

Mother Courage and Her Children Literary Device

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Figures of Speech

- **Irony:** Irony is evident throughout the play. Mother Courage wants to profit from war. She believes war is the foundation of her business. But that same war takes away her three children one by one. The irony lies in the fact that war both helps her survive and destroys her at the same time. Effect: This irony shows that war is not a protector of a mother, but rather the root cause of her ruin.
- **Metaphor:** Mother Courage's cart is a metaphor throughout the play. It is not only a symbol of her business but also of her struggle for survival. Even after losing her children, she continues with the cart. Effect: This metaphor expresses the harsh cycle of war-dependent life and the relentless struggle for survival.
- **Symbolism:**
 - **The Cart:** The cart symbolizes Courage's livelihood and war-dependent life. Even after losing her children, she does not let go of it. Effect: This symbol shows that even when war takes everything from a mother, she must still drag the burden of business.
 - **Swiss Cheese's Honesty:** Hiding the cashbox represents honesty. But this very honesty leads him to his death. Effect: This shows that honesty holds no value on the battlefield.
 - **Eilif's Bravery:** Killing peasants and looting cattle were praised as bravery during wartime. But in peacetime, the same acts are judged as crimes. Effect: This symbol highlights the hypocrisy of war, where moral standards are always shifting.
 - **Katrin's Drum:** Katrin's drum symbolizes humanity. She sacrifices her own life to warn the soldiers. Effect: This shows that humanity can still shine even in the darkness of war.
 - **The Chaplain:** The Chaplain symbolizes the duplicity of religion. When the situation in war changes, he changes his religious identity as well. Effect: This shows that war turns religion into nothing more than a tool for convenience.

Moral Lessons from Mother Courage and Her Children

- War only brings loss.
- Greed leads to ruin.

- Innocence dies in war.
- Sacrifice reveals humanity.

Lx Notes