

Jaybird as used in devil in a blue dress

Literature



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Walter Mosley used animal symbolism for his characters behavior. We can see this in Raymond Alexander being give a mouse character, Daphne Monet being given chameleon character, and Easy Rawlins given a jaybird character. The novel relates the story of the jungle and animals seeking ways for survival.

Raymond is nicknamed mouse showing his “ animal instincts” (Mosley 23). Evidenced when he said, mouse would not think twice about killing anything that pose a danger to them. Shown in the manner that joppy was got murdered; he shot him in the eye showing his inhumanity. He killed him without caring making killing look like an ordinary thing. He represents animal instinct where something must be killed.

Daphne Monet, represents a chameleon where it changes colors from time to time. We can see this characteristic when her eyes turned from green to blue. She changed her personality when she changed from Ruby Green to Daphne Monet. She is seen to have divided nature, which make her act differently. Seen in the bathroom when she said she remembered her mother’s death where she washed her wounds with a “ rough rag and licked” (55) it until it dried (Mosley 55). You can see her changing the washing from gentle to rough enough to hurt, this ability to change the character makes it easier for her to survive in the jungle. She can move between races that are African- American, she can convince both races to help her, which is a good way to be an enemy and an ally (Mosley).

She develops these survival tactics since she got hurt until she can no longer trust anyone. This change could be because of her sexual abuse as a child

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this makes her another animal in the Jungle. Easy Rawlins is characterized by the jaybird from the book before he reads alexander's letter. He described the scene as a bird looking at the evil dog. Jaybird represents Easy. This bird has the ability to fly from danger, but a dog on the ground distracts it.

Evidenced when he has the capacity to leave the town away from violence but he chooses to stay back (Mosley).

Jaybird is the only animal in the book that doesn't kill suggesting that Easy is the only one who is not an animal instead he watched from a distance to see an animal fight. It's evidence is proving that he can stand taller than anyone, no matter the challenges faced. Different characters in this book use the theme survival strategy. First is Daphne Monet we can see her changing from one personality to the other.

She wants to fit in both African and American race asking both of them to help her therefore being an ally as well as an enemy. She does all this in order to be able to survive. Easy apply his survival tactics by moving from Huston to Los Angeles and struggled with life in order to get his life together. Alexander uses animalistic survival tactic; he eliminated anybody who comes between them. The main theme used in this book is a survival strategy.

Works Cited

Mosley, W. Devil in a blue dress. New York, Apprentice-hall publication. 1990
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