

Tween's Resource Negotiation in Lisa Graff's *The Great Treehouse War*

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Abstract

This qualitative study explores how under extreme scarcity of resources contemporary middle grade fiction, *The Great Treehouse War* (2017) reflect the tween's journey of resilience. The study is carried out in the light of Socio-Ecological theory of resilience by Ungar and analyzed keeping in mind textual lens by Belsey. It investigates that under severe scarcity of resources the tween negotiates available meager culturally relevant symbolic resources. The tween's anchor through symbolic resources other than relational support is a critique of social discourses that overlook a child's developmental needs and overburden her with responsibilities of resolving adversities of parental divorce in isolation. Moreover, symbols and metaphors as a resource underscore that societal expectations excessively burden children with severe physical and emotional troll and unreasonably expect them to resolve adult imposed adversities. It suggests for interventions which can protect a child's developmental needs by facilitating relational support.

Article History

Received 02 September 2026

Accepted 26 September 2026

Published 10 October 2026

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 OPEN ACCESS

Keywords

Tween, socio-ecological resilience, relational resources, symbols and metaphors, critique of social discourses

Introduction

The adverse effect of parental divorce maybe more pronounced due to young age and lack of a child's experience. The tenderness of age and limited capacity to understand the logic behind changing family dynamics severs adjustment challenges in children in the outset of divorce. Research endorses that children (6-8) fail to understand the complications of divorce related social, legal and psychological challenges (Cashmore & Parkinson, 2008).

The quality of parent-child relationship is central to a child's resilience. Parental love helps a child to face challenges, develop problem-solving skills and exercise control over their emotions. Positive parenting acts as a lever for children to overcome adversity and achieve resilience (Doty et al., 2017). Parental support and involvement helps a child to adjust to post-divorce adversity and changing family dynamics. Parental interventions through emotional support improves a child's self-esteem, educational attainment and adaptation to the divorce distress and trauma (Schilke et al., 2025).

According to Ungar (2011) resilience is a dynamic process that involves the interaction of individual, relational, social, cultural, discursive, and environmental factors. Adapting to parental divorce is not merely an individual trait but a product of the resources and support available to the child. Resilience theory explores the way children navigate the challenges of

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divorce with the help of protective factors (supportive relationships), access to resources, and positive cultural narratives.

The phenomenon of resilience helps to adapt to adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or stress (Walsh, 2016). An individual's capacity to achieve resilience varies depending on adaptive skills and severity of adversity (Folke, 2016). It also changes with different stages in life and nature of adversities. Children learn to become resilient by facing challenges as a natural process. Challenges in life and changing family dynamics often break down the older order of things and catalyze fresh growth (Kelly & Emery, 2003). Against the traumatic experience of family rupture, resilience involves diminishment of distress and growth. Faced with adversity, children archive resilience through internal and external resources. External resources involve relationship of a child to surroundings, while internal resources include will power, determination and abilities, "what a child can do" (Carey et al., 2009). External resources make a child access relationships and achieve autonomy while through internal resources a child builds trust, empathy and practices self-control, resolves problem and builds communication skills. In the long term, post-divorce situations make children self-sufficient, emotionally intelligent, more resilient, and adaptive to changing family dynamics (Kelly & Emery, 2003).

Middle-grade American fiction (age 8-12) explore the emotional, behavioral, and social challenges in children of divorce (Nikolajeva, 2020). These novels expose divorce induced adversity and adaptive strategies to new family dynamics (Trites, 2018). The present study is delimited to the character of female protagonist, Winnie who battles with the adversity of parental divorce in *The Great Treehouse War* (2017). Moreover, it is confined to the analysis of textual symbols and metaphors which act as a critique of social discourses. The study is an effort to explore socio-ecological resilience of tween in middle grade American fiction, *The Great Treehouse War* (2017).

Children's lack of experience magnify the adversity of parental divorce. Moreover, parents ignore minor while taking divorce decision. In most cases, children fail to find true relational and institutional support to grapple with the divorce trauma. Parents' anchor through legal channels to get better claim of a child's custody but children may not find easy access to such channels. Their survival amidst such adversity can be the result of different support networks which can influence their coping with their pain. This study brings forth their strategies to battle the adversity of parental divorce.

The Great Treehouse War (2017) is a middle grade fiction about Winnie, a tween who takes shelter in a treehouse to escape performative care of her divorcing parents and in search of resilience. Nine of her friends who plan to declare war on their parents also join her on her expedition. Together they make the "Treehouse Ten" a safer place where they resolve their issues and achieve autonomy with culturally relevant resources. The present study endeavors to illuminate that amidst severe relational adversity, the tween anchors through symbolic resources which are a critique of societal discourses for underestimating a child's developmental needs, overburdening them with resolving adult induced adversities.

The study is significant due to an increased number of children effected from divorce in American society. Moreover, majority of children do not access facilities and relationships to cushion them. The present study provides valuable insights into the coping strategies children explore for themselves to overcome divorce adversity. Moreover, this study underscores the resources available for children which in term can guide legal bodies to

rethink their decisions about custody laws. These guidelines can help legal bodies in making more informed decisions for welfare of children in the context of divorce.

Research Question

Q: How do the symbols and metaphors in *The Great Treehouse War* critique societal limitations and systemic failures surrounding the concept of childhood resilience?

Literature Review

Lairana and Wandamar (2023) explore the role mediating agents' play in the adaptability of adolescents' to the adversity of parental divorce. They conclude that adolescents' anchor through relational, extracurricular, religious and cultural practices may significantly affect their coping. Support of relationships, therapeutic agents and friends can play tremendous role to mitigate divorce induced adversity. Likewise, long term cognitive, and academic outcomes of such children can be mitigated through informed interventions (Demir-Dagdas et al., 2017).

According to Lansford (2009) post-divorce inter parental conflict; quality of post-divorce parenting, a child's inconsistent discipline and emotional strain is responsible for behavioral issues in a child. Lansford endorses that the presence of strong protective factors, i.e., relationships, financial stability, low conflict in the surroundings, and effective parenting can assist a child in coping with divorce adversity.

Likewise, the study conducted by Musaja (2020) endorses that intense pre- and post-divorce inter parental conflict and poor parent-child bonding leads to a child's increased sense of insecurity and low self-esteem. The study concludes that in post-divorce situations, a child feels protected if guardians keep open communication, maintain discipline and consistency in a child's daily routines. Even amidst divorce adversity, they feel sense of security if they can access human resources and find parental support. Relational connections help them build additional emotional outlets and perspectives for their guidance, reassurance and emotional validation. Similarly, cultural and community interventions may lessen a child's pain (Demir-Dagdas et al. (2017).

Individual factors related to age and developmental stage measure a child's coping with the adversity of divorce. Younger children desperately struggle to cope with the issue while older children externalize their adversity through aggressive behavior (Amato & Keith, 1991). Likewise, journaling or peer support can help adolescents and grown-ups to deal with the adversity in a better manner (Lansford, 2009).

Similarly, dispositional attributes including intelligence, temperament, and personality traits of a children assist them in adaptation (Germazy, 1991). Antonovsky (1998) associates resilience with a "sense of coherence" while Werner and Smith (2001) consider optimism as an important trait of resilient individuals. The trait of hopefulness may significantly increase adaption to "chaos, brutality, stress, worry or despair," (Southwick et al., 2014, p. 6). Moreover, resilient people are also committed to life, exercise control over events and anticipate a change in life (Maddi, 2002).

Apart from individual traits, the quality of the parent-child relationship also play pivotal role. Parents, caregivers and supportive adults significantly influence a child's coping by either facilitating a child access to resources or restricting access to coping strategies (Ungar, 2011). Children with strong parental bonds handle divorce much effectively

(Hetherington and Kelly, 2002). They overcome adversity by developing close-knit relationship with family, friends, teachers and community (Germazy, 1991). The interventions of these relationships counter divorce trauma through validation of pain and celebrations of achievements. These supportive networks endow a child with emotional strength to overcome adversity. Likewise, educational institutions through counseling, supportive friends, and peer circles can assist children coping. Likewise, presence of maternal substitute, a mentor or religious institutions engage a child morally and materially (Werner, 1989). Additionally, socio-centric view endorses the idea that resilient children follow their predecessors, exchange help and set trends for their successors. They grow and thrive throughout life because of their connectedness with others (Walsh, 2016).

Research Methodology

The socio-ecological study adopts a qualitative research approach and investigates quantitative data of given novel text. Ungar's socio-ecological theory and Belsey's analytical framework guide the study. The analysis presents symbolic resources as a critique of divorce discourse that overburden the tween with divorce induced adversities.

Textual analysis is concerned with analyzing the meanings of metaphors and symbols in the given study (Tenny et al., 2022). The present study is carried out keeping in mind Belsey's textual lens. It is concerned with critically analyzing the language, symbols and metaphors present in texts. It studies what the text says, to whom it says, why it says so, and what effect it creates (Belsey, 2002). The present study involves understanding the symbolic structure and meanings of metaphors as a critique of social discourses. Moreover, the study situates the novel within its broader socio-cultural framework, presenting the narrative as a product of cultural attitude towards divorce in contemporary American society. Additionally, text-centered nature allows the study to be based on close reading for an in depth analysis of symbols and metaphors as a resource for the tween to cope with divorce adversity.

According to Ungar (2011) resilience is the capacity of individuals to achieve wellness through navigation of culturally relevant psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources. Accordingly, resources are "more than an individual set of characteristics' and include supportive environment. Ungar believe in relative resilience, different ways of achieving resilience in different surroundings and circumstances. Accordingly, practicing one's culture brings positive energies and mitigates negative impact of adversities. In their journey towards resilience individuals involve in navigation and negotiation of resources.

Application of Ungar's theory involves identification and analysis of tween's access to symbolic resources. According to Belsey (2002) textual symbols and metaphors translate abstract feelings into tangible narrative elements and externalize individual's abstract trauma.

Analysis of Textual Excerpts

In *The Great Treehouse War* (2017) the tween's adversity results from a lack of relational, environmental, institutional and cultural resources. Amidst immense pain, the tween exercises autonomy, navigates and negotiates symbolic resources to overcome her adversity.

1. *"While Winnie's parents argued, Buttons purrs a little louder in Winnie's lap, scrunching his head under her hand. Winnie scratched and scratched at Buttons' soft orange fur, while her parents argued and argued".*

One's ability to manage resources, "navigate and negotiate" oppressive structures with their socio-ecological surroundings constructs resilience (Ungar, 2011). She fails to handle the situation and experiences emotional turmoil. Faced with lack of relational support, she consciously observes her parents' callousness and her commodification. She minutely observes their lack of empathy and childish behavior and demonstrates her agency. She realizes that her survival depends on her capacity to understand and negotiate with her surroundings.

2. *"Winnie would stay with her (mom) on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Fridays" (p.15)
"With him (dad) on Mondays, Thursdays, and Saturdays. ... (p. 16)
Three days with your father, three days with me, and one day on your own (p. 16)
"Winnie rubbed under Button's orange chin... Winnie nestled her cheek in the soft fur at the base of Button's' neck". (p.16)*

The tween's structural adversity includes her three-day stay with each parent and a day's stay in a treehouse, and parental care replaced with logistical equation. The text exposes systemic failure that fails to prioritize children's emotional needs against unreasonable parental demands. Lansford (2009) stresses the significance of conscious parenting to inculcate resilience.

Parental apathy invalidates her emotional turmoil and commodity her for their competitive behavior. Sending her to the treehouse on Wednesdays, signify parental obsession with dividing their days with their daughter evenly.

Amidst chaos, the tween utilizes her silence and internal peace as a resource. She invokes her pets support and avoids parental confrontation, keeping her mental peace intact.

Understanding parental obsession is her first step towards resilience. Her anchor through strategic silence, less parental confrontation, the treehouse and Button underscore her extreme scarcity of relational resource. The treehouse critiques systemic failure and buttons presence and validation of her pain exposes parental disregard for children's physical, and psychological needs for development. It critiques resilience discourses that require children to develop resilience through adaptation to non-supportive environments. Moreover, it scorns arrangement of strict custody schedules without involving the will of children. It urges resilience discourses to redefine its standards and prioritize relational support ahead of mechanical feasibility.

3. *"To replace Thanksgiving with her daughter, she (mom) decided to pick a new holiday...Flag Day"... (p. 31)
Winnie says, "Flag Day is amazing. Even better than Thanksgiving" ... (p. 32)
"Winnie and her mom celebrated Ice Cream Day, Sandwich Day, Cow Appreciation Day and Underwear Day"... (p.33)
With father, she celebrated ... "Sand Castle Day. Bad Poetry Day. Burger Day... Elementary, she was celebrating a holiday every day of the week except, of course, on Wednesdays". (p.34)*

According to Ungar (2011) resilience depends on individual's negotiation of resources. The tween's parents weaponize holidays to win over each other, "three days with each parent, one day alone". Parental celebrations; Underwear Day, Flag Day and Ice Cream Day are symbols of performative care rather than genuine concern. Excess of resources reflect commodification of parental love. The tween's preference for "Thanksgiving" rather than "Flag Day" is a metaphor for her surrender to parents' insensitivity. While the pets muted anchor reflect the tween's desperate need for parental validation of her divorce pain. Amidst excessive pain the tween uses her fragile tactics of active observation and minimal articulation. Understanding parental apathy, she feigns her involvement in the activity by endorsing mom's celebrations, "flag day is amazing, even better than thanksgiving". Her silent endurance critiques resilience discourses that demand that children should disregard their expression and forcibly adapt to critical situations created by parental divorce. Winnie's loneliness in the treehouse on Wednesdays critique systematic abandonment of children in the face of divorce. Similarly, the Christmas competitions and strict custody routines result from systemic failure. It suggests priority of children's wellness and relational healing against structural convenience.

4. *Dad...can I talk to you? About my grades? I need to work on this local history report* (p. 77)

"Winnie's father waved the discussion away. "But you can bring your grades up on your mother's days"...

"Winnie nestled her chin deep in Buttons' soft fur... Winnie always had Wednesdays-there were two left before the report was due... (p. 78)

"But her dad didn't seem to care about any of that".

"Dad,"... "can't we just talk for one sec " (p. 81)

The tween lacks relational resource due to illogical competitive parental behavior," you can bring your grades up on your mom's days, which deprives her from culturally attuned resilience channels. The resource she can utilize for her expression of freedom from parental bizarre celebrations is her "Wednesdays". She asserts her agency and identifies "Wednesdays, as her strength. Moreover, her mindfulness is her internal abstract resource that enables her to overcome impending adversity. The limited number of Wednesdays and her self-reliance as a resource indicate the adverse societal and institutional pressure on children which add to their existing trauma of parental divorce.

5. *"Winifred," her mother says (on Phone),"When your father takes you to Kansas this summer..."(p. 84)*

"Since you'll be missing thirty-seven of my days this summer, you'll just spend your next thirty-seven Wednesdays with me"...

"Buttons let out an annoyed mew"!

"Buttons was leaving floury paw prints all over Winnie's favorite black shirt, as though frantically trying to send her a message".

"Her mom replies "I don't think you understand, Winifred," clearly not recognizing the misery in her daughter's voice". (p.83)

Her mom said We will celebrate... "National Garlic Day..."And X-Ray Day, and Square-Dancing Day, and Crush a Can Day" (p. 85)

Textual Symbols and metaphors externalize the tween's inner turmoil. The "cat's "annoyed mew" and tactile pain represent "messiness" of her pain and her unheard voice. Similarly, its steady support reflects the significance of fragile pain mitigating agents in adversity. The

tween desperately succumbs to systemic exclusion and maternal illogical demands which threatens her leisure time on Wednesdays. Parental "divorce split up holidays", intensifying her trauma (Bowe, 2017, p.68).

The tween utilizes her resource to asserts her negligible wish, "You can't do this", "you can't", trying to restore her freedom. This brief protest highlights her immense helplessness. Such support system critiques divorce discourses that treat children like logistics and colonize them internally, disregarding their need for emotional validation. The text invites attention towards priority of children's voice ahead of parental demands.

6. *Winnie shut the door on their bickering, thinking... of having one day a week to herself (p. 17)*

No matter what the weather was outside, the inside of the treehouse was always bright and cheerful (p.26)

1. *If her treehouse wasn't part of the United States, then when Winnie was inside it, she didn't have to follow any of the laws of the United States-laws like you have to do what your parents say...*

2. *If her treehouse was part of the Republic of Fittizio, then when Winnie was inside it, she got to follow the laws of that country.*

3. *...In her treehouse...she could make up her own laws. (p.97)*

The tween demonstrates agency and utilizes the treehouse as a symbolic resource. It is a resource that helps her foster her inner sovereignty and self-regulated territory, "Republic of Fittizio". It is equipped with supportive friends. Both literally and figuratively, its elevated placement keeps the tween away from adult impositions. The tween uses the resource of the treehouse as "navigation and negotiation" tool (Ungar, 2011) It ensures safety, control, relational resource and psychological purgation for the tween. Likewise, Fittizio's dissolution, "if it didn't exist anymore, it didn't have any laws," represent trauma that divorce induces in children. The tween demonstrates practical resilience by deciding to "make up her own laws".

Finally, her measures for an independent state reflect her search for resilience. She claims sovereign to counter parental callousness, bizarre celebrations and performative care. Her independence in the treehouse criticizes divorce discourses that force children to devise extreme survival tactics and tools to help them adapt to divorce adversity. The isolated, independent, and equipped status of the treehouse exposes limitations of her parental abodes and the lack of structural protections against parental strife.

7. Winnies letter to her parents

Dear Parents, if you need me, I'll be in my treehouse... you can't make me come out unless I want to.

""I have a local history report to work on. And also, I don't want to.

Buttons' purr let Winnie know she had made some excellent points. Buttons pressed his wet nose into the crook of her elbow for support.

Her mom says, "I suppose it's fine, as long as you miss your Father's Day tomorrow, too. That way, everything's still even. That's what's important.

... "if you guys want me to come down, you have to come up here together, both of you, at the same time, and talk to me." (p.105)

"But I don't want to leave. Not until my parents do what I asked."

Resilient individuals are competent, hopeful and committed to their life. They exercise control over their activities and constantly effort for positive change (Maddi, 2002). Textual symbols

and metaphors are indicative of the tween's assertion of agency. The treehouse is a symbol of protection from parental challenges while its "open window" reflects the tweens hopefulness. Buttons stands for emotional validation and relational support. While the efforts to call her parents to the treehouse is a metaphor for the tween's resolution to achieve resilience and expose parental apathy. Likewise, her perseverance, "I don't want to leave. Not until my parents do what I asked" is a metaphor for consciousness of her lack of relational anchor.

These symbols and metaphors highlight the commodification of children, criticizing the structural rigidity of post-divorce dynamics to regard children's wellbeing. The demand for parental accountability critiques the adverse effects of done deal on younger children. It necessitates that legal system should monitor violation of children's emotional rights, safeguarding them through informed interventions.

8. *"I'm good at art."... "Doodling, painting." She thought a little more. "Artist Vision." ...with the help of a useful skill she'd had tucked up her sleeve all along, she could fix some of her problems anyway (p. 204)*
She "turns her artist vision on herself". (p.225)

The tween uses her creative abilities to assert agency. Through the metaphor of "artist vision" her cognitive reframing, she challenges her trauma. This ability helps her to introspect, "sometimes it helps to turn your Artist Vision on yourself". The tween feels secure and analyzes her surroundings through the art of "Artist Vision" and prepares for future strategy to resolve her adversity. While "tucked up" is a metaphor for her hidden talent. It exposes post-divorce parental conflict that severs the tween's insecurity and forces her to devise fragile solutions for resilience.

The tween's lack of resources critiques divorce narratives that unjustly put the burden of parental conflict, self-care and parental care on young shoulders. Her "useful skill" is a scornful critique of resilience discourses that overburden children with responsibilities and overlook channelizing their support network. Moreover, it criticizes legal discourse that fails to safeguard and validate children's needs. Such children succumb to the trauma and mature prematurely which contradicts children's healthy developmental needs.

9. *Dear Mom, It's me, Winnie! Can you come to the treehouse to talk to me? Come at exactly 9:00 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday!), and don't be late! I'm just inviting you, not Dad! (p. 236)*
Dear Dad, I'm only writing to you, not Mom! I'm officially inviting you to come to the treehouse tomorrow morning exactly at 9:02 a.m. (Just you! Mom won't be there at all!) THE TIME IS REALLY IMPORTANT! 9:02. (p. 237)

The tween creatively utilizes time as a resource to assert control and bring order. She assigns different timings to parents to trick their joint presence and to keep the situation under control. Winnie's one-sided parental correspondence critiques lack of adequate resources for children to directly communicate with both parents after divorce, simultaneously.

Under extreme circumstances the tween uses epistolary channel for support. She adopts parental role, strategically manipulates parental insistence on division, and challenges inflexible strict custody schedules. She utilizes abstract resource of dishonesty to transform parental insensitivity. Such strategy critiques divorce discourses that do not hold parents' accountable for their child's welfare.

10. Winnie spun the lock on the trapdoor so quickly, they couldn't escape (p.238).
You're supposed to be worried about me! You're my parents. That's your job!"...
"I need you to listen to me," "I want.", "I need." (p.239)
Buttons raised his kitty eyebrows at Winnie. She could tell he thought the development was pretty remarkable, too (p.241)

The locked trapdoor reflects Winnie's navigation of her adversity by thwarting the chaos created by parents. She reframes her social ecology, adopts parental role, exercises self-control and contemplates to counter her adversity. She succeeds to make relational repair and resolve child-parent conflict, "it's fine with me, if your father agrees, "we're sorry". Moreover, relational repair with her parents emancipates her against future challenges.

The cat is a constant, non-human, non-relational support which is a critique of structural adversity in the context of divorce. The tween's need for relational support represented through pet's "comforting purrs" exposes a system that disregards children's emotional validation. The tween's resilience demands parental accountability. Her planned transformative interchange and negotiation with her parents resolves her conflict and transforms her relationship with her parents.

Discussion

In *The Great Treehouse War* (2017) textual symbols and metaphors critique adult-oriented solutions to children's adversity in the face of parental divorce. The invented holidays commercialize children as commodities and commodify parental warmth. Due to lack of parental ownership the tween endures her pain silently. Her silent endurance and using days as a resource for survival reflect her lack of relational support. It exposes the social systems that induce strategic silence in children and demand solo coping, restricting their access to systemic support networks. Moreover, it exposes societal systems that overburden children with unjust parental impositions and safeguard parental wish to win custody battle. Likewise, the availability of "Wednesday" as a resource to express herself and enjoy freedom exposes the social system that demands solo coping from younger children.

The cat's presence and its silent non-human support expose children's amplified adversity in the context of divorce. Such lack of supportive relationships severs the tween's burden of navigation of adversities. Likewise, her reliance on her covert inner talent of "Artist Vision" as a resource exposes her utterly isolated status against multiplicity of complex divorce issues. Her abstract inner talent exposes the reality that when parents' divorce, the adversity becomes unmanageable for children. It also exposes the reality that in extreme situations children turn towards fragile support system. It supports the idea that parents should be accountable for violating not only financial needs but also emotional needs of children.

Moreover, the tween's invention of solitary coping strategies and anchor through the treehouse for parental realization reflects parental priority for self-care rather than a child's mental health. It reflects societal limitations to protect children's developmental needs and happiness in the backdrop of divorce. Likewise, her realization to "fix some of her problems" critiques systems that place the burden of resilience on inexperienced children.

Likewise, only presence of peer support, lack of parental inclusion, remote position of the treehouse and her zip line escape are all risky challenges which make her resilience an unstable one. Her challenges critique socio-ecological models that demand a child to adapt to colossal adversity. It suggests prioritization of children's voices ahead of structural

usefulness. Ungar (2011) also supports a child's resilience with relational healing rather than performative endurance.

Similarly, the tween's confining parents in the treehouse scornfully criticize resilience discourses that put the burden of establishing relational connections on a tween. Ultimately, Winnie's insistence on resolving parental indifference through collaborative discussion criticizes legal systems that consider vulnerable children responsible for resolution of divorce induced parental conflicts. The analysis suggests that for a child's adaptation to post-divorce changing family dynamics, settings should be prioritized where children's frail voice can be heard, structural empathy is experienced and adult accountability is necessitated. The tween's anchor through deception exposes legal systems that force children to adopt rebellious and dishonest strategies to fulfill their rightful demands. It also exposes systemic failure where parents play pivotal role in solidifying tween's hardships, violating children's basic rights in addition to divorce pain. The text supports relational restoration rather than structural control and mechanical facilitation. It suggests resourceful resilience rather than self-engineering.

Similarly, metaphor of "done deal" critique legal discourses for systemic negligence and prioritization of parental care over a child's rights. It inherently overlooks children's developmental needs and relational stability. The text exposes the dilemma of the "done deal" that serves the interests of parents rather than the child. Likewise, her immense pain criticizes legal decisions in divorce context which inflict unbearable emotional labor in children. The symbols necessitate interventions that can prioritize a child's voice and wellbeing. Custody schedules serve legal requirements and force a child's fragile agency to thrive for survival. The tween's disintegrating autonomy is a scornful critique of social discourses that impose unbearable pain in minor children through divorce mandated legal decisions. The text supports interventions to prioritize a child's voice and a child's access to support network.

Textual symbols and metaphors challenge socio-ecological structures that force a tween to self-engineer, bear emotional labor and invest risky and unstable strategies to establish relational connections with real parents. It exposes ideological conflicts between societal demands and children's rights in divorce contexts. According to Ungar (2011) culturally approved community and relational support can bring resilience in children.

Findings and Conclusion

According to analysis symbols and metaphors act as a critique of social discourses. These expose that divorce discourses disregard a child's developmental needs, commodify a child, invalidate a child's emotional needs and servers her spatial and financial requirements. Moreover, custody law overburdens a child with expectations of maturity and treat her as a commodity to satisfy parental interests. Parental performative care and competitive strategy expose parental satisfaction with monetary and metrical calculations. While the pet support critique children's lack of relational empathy and unaddressed turmoil in divorce contexts. Lastly, the tween's dishonesty expose lack of parental care and empathy and societal demand from a child to bear and fix divorce adversity. The narrative supports that divorce discourses should prioritize children's voices ahead of structural usefulness, and relational repair over structural control. It endorses resilience through culturally approved structural empathy, accountability and systemic cooperation rather than self-engineering.

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