

METAPHOR AND SIMILE IN JEAN WEBSTER'S DADDY-LONG-LEGS

Metaphor

Metaphor – which asserts a correlation or resemblance between two things that are otherwise unrelated – is used quite often by Jean Webster, making the novel more appealing.

Below, I'll provide examples of metaphors and interpret each based on the context.

Example 1: "I'm finding Mrs. Semple's conversation pretty unseasoned food."

What the author wants to say is that Judy finds Mrs. Semple's conversation very uninteresting. Judy writes this after Jervis leaves the farm. This implies that for Judy, Jervis was an interesting person to be around and in comparison, whatever Mrs. Semple says is bland.

Example 2: "She is such a jelly-fish."

Jelly-fish implies that the person mentioned doesn't have a backbone, a strength of will. Judy writes this to express her annoyance and anger at the mother of the poor girl who's the only one trying to help her family, while her mother does nothing.

Example 3: "He's a queer old duck; he goes about with his head in the clouds and blinks dazedly when occasionally he strikes solid earth."

In this sentence, Judy talks about her Philosophy professor. *Queer old duck* implies that he's a weird old man who daydreams most of the time (head in the clouds) and is disoriented when he becomes aware of his surroundings (strikes solid earth).

Example 4: "The cat was almost out of the bag when I grabbed it by its tail and pulled it back."

The whole sentence is a metaphor. To *let the cat out of the bag* means to reveal a secret. The Cat represents secret, while *I grabbed it by its tail and pulled it back* can be interpreted as 'I held back myself from revealing my secret'. Judy writes this when she first gets to the college and wants to express how far more exciting it is, compared to the asylum, but since she doesn't want to reveal her past, she holds herself back.