

Applying CDA and Vladimir Propp's Morphology of the Folktale to Nicholas Sparks' "The Guardian"

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Abstract

According to narratologists, Vladimir Propp's "Morphology of the Folktale" is generally recognized as one of the most inspiring contributions to "the understanding of plot structure" (Sundari, 2014, p.1). Therefore, Propp's theory was initially found to analyze Russian folktales. However, some researchers apply it to fairytales, such as Sundari (2014), who used it in "Sleeping Beauty," and Nursantia (2003), who used it in Joseph Conrad's novel "Heart of Darkness." Salmah (2004) applied Propp's theory to Charles Dickens's "Our Mutual Friend" in his thesis. Thus, the lack of using Propp's "Morphology of the Folktale" in novels in general and modern text in specific with Wodak's (2001; 2009) *discourse-historical approach* inspires researchers to fill this gap in the study by using Propp's theory in the contemporary book, "The Guardian" by Nicholas Sparks (2003) and a CDA theory on the exact text. This study tries to address the following research questions:

1. Is it possible to apply Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* (1927) to Nicholas Spark's novel "The Guardian"?
2. What are the good and bad morals portrayed by the main characters in "The Guardian"?
3. How many features of Propp's thirty-one features can be found in Nickola Spark's "The Guardian"?
4. What are the main macro-topics in the novel?

Keywords: Julie, Morphology of the Folktale, Nickola Spark "The Guardian," Vladimir Propp

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1. Introduction

Vladimir Yakovlevich Propp was born in St. Petersburg, Germany, on April 17, 1895. He died on August 22, 1970. In his lifetime, he is known for his fairy tale research. Propp studied hundreds of myths, fairy, and folk tales in Russia. He concludes with 31 functions and eight typical characters that can be found in almost any tale, literature, theatre, film, and television. Propp's book was first published in 1927. However, Propp's work remained unnoticed until the 1950s, when his book was translated into many languages. Propp states that the 31 functions can be found in any folklore regardless of its language, not only Russian folktale (Nursari1, Subiyantoro, & Saddhono, 2019, p.162; Sundari, 2014, p.1; Chamalah, et al., 2019, p. 61).

2. Propp's Morphology of the Folktale

This section deals with Vladimir Propp's theory. The reader needs to understand "Morphology of the Folktale" to understand the application part of the theory on the selected text. Thus, the following two sections are the theory that contains Vladimir Propp's Thirty-one functions and the application of these functions in Nicholas Spark's novel "The Guardian" (2003).

2.1 Absentation

One of the households is absent. It can be one of the older generations, such as a prince going to a foreign land, leaving his wife behind, parents leaving to work, going to trade, war, forest, and not coming back. Another type of absentation is the death of parents. The absentation is also includes the younger generation, such as going fishing, visiting, going for a walk, etc. (Propp, 1927, p. 26).

2.2 Interdiction

An Interdiction is given to the hero. "Take care of your little brother," "You dare not look into this closet," "don't you say anything; be silent". Sometimes, interdiction is considered advice, such as a mother telling her son not to go fishing. Stories usually indicate first absentation, then interdiction. However, sometimes, interdiction is delivered without an absentation such as "don't pick the apples,"; "don't kiss your sister,"; "don't pick up the golden feather,"; "don't open the chest" (Propp, 1927, p. 26).

An opposite form of interdiction is represented in the form of suggestion. "Take your brother with you to the woods," and "Bring breakfast out into the field" (Propp, 1927, p. 27).

2.3 Violation

Violation is not following the interdiction, whether it is a suggestion, warning, or advice, such as "the tsar's daughters go into the garden" or "they are late in returning home." At this point, a new character enters the story. It may be a devil, a witch, a dragon, bandits, etc. Their role is to disturb the family's peace and cause damage, misfortune, and harm (Propp, 1927, p. 27).

2.4 Reconnaissance

In the reconnaissance, the villain tries to find the location of something precious: "Where do you get these precious stones?" (Propp, 1927, p. 28).

2.5 Delivery

The villain receives information about his victim (Propp, 1927, p. 28). When a mother calls out her son, she reveals his presence to a witch (Propp, 1927, p. 29).

2.6 Trickery

In this function, the villain uses disguise. A witch presents to be a lovely lady. The dragon turns into a handsome youth or a golden goat. A thief pretends to be a beggar. To deceive their victim and take their possessions (Propp, 1927, p. 29).

2.7 Complicity

The hero submits to the villain's persuasions, such as going to swim, taking the ring, etc. (Propp, 1927, p. 30).

2.8 Villainy

This is one of the most essential functions. The villain causes injuries and harm to the hero or one of his family members. The forms of villainy are exceptionally diverse:

1. The villain kidnaps a person. A witch kidnaps a boy. A dragon kidnaps a peasant's daughter. The older brother kidnaps the bride of his younger brother.
2. The villain takes away a magical agent. The peasant finds a magic steed. Princess seizes a magic shirt. A stepmother orders the slaughter of an astonishing cow.
3. The villain spoils the crops.
4. The villain seizes the daylight. (Propp, 1927, p. 31).
5. The villain causes bodily injury.
6. The villain causes an unexpected disappearance. Such disappearance results from bewitching; a "stepmother puts her stepson into a sleep," A wife flies on a magic carpet.
7. The villain entices his victim. (Propp, 1927, p. 32).
8. The villain expels someone: A vicar banishes his grandson. A stepmother expels her stepdaughter. (Propp, 1927, p. 33).
9. The villain orders somebody to be thrown into the sea.
10. The villain casts a curse upon somebody or something.
11. The villain makes a substitution. A maid blinds the tsar's bride and pretends to be the bride. A maid turns the bride into a duckling and takes her place.
12. The villain orders a murder to be committed.
13. The villain commits murder. (Propp, 1927, p. 33).
14. The villain imprisons someone. (Propp, 1927, p. 34).
15. The villain threatens forced marriage.
16. The villain makes a threat of cannibalism.
17. The villain torments people at night.
18. The villain declares war. (Propp, 1927, p. 34).

2.9 Lack

A family member either desires or lacks something. For example, the hero is unmarried and looking for a bride. (Propp, 1927, p. 35).

2.10 Mediation

Mediation is divided into two types of heroes: victimized heroes and seeker heroes. If the tale is opened with a girl kidnapped and Ivan goes to look for her, the hero is Ivan, not the girl. This type of hero is the seeker's hero. However, if the girl or a boy is seized, the story is about their fate. Heroes of this type are called victimized heroes (Propp, 1927, p. 36).

2.11 Beginning Counteraction

This function is represented when the seeker decides upon counteraction. For instance, "Permit us to search for your princess." Sometimes, this feature is not described in words but as a volitional decision. This feature can be found only in tales when the hero is a seeker. (Propp, 1927, p. 38).

2.12 Departure

The hero leaves his home. Victim-heroes and seeker-heroes are different in their departure. The departures of the victim heroes mark the beginning of various new adventures in their new journey. While. Seeker-heroes have specific searches as their goal (Propp, 1927, p. 39).

2.13 Donnor

Someone or something offers the hero help.

2.14 The Hero's Reaction

The hero's reaction to the Donor's action. The response can be positive or negative. Negative.

1. The hero withstands (or not) a test.
2. The hero answers (or does not answer) a greeting.
3. He renders (or does not render) a service to the dead.
4. Does he free a captive or not?
5. Does he show mercy or not (Propp, 1927, p. 42)?

2.15 Provision or Receipt of a Magical Agent

The hero becomes able to use a magical agent. The supernatural agents can be animals, such as horses, eagles, etc., or objects like swords, rings, balls, cudgels, guslas, etc. Another form of magical agent is the power of transformation into animals (Propp, 1927, p. 43-44).

2.16 Spatial Transference Between Two Kingdoms, Guidance

Typically, the object of the search is located in a "different" or "another" kingdom. Thus, the hero should move too far away from the kingdom's horizon. The hero's travel may have

different forms: walking, swimming, on a ship's board, on the back of a horse or wolf, etc. (Propp, 1927, p. 50-51).

2.17 Struggle

The hero and the villain join in combat. They may fight in an open field. The hero and the villain engage in a competition. The hero wins using his skills (Propp, 1927, p. 52).

2.18 Branding/ Marking

A brand is applied to the hero's body. The hero gets a wound during a skirmish or battle (Propp, 1927, p. 52).

2.19 Victory

The villain is defeated.

1. The villain is beaten in an open fight.
2. He is defeated in a competition.
3. He loses at cards.
4. He loses on being weighed.
5. He is killed without an opening fight.
6. He is banished directly. (Propp, 1927, p. 53).

2.20 The Initial Misfortune or Lack is liquidated

In this function, the narrative reaches its peak. Here, the hero seizes the object of a search by using cleverness or force. Sometimes, the heroes use the same techniques villains use in the initial fights (Propp, 1927, p. 53).

2.21 Return

The hero returns. It is similar to departure. However, in release, the hero is given an eagle, a horse, etc., and then the forms of travel occur, whereas a return happens directly and in a similar manner as an arrival (Propp, 1927, p. 56).

2.22 Pursuit/ Chase

A pursuer (dragons' wives, etc.) follows the hero, such as "a witch flies after a boy." In this case, the hero may take refuge in a tree or elsewhere (Propp, 1927, p. 56).

2.23 Rescue

The hero is rescued from the pursuer. The hero flees, tries to disappear, hides, or throws obstacles in the path of his pursuer. The hero may turn into forests, mountains, lakes, etc. The hero may change his appearance, which makes them unrecognizable. A princess disguises herself as a prince. The hero is saved "from an attempt on his life" (Propp, 1927, p. 57-58).

2.24 Unrecognized Arrival

The hero, unrecognized, arrives in another country or returns home (Propp, 1927, p. 60).

2.25 Unfounded Claims

A false hero presents unfounded claims (Propp, 1927, p. 60).

2.26 Difficult Task

Another challenging task is presented to the hero (Propp, 1927, p. 60).

2.27 Solution

The hero does the extraordinary task of finding the princess before the time required ends (Propp, 1927, p. 60).

2.28 Recognition

A mark, a brand of a wound, or a star marking recognizes the hero. The hero may also know by a thing given to him such as a ring, towel, etc. Moreover, the hero is also recognized for accomplishing a difficult task (Propp, 1927, p. 62).

2.29 Exposure

The villain or the false hero is exposed. This function is linked to the preceding accomplishment of complex tasks. The false hero cannot do the job (Propp, 1927, p. 62).

2.30 Punishment

The villain and all the evil persons are punished (Propp, 1927, p. 63).

2.31 Wedding

The hero gets married (Propp, 1927, p. 63).

3. Applying Propp's Morphology of the Folktale on Spark's "the Guardian"

3.1 Absentation

The novel opens on Christmas night with Julie Barenson looking through the window and remembering the fresh death of her young husband. "At twenty-five, she was a widow and hated everything about the world" (Sparks, 2003, p. 1). "Jim's dead, and now that he's gone, I feel like I'm dead, too" (Sparks, 2003, p. 2). She was struggling with the pain of her loss because everything remained her of Jim: "Everything in the house, everything she saw and smelled and touched, reminded her of Jim" (Sparks, 2003, p. 2).

3.2 Violation

Until page one hundred, we have this worker warning Mike from Richard without knowing why: "Keep it that way. You don't want to know him" (Sparks, 2003, p. 100). However, Mike needs to tell Julie about this warning in time. They both listened to the worker's notice' when it was too late, and the consequences were enormous.

3.3 Trickery

When Richard first appears in town, everyone believes he is a good guy: "I told you he was a nice guy" (Sparks, 2003, p. 16). He attends church every Sunday: "I talked to her after church yesterday" (Sparks, 2003, p. 27). He was a handsome, polite young man. Everyone is astonished by his dates with Julie: "he seemed nice enough...Kind of quiet, but polite" (Sparks, 2003, p. 67). "Richard, it seemed, had picked Julie up in a limousine stocked with champagne; they'd gone to Raleigh for dinner. Afterwards, at the civic centre in front-row seats, they'd watched a live performance of *Phantom of the Opera*" "if that wasn't quite special enough to impress her, it turned out that Richard and Julie had sent Saturday together as well, down near Wilmington," "There they'd taken a hot-air balloon ride before picnicking at the beach" (Sparks, 2003, p. 86).

However, after Julie rejected being in a relationship with Richard, he started dating her co-worker, Andrea. Richard does not want anyone to know about their relationship or why they go to other cities, "Morehead city." Emma sees them: "She was with Richard. And get this, I just saw him kiss her" (Sparks, 2003, p. 291). Richard dates her not because he likes her but because he uses her to fulfill his sexual needs: "a woman meant nothing to him, but her body was soft and warm, and she desired him" (Sparks, 2003, p. 292). While having sex, he asks her not to make any sound because he imagines Julie instead. "He didn't want to hear her voice because it reminded him that she wasn't Julie" (Sparks, 2003, p. 292). In the morning, Andrea asks to go to the bathroom by mistake; she opens the darkroom, a room full of thousands of pictures he has taken for Julie while he was stalking her. "She was staring into the room to the left...The darkroom" (Sparks, 2003, p. 300), "Taped to the walls were hundreds of photographs of Julie" (Sparks, 2003, p. 346). Richard feels disappointed and angry. Therefore, he beats Andrea to death and throws her body in the wood.

3.4 Villainy

Richard Franklin represents the villainy feature. Even he looks handsome, friendly, and a gentleman "the way he looked. Richard, she was beginning to think, was just about the sexiest man she'd ever seen" (Sparks, 2003, p. 94). After taking Julie to the most beautiful dates, Richard gives her a locket. Later, when he visits Julie, he asks her why she is not wearing the locket: "Manipulated. As though he'd wanted her to promise that she'd start wearing the locket at work again" (Sparks, 2003, p. 94-95).

Julie stopped dating Richard, and he started to appear everywhere. She feels he stalks her: "I was sure as hell sounds to me like you planned this all along" (Sparks, 2003, p. 166). Once, he visits the salon and leaves his glasses as a chance to call or revisit Julie: "I know you left them on purpose just to have reason to call" (Sparks, 2003, p. 221). He watches her every day whenever she goes: "he'd been watching her in the cemetery" (Sparks, 2003, p. 241) and "watched Julie's shadow through the curtains in the living room" (Sparks, 2003, p. 320). Meanwhile, she receives these strange calls when she hears only heavy breathing and no words: "He'd been watching her, and now he'd called to tell her about it" (Sparks, 2003, p. 239). Once she receives twenty empty voicemails. Julie feels panicky and deletes all the messages. "She wished she hadn't deleted any of the messages" (Sparks, 2003, p. 244) because the police do not pay attention to her complaint. After all, she has no evidence. Especially after deleting all the voicemails, "I can't prove it, but I know it was him" (Sparks, 2003, p. 244). Julie, Mike, Henry, and Emma are scared because they know that Richard is not going to stop stalking her: "they were scared of Richard Franklin" (Sparks, 2003, p.

263), "He scares the hell out of me", "Her mouth, she realized, had gone dry" (Sparks, 2003, p. 247), "people like that don't stop" (Sparks, 2003, p. 242). He even entered Julie's house to put his pictures in the locket he gave her: "Can't you see that this is proof right here? That he's been in the house? That's breaking and entering" (Sparks, 2003, p. 315). Yet, the police do not believe he is a real danger to Julie's life.

That night, Julie breaks up with him. Richard told her that he was out of town because his mother died, "I wasn't prepared for much of anything. You can't imagine what it was up there...the way she looked at the end, what the nurses were saying, the way it smelled..." (Sparks, 2003, p. 169). Julie feels empathy for him, and she allows him to sleep over. Later, the reader learns that Richard killed his father when he was nine. After nine months, he killed his mother by putting all her sleeping pills in her vodka: "his mother's sleeping pills and slipped the contents into her vodka" (Sparks, 2003, p. 327). From here, the reader realizes how dangerous he is.

Richard was put in foster care with two other boys. However, they stole his camera to buy cigarettes: "those two boys who stolen his camera two months after he'd moved in" (Sparks, 2003, p. 206). "When he finds out, he uses a baseball bat to beat them. In the beginning, they laugh at him as they are taller and heavier than him. Yet "they were rushed to the hospital in a pair of ambulances" as "their faces crushed beyond recognition" (Sparks, 2003, p. 206). When the police came, Richard told them that what he did was only self-defense as the boys tried to kill him. "They were going to kill me. I was scared. One of them attacked me with a knife" (Sparks, 2003, p. 207). He even wound himself to convince the police "he'd been slashed across his lower stomach." "remembering with disdain the cut he'd so easily inflicted upon himself" (Sparks, 2003, p. 207). The case closed with the boys sent to Juvenile: "The two boys, nor Richard, were sent to the Juvenile detention facility, despite their pleas that neither of them had ever touched the knife, let alone slashed Richard with it" (Sparks, 2003, p. 207).

In school, he used his teacher to get into a decent college. He gave her a birthday gift and used to tell her about all his hardships. "She wrote a letter of recommendation to the University of Massachusetts." She begs them to accept him as he passes through many difficulties: "she'd never seen a young man overcome so much" "begging them to give him a chance" (Sparks, 2003, p. 210). However, after getting into the university, he does not speak with her, which shows how mean he is! "For once he'd been accepted to the university, he never spoken to her again. She had served her purpose, and he had no more use for her" (Sparks, 2003, p. 210).

Jessica is Richard's wife. He met her in a restaurant. She was a waitress there and was not even the one who served him. He was staring and smiling at her while he was eating. After getting married, Richard starts beating her. "He used to beat her" (Sparks, 2003, p. 384). "He's insane." "Everyone was afraid of him, including Jessica. He's violent and dangerous" (Sparks, 2003, p. 384). Till Jessica ran across the country, hoping she would not find her. "She took a bus halfway across the country and hoped he would simply let her go" (Sparks, 2003, p. 345). However, he haunted her: "He hunted her down" (Sparks, 2003, p. 386) and forced her back to his home. "I have no idea how he did it, but he found her and brought her back." Two weeks later, Jessica's sister and mom visit her and force her to move to her parent's house because they fear Richard will kill her. Moreover, one day, Jessica went to the supermarket to buy groceries and never returned. "She went to the supermarket one night for groceries, and we never saw her again. Everyone knew he did it, but they never found her"

(Sparks, 2003, p. 384). Meanwhile, Richard disappears from Boston. When Police Jennifer discovers his real name, “the camera is registered to Robert Bonham of Boston” (Sparks, 2003, p. 382). Jennifer calls the Boston police department to discover that “Robert Bonham is wanted for questioning in the disappearance of his wife, Jessica Bonham, Four years ago” (Sparks, 2003, p. 382).

To escape the police after murdering his wife, Richard starts watching a man named “Richard Franklin” to know more about all his habits and routines. “He’d watched the real Richard Franklin” (Sparks, 2003, p. 373). He decides to kill him and steal his identity. “Franklin began to cry, and three hours later, he was buried in a grave that would never be discovered” (Sparks, 2003, p. 374). “He’d take care of the real Richard Franklin, just as he’d taken care of his mother and father. And the boys in the foster home. And his roommate at college. And Jessica” (Sparks, 2003, p. 374).

Another victim is Andrea. Richard was friendly with her to use her sexuality. However, after she discovers the dark room, he tries to kill her most awfully: “It was bad...I’ve never seen anything like it” (Sparks, 2003, p. 331). “After seeing Andrea’s wounds when the doctors had changed her bandages, she knew with certainty that Richard Franklin was a monster” (Sparks, 2003, p. 375). Andrea ended up in a coma. Richard even tries to kill a policeman, Pete Gandy, when they discover that he beat Andrea and went to arrest Richard: “Too bad that Pete Gandy had rolled out of the way...he could imagine the delightful *whump* as the car crushed him” (Sparks, 2003, p. 345). At the novel's end, Pete protects Julie at the beach house. However, Richard tries to kill him again by smashing his head “he knew even before he saw Richard that someone was moving toward him” and “he felt something had crashed against his skull” (Sparks, 2003, p. 413).

One of the last brutal acts that Richard did was killing Singer. Even he knew that Julie was really attached to her dog. “Richard heard Julie screaming about her dog” and “He felt sorry for her and wanted to apologize” (Sparks, 2003, p. 409). Thus, he kills his parents, the honest Richard Franklin, Jessica, and Singer and hurts Andrea, Pete, Mike, the two boys, and Stalking Julie. Richard is definitely a villain.

3.5 Lack

Emotionally, Julie grew up in an unhealthy environment with her father's absence in her childhood and a drunk mother in her teens. Her house was packed with “booze and toxic men” (Sparks, 2003, p.14), which is totally unhealthy for a young girl to grow up in “how difficult her relation with her mother had really been, how unnerving it was to see men wandering in and out of her house at all hours” (Sparks, 2003, p. 90). One tried to rape her, and “the last one actually tried to have his way with her” when she fought him and told her mother. Her mother was angry and blamed her: “her mother, in a drunken, teary rage, had blamed *her* for coming on to him” (Sparks, 2003, p.14). A couple of nights later, her mother kicked her out of the house. “how desolate she felt leaving home before graduation high school.” (Sparks, 2003, p. 90). “how scared she’d been when living on the streets, especially late at night” (Sparks, 2003, p. 90). She was forced to live in the streets for six months where everyone was using drugs and “panhandled or stole....or worse”. She was scared to become like them. She worked in a lot of menial jobs to keep herself fed. One day, she meets Jim, who offers her a career, a place to stay, a love and a happy life.

However, her happiness does not last. After their fourth marriage anniversary, they discovered that Jim had a brain tumor. "Two years later, the brain tumor took his life" (Sparks, 2003, p. 15). She was in terrible pain and alone again, struggling with her loss. "I knew you didn't have anyone to help you get through something like this" (Sparks, 2003, p. 5). "It broke my heart to think you would be all alone" (Sparks, 2003, p. 4-5).

Julie struggled to find a suitable partner four years later: "Julie hadn't been on a date since Jim had died" (Sparks, 2003, p. 12). She went on a date with Bob. Their conversation was only about his job. "His preferred topic of conversation on their date had been accounting" (Sparks, 2003, p. 12). Even after she stopped dating him, he called her thrice a week. "He was persistent...Annoying as hell but persistent" (Sparks, 2003, p. 12). Later, she starts dating Richard. Even though their date went very well, Julie stopped dating him because she did not feel a spark existed between them. "He didn't rock my boat." "Whether it was chemistry, magic, or some combination of simply wasn't there. She just didn't feel the little tingles on her neck that she had when Jim first took her hand." "She didn't feel like closing her eyes and dreaming of a future together" (Sparks, 2003, p. 89), "he seems like a nice guy...who'd be perfect for someone else" (Sparks, 2003, p. 90). Moreover, Richard shows that he is bothered because she does not wear the locket the next day. She was upset. "The way he'd said it, the look on his face, the feeling it gave her...all of it bothered her" (Sparks, 2003, p. 95).

She knows Mike was there for her in difficult times, and she likes him. She was sure he would not ask her out because he was Jim's close friend. Thus, she asks him out for a date: "If I wait for Casanova, I'll be so old that he'll have to escort me in my walker" (Sparks, 2003, p. 151). "that not only did Mike love her now, but there would never come a day when he wouldn't" (Sparks, 2003, p. 159). Thus, Mike fulfills Julie's needs as he is her best friend, lover, and backup.

3.6 Mediation

Mediation is divided into two types of heroes: victimized heroes and seeker heroes. According to "The Guardian" narration, Julie is a victimized hero as she was a victim of her drunk mother and later Richard's stalking. Throughout the novel, the reader can feel how scared she is, unable to walk the streets without fear of being followed. She is terrified that Richard is calling again every time the phone rings. And lastly, she has to run to the beach house to escape Richard's danger.

3.7 Departure (The Hero Leaves Home)

Our heroine, Julie, lives in the streets for six months: "Julie found herself without a home" (Sparks, 2003, p. 14). One day, a stranger named Jim buys her a coffee and offers her a job and a place to stay if she comes to Swansboro, North Carolina, a position she had never known. Initially, she thought Jim was trying to use her, but he denied any "improper interest" in her. Having no other choices, Julie takes the bus to Swansboro: "a month later...she showed up in Swansboro, thinking as she got off the bus, *What in the world am I doing in this nowhere town?*" (Sparks, 2003, p. 14-15). Thus, the heroine left her hometown, seeking a new life.

3.8 Donor (Provider)

Jim is the first donor in Julie's story. He finds Julie living in the streets. He offers her a decent living and a place to stay in his hometown: "If she moved to Swansboro, North Carolina, he would help her get a full-time job and a place to stay." (Sparks, 2003, p. 14). He also offers her the safety and the love she never felt in her childhood home. He introduces her to his friends, who later become her friends as well. Julie starts working with his aunt, Mabel, who taught her how to cut hair and helped her get her hairstylist license. Even after his death, he sends her a dog to feel less lonely and later to protect her. Jim is her guardian angel: "I'll be your guardian angel" and "I'll watch out for you" (Sparks, 2003, p. 5).

The Singer is the second donor. He is Jim's gift on the first Christmas after Jim's death. Julie was spending Christmas alone when a delivery boy suddenly gave her a box; when she opened the box, she found a small puppy with a note. She named this Great Dane puppy "Singer." "He really was an ugly thing" (Sparks, 2003, p. 5), and "he'd grow up to be the size of small horse" (Sparks, 2003, p.5). He follows her everywhere. Sometimes, he helps her with small tasks: "Will you turn off the bedroom light?" (Sparks, 2003, p. 10). Singer has a sixth sense "that enabled him to tell the good guys from the ones she should avoid" (Sparks, 2003, p.11). He always protects Julie till the end of his life, "He was protective of her. Just like Mike in his own way".

Mike is the third donor in this novel. He is Jim's closest friend. After Jim's death, Mike has a strong friendship with Julie. Physically, he is a handsome guy with blue eyes and light brown hair "and an easy smile to go with his trim build, he was good looking in an all-American kind of way" (Sparks, 2003, p. 19). "He was both good-hearted and nice-looking; she liked the way his eyes crinkled at the corners when he smiled." "she adored his dimples." He laughs a lot: "She liked guys who laughed, and Mike laughed a lot." "she really, really liked the sound of his laugh" (Sparks, 2003, p. 24). When Julie feels down after Jim's death, he is there for her: "Mike had been the one she'd turned on for comfort after Jim had died" (Sparks, 2003, p. 23), "the one who spent the first two years after Jim's death holding her as she cried" (Sparks, 2003, p. 78). He was always there for her. He used to fix her car, help to patch my roof, and repair her washing machine, "he'd been the good guy, the friend, the one she could always count on. The one who fixed her car and played Frisbee with Singer" (Sparks, 2003, p. 78).

They become emotionally attached with time: "she loved what was happening with Mike" (Sparks, 2003, p. 213). When they start dating, Julie glows as she finds in him the friend who understands her and the lover who adores her: "you're practically glowing these days" (Sparks, 2003, p. 215). When Richard is stalking her, Mike is the one who protects her: "Mike hadn't so much let her out of his sight for more than a few minutes except when she was at work" (Sparks, 2003, p. 276).

3.9 Receipt of a Magical Agent

The hero gets a magical eagle, a horse, etc. Sometimes, the supernatural agents appear in balls, swords, cudgels, guslas, rings, etc. Several characters offer their help at the hero's disposal; for instance, an animal provides his services to the hero as if he were present (Propp, 1927, p. 43-45). Singer is the magical agent that Jim sent to protect Julie. He does his job perfectly till the end of his life when Richard poisons him: "Julie cries grew louder, more frantic, and the sound was terrible" (Sparks, 2003, p. 409). "who had been Julie's companion

in life and, at the end, her guardian” (Sparks, 2003, p. 430). Sometimes, Julie feels that he is still with her at home. She smells his scent: "she smelled an odour that was undeniably him" (Sparks, 2003, p. 430). Once alone at night, she heard him drinking water from the kitchen bowl. "she heard him drinking from the water bowl in the kitchen" (Sparks, 2003, p. 430). Thus, Singer has the magical power to accompany and protect Julie even after his death.

3.10 Struggle

In the last pages, Julie enters the previous fight with Richard when he tries to force her to come with him, but she fights him so hard. With Singer and Officer Jennifer's help, Julie can win this fight.

3.11 Pursuit/ Chase

Richard chases Julie through the entire novel. Thus, she has to seek refuge in the beach house.

3.12 Unrecognized Arrival

Without leaving any tracks behind them, Julie and Mike run away to the beach house. Hoping that Richard will not find them.

3.13 Difficult Task

Finally, the hero may be recognized for accomplishing a challenging task (Propp, 1927). Julie has already passed through a lot, from living in the streets to the death of her husband. Now, her last task is to run away from Richard.

3.14 Punishment

The novel closes with the villain punished for all his evil deeds with death. Richard dies while he is trying to force Julie to come with him. Officer Jennifer Romanello fires on him. "There was a sharp, burning pain in his chest" (Sparks, 2003, p. 427). Suddenly, the gun feels heavy in his hand, and he misses when he fires at Officer Jennifer. The gun slips from his hands, and he drops to his knees, "Richard fell forward into the sand" (Sparks, 2003, p. 428). While Julie and Mike live happily ever after with Henry and Emma.

4. Conclusion

In this paper, the researcher studies Nicholas Sparks's novel "The Guardian" (2003) according to Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* to fill the study gap. Therefore, no study has applied Propp's *Morphology of the Folktale* to a modern fictional text. Among Propp's thirty-one features, the researcher finds fourteen. Propp did not assume that all the thirty-one features should be found in a single text. Accordingly, even though Propp's theory is comparatively old and intended to be applied to Russian folktales, it is easily used in novels and modern fiction. Lastly, according to Wodak's (2001; 2009) discourse-historical approach, the main topics are: topoi of Struggle, topoi of love, and topoi of abuse.

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