom and exposure, like an artifact on display"* (Macdonald, 2019). When one views themselves as an object, this dualism highlights the internal conflict that results from that perspective.

8. INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS AND OBJECTIFICATION

When it comes to understanding Gabby's objectification, the power dynamics that exist inside her marriage to Mike are a vital part to take into consideration. MacDonald printed,

"Gabby had always been the supportive spouse, her identity molded around Mike's ambitions" (Macdonald, 2019).

A periodic concern in the field of objectification theory, this statement draws attention to the connection that exists between Gabby's sense of self-worth and the accomplishments of her husband. According to this notion, women are frequently evaluated based on the connections they have with males, which serve as the basis for deciding their value Szymanski et al. (2011). Analyzing the process of objectifying individuals through the interactions within Gabby's marriage provides a helpful viewpoint. MacDonald asserts that Mike's profession

consistently took precedence, with Gabby's desires and aspirations revolving around it. According to MacDonald, there was a significant gap in Pakistan. This highlights the importance of traditional gender norms and imbalanced power dynamics in sustaining the objectification of Gabby inside her marriage. Szymanski, Moffitt, and Carr (2011) emphasize that objectification is often present in intimate relationships marked by power imbalances. Gabby's story serves as a prime example of these findings as she grapples with her own identity considering her husband's prosperous career.

9. FAMILY SECRETS AND PERSONAL HISTORY

The letter from Gabby's sister, which conveys the discovery of the family secret, digs deeper into the themes of objectification and trauma than either of the previous two. The novel states that,

"The letter tore through her like a storm, unearthing buried memories of control and conformity" (Macdonald, 2019).

Upon discovering this truth, Gabby feels a strong inner drive to confront her history and recognize the impact of her family's expectations on her sense of herself. Gabby feels an irresistible urge to face her history and the experience of being treated like an object inside her family due to her sister's letter, which discloses family secrets. MacDonald adeptly depicts this moment with precise accuracy:

"The letter serves as a Pandora's box, releasing deeply repressed memories and emotions." (Macdonald, 2019).

MacDonald's statement implies that she chose the right time to address the lasting impact of her past experiences. This occurrence is crucial as it connects her present difficulties with enduring familial obligations and traumas. Research on familial dynamics and the process of objectification offers substantiating evidence for this narrative. Studies investigating the influence of family dynamics on self-perception reveal how early experiences and assigned family responsibilities shape an individual's sense of identity and susceptibility to being treated as an object. Gabby's story illustrates the need to directly confront these pressures as crucial for personal growth and reassessing one's own worth.

10. PAKISTANI SOCIETY

The only thing Gabby knew about Pakistani society was its terroristic environment and horrible life. When she landed at Karachi airport, the first impression she got was its male suppressed culture. When she shook hand with the driver, Mike explained her that it's not allowed women to shake hand with men in Pakistan. They are considered the

property of men, so it's important to follow the instructions of their men.

'Gabby, women don't offer their hands to men in Pakistan. I just thought I would tell you ...' (Macdonald, 2019)

While talking to Massima, Gabby came to know that Pakistani women can't get married according to their choice and after marriage, they were forced to obey their husbands. Masimma told her about her own personal experience.

She pauses and takes a deep breath. 'This man I loved and thought I knew, he blindly accepted his parents' wishes. He drove me home that evening without speaking one word to me. He did not make the smallest fight for me. We had worked together and been close for three years and I never saw or heard from him again. Four months later he married a newly qualified doctor. She never practised her profession. She was the perfect stay-at-home wife.' (Macdonald, 2019)

Gabby herself saw the plight of rural Pakistani women, who were considered only the production machines and when she machines got faults, they were easily replaced by the new ones. Such a young girl was kept as a maid at Gabby's house by the end of novel. After the flood, Samia was left by herself due to contracting an infection. Dr Abida told her that there were a substantial number of such women everywhere in Pakistan.

Poor women from remote regions are often treated like cattle. They are beasts of burden to work and breed. When women become ill, frail, or old, their men often abandon them. We have many women whose fathers and husbands have deserted them when they became a liability in the floods. (Macdonald, 2019)

The narrative calls poor women "beasts of burden" and "treated like livestock". This graphic illustrates Martha Nussbaum's interpretation of objectification. According to Nussbaum, objectification involves treating people as objects without an agency. The text compares women to cattle, implying they exist only to work and procreate. Nussbaum (1995) outlines seven expressions of objectification, one being instrumentality about an individual as a means to meet another's interests or aspirations. Women perform manual labor and procreate. This treatment dehumanizes women, denying them autonomy, according to Nussbaum. They are laborers and reproducers, not self-governing agents.

"When they become a liability": Forsaken when they become "ill, frail, or old". Objectification often reduces women to their physical ability to work or procreate. Objectifiers value them less when they lose this potential. Rae Langton (2009) elaborates on this term, positing that objectification incorporates fungibility, the notion that an individual can be

substituted if they no longer match the predicted function. When these women are no longer useful for labor or procreation, they retire.

Langton adds that objectification often results in silencing, where the oppressed minority lacks the power to speak up or express their autonomy. Women's abandonment in the story acts as a form of silence, as their voices and worth fade when they are perceived as onerous.

Objectification occurs against a backdrop of flooding and economic hardship, emphasizing the intersection of class and gender within this process. The women in the story face double marginalization because they are not only female but also poor and from rural areas, which increases their vulnerability. Sociologist Iris Marion Young (1990) underscores this interconnectivity in her concept of the "five faces of oppression," which encompass exploitation and powerlessness. Within a patriarchal and economically unstable society, these women are taken advantage of for both their labor and reproductive roles, leaving them without power or agency.

The leaving of women by "fathers and husbands" reveals how patriarchy supports power relations that end in women's subordination. In such systems, men possess economic and social authority, while women are dependent on them. When the women no longer execute their roles, they are put aside, reinforcing their objectification and powerlessness.

Feminist philosophers such as Silvia Federici (2004) have studied the importance of women's unpaid labor in supporting patriarchal and capitalist systems. In *Caliban and the Witch*, Federici argues that women are objectified through their reproductive and domestic labor, which often goes undetected and unrewarded. In instance of MacDonal's work, the women's labor and reproductive obligations are vital in the rural, agrarian economy, yet they are nonetheless discarded when they are no longer able to perform these roles.

11. CONCLUSION

The above discussion has shown that females are being objectified all over the world, whether it's a patriarchic society or a developed modern society. It has created a fissure in the society where females are living as suppressed members of the society. Objectification theory by Nussbaum and Langton is used to contextualize the selected novel of Macdonald to show the patriarchic power and suppression against women. The detailed analysis of the selected novel has shown that Sara Macdonald, like other feminist writers displays and exposes the

patriarchic tapestries in her novel and puts forward the narrative of women's struggle to look for positive and healthy change in the society. The study also suggests reevaluating orthodox beliefs about the females and their acceptance as persons rather than an object. In this article, the first issue is to clearly define the concept of objectification. The first goal engages with the other two. All the three aims revolve around objectification, of women, how they are objectified in the society and how the objectification affects their personal and social life in the selected

novel of Sara Macdonald. Through the analysis, it's clear that the patriarchic setup affects the life of women a lot. They are subjugated and forced to follow the laws made by men for their lives. Sara MacDonald, the author, delves into the complexities of identity, society, and relationships amidst the vibrant backdrops of Cornwall and Karachi. Using objectification theory, we can investigate the ways in which societal expectations and internalized norms have an impact on the development of characters, specifically Gabby, the main character.

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