

Tatyana tolstaya's white walls: summary

[Literature](#), [Russian Literature](#)



White walls. In having white walls, there is always room for improvement. You are never stuck with one look because you can always simply change it. Tolstoy is very optimistic in that she feels that with the end of Communism and the Soviet Union, there is great room for improvement. I believe that she is correct in this assessment because Russia today is not as big of a super power as the United States, but it is certainly on its way to be there soon. Another big symbol in this piece, I believe, is Johnson + Johnson. Tolstoy never clarifies entirely what Johnson + Johnson is, but it seems to be a big company. This could be a new company that was formed after the collapse of the Soviet Union. We learned about how when the USSR dissolved the government and the economy took a huge hit. I believe this is an example of a company that is on the rise. This can definitely be viewed as a symbol due to the fact that it is not only a business, but the name Johnson + Johnson makes it seem as if it is a family-run operation.

The sentence after Tolstoy mentions Johnson + Johnson, she says, "From broad, there were quick-acting cleaners and spot removers-aerosols to erase memory, acids to eliminate the past." This is another example of how she wants the past to be erased. Although Johnson + Johnson is only mentioned a few times in this short story I believe it is a crucial symbol. The business industry is on the rise in Russia. The final symbol I chose was Mikhail Avouching Jason. M. A. Jason was the builder of the dacha that Tolstoy and her family lived in when they were kids.

He is constantly mentioned throughout this piece. Tolstoy laments about how she always found some of his old stuff in the attic and how she was always

very intrigued by what she would find. The way they describe Jason, makes it seem that he was a very nice and kind man. The main message that I get from reading this is that Russia is a rebuilding country. All the examples in the story of tearing down old things to replace them with new Houses 4 items shows this message. If it weren't for Jason then Tolstoy would never have lived in this house and she wouldn't have found all of the old items left behind by IM.

She talks about how Jason essentially dispersed without any remembrance of him. Tolstoy says that, " Jason dispersed, disintegrated, vanished into the earth. " This shows how over time things become lost. She then talks about how his plaque saying his name had been stolen by an admirer of nonferrous metals. Many people have come and gone but the country has remained alive. As new generations evolve the country has to adapt to their specific needs. Again this is why I believe Tolstoy is trying to tell us that Russia is a rebuilding country.

All three symbols mentioned played crucial parts of this story. Different people could interpret them in many different ways, but this is how I see them. They all show different parts of Totality's childhood and how she grew up. All of these symbols also have historical references in them. Again it depends on how you view and interpret them. Someone could think it meaner one thing when another person could think it meaner the complete opposite. She never makes a comment specifically about Communism in this piece.

She mentions Lenin and Stalin a few times but does not give you her impression of them. An author for The New York Review of Books says about "White Walls", that "Totality's favorite theme is an inexhaustible one: the passage of time, often accompanied by a potent regret for opportunities lost. This is extremely relevant because the whole story is about the passage of time and how things change. All in all the main message is that Russia is a rebuilding country that is on its way to becoming more of a super power than it is today.