

**The Propensity of Survivorship and Self-Accomplishment
Tendency: A Psychological Scrutiny in Charlotte McConaghy's -
*Wild Dark Shore***

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Abstract

This article explores, Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in a harsh and isolated environment as a conceptual framework to analyse Charlotte McConaghy's *Wild Dark Shore*. The characters in the novel navigate Maslow's multi-layered foundation of human motivation, starting with their struggle for safety and physiological survival in an uncertain environment and moving on to the pursuit of love, belonging, respect, and, finally, self-actualization. The novel *Wild Dark Shore*, highlights the fluidity of human desires through times of familial bonding, environmental stewardship, emotional instability, and introspective growth, indicating that people frequently seek various levels of satisfaction at the same time rather than in a rigid hierarchy. The Ecological landscape serves not just as a backdrop, but also as a

psychological arena for exposing undesirable trauma, building strong resilience and facilitating with the reflection of inner development. By combining humanistic psychology and eco-fiction, the article asserts that McConaghy's work provides important insights into the interdependence of surrounding nature, finding true identity, and the human ability for healing.

Keywords: Needs, Environment, Psychological, Survival, Introspective, Ecological, Resilience

Charlotte McConaghy is a dedicated Australian writer, known for portraying caricatures of human life in the space of nature. The focus on environmental issues in her creations intertwines with the human psyche. The ecological set up and the characters show a natural commitment which is everlasting and magnificent in its own way. McConaghy's writings appeals as both personal explorations of human fragility and eco-fiction because it is an environmental conscience, along with a remarkable psychological insight. In the novel *Wild Dark Shore*, she once again merges the raw essence of nature with the intricacies of human longingness, crafting a narrative in which the physical wilderness serves as a metaphor for the interior wilderness of fear, desire, and survival.

The interconnectedness between literature and psychology is cherished in every sense of life. Both these disciplines focuses on the human psyche. The involvement of humanistic behaviour in which, it deeply formulates the instincts of inner conflicts, based on that inner conflict the reflections, is seen through outwards and the complexity that reshapes the experience that are captured through these both disciplines. However, the psychology is studied through a scientific inspections, which has got to deal with the measurements and to produce the accurate result. Literature on the other hand, deliberately functions out of its own ideas. The creativity and loads of imaginations are incorporated. Apart from this, the literature looks towards the structure of narrative, the characters and its performance and the flourishing emotions creates a masterpiece.

Literary texts often function as psychological space of environment, this bond blends them together, providing a visual understanding of the traumas, hopes, fears, and desires that shapes human existence. By having a great examination of the character's thoughts, mindset and emotional access, the readers gain a deep understanding about the functions of human psychology. When the readers grasps the intentions of the characters of the fiction, then they just relate them with the real life. The layers of the narrations are also done in a same way that it matches with the reality. Therefore, psychological theories like those laid proposed by Freud, Jung, or Maslow offers an insightful interpretative frameworks that enhances literary criticism by illuminating the ways in which character's needs impact of visualized plot, structure, and crucial thematic development. In this regard, including psychological viewpoints into literature not only enhances our comprehension of fictitious characters but also draws attention to common human behaviours of patterns.

The framework of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, is a widely used principle to determine the standards of the life. In general, an individual in reality goes through various struggles for the improvement. This Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs concept helps an individual to self- check one's growth. All these means reflects the inner vision as well as the external reputation.

Human behaviour is motivated by a multifaceted set of needs, ranging from basic survival to the search for meaning. Novels inherently mirror these stages via the challenges and development of their characters. Plotlines are frequently built around these needs: characters must first overcome obstacles to their physical existence and safety before pursuing emotional connection, social belonging, recognition, self-worth, and, finally, self-realization.

Literary critics can analyse, whether the characters change as they progress through these phases by, applying Maslow's theory. It is so predictable for readers that, the nature of human psyche works in this way, generally on the basis of needs.

Maslow's theory also emphasizes the manner in which when one or more of these needs are at risk or not fulfilled, conflict results. Readers can learn how a character's psychology arc is shaped by both internal problems and external situations by charting their actions and emotional journeys onto Maslow's pyramid. subsequently, by relating narrative events to universal patterns of human motivation and development, Maslow's theory contributes to a deeper understanding of literary interpretation.

Following Maslow's theory, human behaviour is driven by a systematic process. People make judgments, behave, and think in accordance with the prevalent need of the moment. Human needs do not necessarily follow a rigid linear order, despite the pyramid's presentation. Human behaviour is much more dynamic and variable than a set sequence implies in this concept. People don't always wait for one level to be fully satisfied before moving on to the next, even though the lowest needs like physiological survival and safety usually take priority. Literary characters frequently reflect the complexity of human existence, which rarely happens in a straight line.

For instance, people might desire achievement and respect despite emotional uncertainty, or they can seek love and connection even in the face of unstable physical conditions. In a similar vein, self-actualization can happen during difficult times when inner purpose, moral clarity, or creativity arise even in the absence of complete material stability. The illusion is created in such way that an individual may undergo huge anxiety and stress but then, still from outward they may seem so happy. However some people don't even express the happiness outside to anyone, if they are actually happy. All these are observed only through the light of their intuitions.

The dynamic nature of human motivation is reflected in this flexibility: depending on one's personality, the living environment and emotional state, different demands, which can take centre of the stage at different times. These reflections are portrayed by both in the real

life as well in the fictions. This flexible structure is particularly evident in literature since characters frequently express conflicting desires at the same time. A character may battle for survival while longing for company, or they may have breakthroughs while battling fundamental concerns.

Human emotions and the experiences that arise from them shapes the understanding of life. In relation to life, literature frequently acts as a mirror to the complexities of the human mind. Every human being carries plurality of sense to showcase themselves in this world. Humanistic psychology highlights the innate capacity of people to develop, heal, and discover purpose in their lives. It is frequently referred to as the “third force” in psychology, following behaviourist and psychoanalysis. It emphasizes ideas like to comprehend empathy, attains intentional free will, self-actualization, and the pursuit of authenticity.

The novel *Wild Dark Shore* by Charlotte McConaghy, determines about the narratives that explores the specifications of self-awareness, hands of connection with the natural world by explaining the space of island and seeks towards transformative power. The characters of the novel with their inner conflict, walks through a journey towards the enlightenment of self-discovery that demonstrates the essential principles of humanistic ideology. The acceptance of one’s imperfections, faith in one’s ability to recover, and the quest for emotional completeness despite despair, sounds as an important aspect of life.

The characters of the novel encompasses the humanistic struggle between despair and self-realization. The journey in wild unfolds the intentions of loss, isolation, and emotional turbulence mirrors the psychological quest for self-actualization described by Abraham Maslow. Apart from looking into external warmth, Characters are driven to examine themselves and find acceptance, compassion, and strength there. The novel’s harsh natural environments serve as parallels for the inner landscapes of the mind, where existence depends on the capacity to rediscover purpose and hope in addition to physical endurance.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is heavily influenced by contextual factors rather than being in a vacuum. A person's ability to move up the hierarchy or stay at its lower levels depends on their surroundings. On the other hand, psychological development is made possible by a stable and encouraging environment. People can go beyond simple survival and invest in relationships, creativity, and personal meaning in environments that provide safety, social acceptability, and exploration chances.

Right from the landscape of the novel to the mindset of the characters the novel *Wild Dark Shore*, perfectly flows with the statement of realistic attributions of survival. The paradox with life and survival makes the characters to reside in the remote island of Tasmania. The thoughts and the thrills faced by the main character Rowan, plays a crucial role in describing the ecology around the island. The experience of human functionality in such conditions is the impression created through this series.

The narrative structure is packed with lots of mysteries. The description of the remote island offers as an understanding that the place is very much isolated and it has a wide mangrove forest in which the habitat seems untouched by the human society. This remoteness of place and the characters synchronizes together. The wilderness of the island makes an extraordinary quest for elucidation of life. "Shearwater is long and skinny and divided into two parts, its northern side mountains and mostly unexplored," (McConaghy 9).

At the outset of the novel the territory itself stands as an allegory of the lowest level of Maslow's pyramid that is physiological needs. The severe and unpredictable environment reflects the character's chaotic interior state. They are instantly negotiating the basic question of survival. Rowan witness the essence of life that the Salt family undergoes in the novel. Nature here is not simply a backdrop but an overwhelming force that challenges human resilience. Though the lighthouse is where the Salt family resides in the island, the rest of the quaters for researches, which is swallowed by the ruthless ocean. The necessity

for food, accommodation, and physical security forms the fundamental basis of her narrative, corresponding to the foundational levels of Maslow's hierarchy. "We still have some gas for cooking and manually heating water, and diesel for the generator to keep the freezer running so our remaining food store don't spoil," (McConaghy 9).

Following their initial efforts to endure basic physical survival, the characters in *Wild Dark Shore* then prioritize their safety as the next pressing concern. In the novel, the characters constantly live with the fear of danger both from nature and from other humans. This formation, makes the characters to stay in an alert mode. The hostile environment, unpredictable weather, rough and fearless sea, and the environment around makes every step threatening. Simultaneously, emotional stability is also vulnerable. In contrast, at this point of time, naturally human beings seek for a little cordiality, so that they feel safe.

The characters with their internal wounds and the growing anxiety seeks for stability and safety. They desire a space where they can relax without worrying about being hurt or betrayed. The cordial space would sooth their pain in such conditions of harshness of unexplored land. The character's primary motivation to move, make choices, and interact with other individuals prudently is the need for protection. Though, without a sense of safety the body, mind does not move to the next level in the state of motivation, unfortunately the novel moves to next level because of the strong bonds between the members of the salt family.

After the characters in *Wild Dark Shore* achieve brief periods of fundamental safety and physical survival, Their more complex mental demands evokes to emerge. The human need for love, connection, and emotional belonging is highlighted in Maslow's third level. McConaghy's leads frequently experience emotional isolation, surrounding loneliness, and growing sorrow, which heightens the desire for connection. They look for comfort not just in a physical place to stay but also in the company of someone who can relate to their inner troubles. The desire for emotional intimacy serves as a guide even in the difficult situations.

Ironically, the demonstration of familial love is very much evident in this novel *Wild Dark Shore*, in which the bond between the father and his children prominently takes place, in absence of their mother. Dominic Salt the father of Raff, Fen and Orly, gives them protection, the fatherly love and care. These connections between family, assist them in enduring terror, to fight the pain, and dreadful uncertainty.

The connection with the environment plays a cornerstone in which the life totally depends based on the surroundings. The course of island is in the condition to drown, which is a great threat to the characters in the novel. In this case the warmth and home like feeling is fully furnished through the spark of familial relationship. McConaghy provides instances, whereby, belonging turns into a stabilizing force that enables people to move beyond simple survival. "Loving a place is the same as having a child. They are both too much an act of hope, of defiance" (McConaghy 89).

Only when the individuals develop a tender sense of connection and belongingness, does the progression towards Maslow's fourth level the needs emerge. Generally esteem in Maslow's hierarchy of needs refers to the respect which is within oneself as well as the respect gained from outwards. In this sense the balance of self- respect and the respect gained from outside plays a priority in building a proper well- being. The sense of deep emotional experiences and the hostile environment, intricately ties up with the individual's motivation to survive.

The isolated space makes an individual either to think and grow up or to fall and stay in the devastating loneliness. Their abilities of the characters in the novel, are constantly tested by the wild environment, which puts their mental resilience, mental stamina, and physical prowess in the mode of test. Every instance of skill which is navigating risk and every instance of perseverance in the face of harsh terrain, that serves as a source of self-validation. The

surroundings creates as a kind of hostile mirror, reflecting their fears while also providing chances to demonstrate their abilities.

Altogether, the broken self-esteem is repaired through their connections with others moments of acknowledgment, trust, and mutual reliance. In such a dangerous world, respect must be earned via survival, bravery, and the capacity to defend oneself and others. The characters progressively gain a sense of personal significance as they deal with both internal conflict and outside challenges.

The characters gain respect through the nature, in a way they respect their isolated surrounding. the father character Dominic takes care of the island even when, the research belt is destroyed by the devastating storm. He takes care of the seed vault which is necessary to this world. Raff the eldest son of Dominic, stays sincere and works along with his father. The character of Fen, who spends her quality time with the seals around, by showing a bond of kindness. She is also a great swimmer, who is portrayed as born for water bodies. Orly the last son, is occupied with a prodigy mind, studies about nature at very young age through books. Rowan the stranger to this family, joins along with them to support the surroundings of the island by being a helping hand. These attributions of the characters clearly shows that they are devoted towards the environment, which actually develops a respectable ground.

Despite the harsh surroundings, they are able to regain their dignity, self-assurance, and faith in their own initiatives. Thus, esteem in the novel is not a static feature but a dynamic process formed by emotional evolution and environmental confrontation, fitting well with Maslow's view of esteem as a critical stage in human advancement.

The highest level of Maslow's hierarchy, self-actualization, symbolizes the human desire to reach one's greatest potential, find inner peace, and comprehend one's deeper purpose. This stage is shown in *Wild Dark Shore* as a slow inward transformation influenced by the individual experiences with growing trauma into the space of the natural world, and

themselves rather than as a single epiphany. Here self-actualization is portrayed as a deep notion of introspection.

The process of introspection undergoes various illusions out of mind. The closeness of soul, mind and bodily changes of functions are observed. Mastering solitude is regained through introspection. The wide, untamed landscape physically isolates the inhabitants, putting them in isolated positions on numerous occasions. It compels individuals to examine the unresolved conflicts, phobias, and emotional wounds that have shaped their identities.

Although difficult, this introspective process is essential. It compels them to acknowledge the parts of themselves they have avoided. Introspection, which literally erases the mindset of loneliness and seeks the ultimate manner of solitude. Taking up with a close look, Their inner weaknesses are revealed and distractions are eliminated by the hard environment, which functions as an emotional trigger. They start to think on their previous choices, grasp the reasons behind them, and identify the principles that are most significant to them. This in-depth self-examination enables individuals to rebuild a sense of purpose based on authenticity and inner clarity, rather than survival through external approval. So, introspection becomes a bridge between emotions and realization of one self.

The characters begin to act with intention rather than survival instinct, making decisions based on inner truth rather than outward pressure. They seek a life that is more than just physical survival and mental comfort; they want to be true to themselves. This instinct comes up naturally in an isolated platform. The justification of life leans with the crucial forces, which is actually decided by their environment. This change is the highest point of their mental development. a shift from being passively existing to actively living, from fragmentation to coherence, and from fear to purpose.

The passage of hardships in between the growth and the beginning point decides the real spirit of learning and mastering the skills. In the novel *Wild Dark Shore*, the characters

develops a deep connection with the ecology which they are surrounded by. The instincts of survival later turns into a life which sparks within the novel. The characters builds a warmth within themselves first, and then provides cordiality to the environment.

This idea is particularly potent in literature because characters frequently achieve self-actualization in distinctive and intensely personal ways. To show that every character's journey is unique, authors employ internal monologues, symbolic landscapes, emotional conflicts, and transforming experiences. Which makes an inspiring story or the character building. This creates a means of life lesson. In most of the stories Because each character has unique scars, wants, and meaning-seeking visions, no two characters reach self-realization in the same way.

When they cease living in accordance with social conventions, familial expectations, or forced identities, many literary characters achieve self-actualization. The action of fear, duty, or compliance, they start making decisions based on their own convictions. They are moving toward independence. Strength, originality, moral clarity, or a greater capacity for love and empathy which are common ways to depict literally self-actualization. Characters start acting purposefully as they come to understand their place in the world and the principles that make them who they are. Their development is demonstrated by a sense of inner balance and direction rather than by perfection. Thus the novel *Wild Dark Shore*, attains Maslow's self-actualization along with the importance of surroundings.

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