



## Artistic Details in the Novel “*Three Apples Fell from the Sky*” by Narine Abgaryan

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### **ABSTRACT**

The article is devoted to the analysis of the material world in *Three Apples Fell from the Sky* by Narine Abgaryan. This study helps to reveal the specificity of the material world as an artistic element that reflects the inner world of the heroine. Particular attention is paid to the library and material details that symbolize spiritual rebirth and the aspiration for harmony. The analysis demonstrates how, through objects, plants, and everyday imagery, the author conveys the philosophical idea of the connection between a person and their native culture and memory.

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The contemporary Russian literary process is an active creative platform characterized by the absence of a single style and a unified method of representing reality. Writers and poets of modern literature strive to capture the world, drawing both on traditions and on new writing techniques. Today, scholars and literary critics distinguish two main literary approaches — “realist” and “postmodernist,” sometimes combining them within a single artistic text. This approach is characteristic of a number of well-known Russian writers and poets, among whom Narine Abgaryan stands out in particular.

In the writer’s works, the material world occupies a special place, forming not only the plot and compositional basis but also carrying symbolic meaning. It is well known that the material world in a literary work represents a set of physical objects and plays an important role in depicting the specifics of everyday life, culture, and the characters’ personalities. Let us examine the material world in Narine Abgaryan’s novel *Three Apples Fell from the Sky*.

The novel *Three Apples Fell from the Sky* is a jewel of Narine Abgaryan’s творчество, delicately preserving the spirit of the Armenian people. It is a novel about life and death, wisdom and resilience, memory and culture, but above all, it is a novel about the meaning of human life, which lies in the continuation of the family line. The work does not have a clearly defined plot — it is a novel about all the inhabitants of the Armenian village of Maran; however, the image of Anatolia Sevoyants serves as the central one through which the author’s idea is refracted.

The main heroine of the novel, Anatolia Sevoyants, is a lonely village woman, the only one of her family to survive the Great Famine, war, and natural disasters. She also endures other trials: a tyrannical husband and infertility, which she humbly accepts. She takes a job at the local library, finding solace in books. She represents the type of an enlightening heroine: she not only acquires knowledge but also passes it on to the younger generation. Thanks to her efforts, an entire generation of Maran’s children went to study in the valley and gained the opportunity to move forward.

One of the significant elements of the material world is the content of the library. The library becomes a haven of peace for Anatolia. If for the people of Maran the library is “a dusty room filled with bookshelves,” a job

in which is paid merely symbolically, then for the heroine it is a sanctuary, a paradise-like place sharply contrasting with the gray routine of everyday life. The reference to paradise is not only implicit but also directly introduced by the author: “The library seemed to her like paradise, a place where one could rest from the monotonous and tiresome household chores.”

A vivid artistic detail is the dirty and dusty shelves, which Anatolia “carefully washed and polished to a shine with homemade wax.” The shelves are a symbol associated with books and knowledge; therefore, dirt and dust contrast with books as a source of wisdom. The fact that the heroine “rearranged the books anew, ignoring classification codes and alphabetical order and guided solely by color preferences — placing darker covers below and lighter ones above” indicates not only her attraction to beauty but also her deep familiarity with the books, as she knew them all by their covers.

Flowers also serve as a characteristic detail in the text, reinforcing the idea of a paradise-like place. With Anatolia’s arrival, the library is transformed into a flower garden: sweet peas, aloe, and geranium appear. This botanical detail is symbolic. The choice of flowers reflects the heroine’s inner state. For instance, sweet peas symbolize bright memories, geranium represents wisdom, aloe stands for endurance, and tea roses signify purity, innocence, and nobility. All these characteristics correspond to the heroine’s inner world, illustrating the device of psychological parallelism: the same qualities manifest in her soul and become her guiding values. At the same time, the library turns not just into a repository of knowledge but into a cozy home. This is evidenced by details such as curtains, a carpet, and cushions that the heroine uses to decorate the space. She transforms the library so radically that even the animal world begins to respond differently: swallows, butterflies, ladybirds, and even ants gather there to form new communities. “Over time, the library came to resemble a Babylon for living creatures, where every small bird or insect found shelter and multiplied with remarkable zeal.” Here, the image of Babylon does not carry its traditional meaning associated with sin and vanity but rather its original sense as a center uniting diverse forms of life.

War narrows the space of the novel to the kitchen and a limited set of objects: “She spent that endlessly long and cold winter by the stove, surrounded by plants, her beloved books, and softly bleating goats.” The importance of books is emphasized through the adjective “beloved,” reflecting Anatolia’s personal attitude toward them. The stove, as a traditional household object, not only provides warmth and a means of cooking but also symbolically represents spiritual warmth for the characters.

The central element of the library’s material world changes with the onset of war: “Oh Lord, oh Lord,” Anatolia wept, walking past shelves filled with the corpses of books.” The shelves and books become animated, personified, dying like human beings. Along with this, the characters’ attitude toward books also changes. If before the war the villagers were indifferent to books, in the postwar period they begin to need them — though not spiritually, but purely for practical purposes: “Thick book covers were used as stands for hot dishes, and damaged pages were used for kindling and other household needs. Hand-rolled cigarettes made from such paper tasted bitter, smoked heavily, and constantly went out.” The tragic consequences put an end to the heroine’s interaction with books, and in deep despair, Anatolia leaves her job at the library.

Thus, in Narine Abgaryan’s novel *Three Apples Fell from the Sky*, the material world becomes not just a background but an active participant in human destiny. Through objects, plants, and the space of the library, the inner world of Anatolia Sevoyants is revealed — her wisdom, resilience, and striving for harmony. The world of things here embodies spiritual values capable of resisting the chaos of war and oblivion. In this way, Abgaryan creates a poetic metaphor for the rebirth of the human soul, where even the simplest objects become keepers of memory and love.

## References:

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