

Adah price's evolution



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Barbara Kingsolver's, *The Poisonwood Bible* is a multi-voice novel about how a family's life is transformed during their missionary work in the Congo. Each character shows a unique perspective throughout the story, providing deeper insights on the underlying themes developed. Adah Price can relate to the natives of the Congo, because she is faced with many hardships throughout the novel, similarly to the people of the Congo who confront many difficult situations. Adah Price moves to the Congo with a very negative and doubtful mindset, seen through her self-critiquing diction contributing to the overall melancholy tone, but later converted after a traumatic experience, to a more optimistic tone seen through her new, confident diction and use of point of view to represent her identity.

Adah Price was born with hemiplegia, leaving her disabled for most of her life. At the beginning of the novel, Adah sees herself as a nuisance to society, keeping to herself and only talking during emergencies. However, the Congo does provide some comfort to Adah, but she still feels as if her disability heavily handicaps her from acting normal. Adah faced lots of bullying in Georgia, being called names such as, " Slowpoke poison-oak running joke Adah" (pg. 171), which contributes to the self-doubt Adah holds on herself. This can be seen through Adah's thoughts during church, " Here, bodily damage is more or less considered to be a byproduct of living, not a disgrace. In the way of the body and other people's judgement I enjoy a benign approval in Kilanga that I have never, ever known in Bethlehem Georgia" (pg. 72). Although Adah's outlook is more positive in this quote, her self-doubt is still very apparent. Her diction shows this, as she indirectly refers to herself as a disgrace, showing she believes people think of her as

useless. In the quote, she emphasizes how she has, “ never, ever” received approval in Georgia, showing how she doesn't believe in herself and thinks no one else does either. Adah will often call herself crooked, or refer to herself in the third person to describe her flaws. She will rarely say anything positive about herself at all, which all accumulates to the overall negative mindset Adah feels in the Congo. Barbara Kingsolver's choice in diction helps emphasize the theme of Adah doubting herself and not believing in that she can overcome her challenges.

Adah reaches a pivotal point in her life during the invasion of the ants when she gets abandoned by her mother and left to fend for herself. It can be argued at this moment Adah realizes that to survive in this world, she can't rely on other people to do so. Adah describes her situation as, “ That night marks my life's dark center, the moment when growing up ended and the long downward slope toward death began” (pg. 306). This quote offers insight to her negative and pitiful tone at the beginning of the book. This quote shows us that Adah feels as if she lives a dark and depressing life, and this point is the peak of her pain. Her diction used helps develop the sorrowful tone, using very pitiful and words such as “ dark” and “ downward slope to death” to describe her life. She uses vivid and bitter imagery to describe her downward spiral in life, contributing to the overall theme of her not believing that she can overcome her troubles.

When Adah and her mom move away from the Congo, Adah is finally able to overcome her doubt in herself and take action for a better life. In Adah's trip to Emory University, she decides to speak so that, “ there is the possibility of telling” (pg. 407). Adah usually tries to avoid speaking at all costs, but now

she is taking control and going to live an independent life. She talks to admissions counselor, Dr. Holden Remile, and tells him, " I need to go to your college her sir. And when I am done with it, I will need to go to your medical school" (pg. 408). Her diction is important because rather than asking him to go to the school, her tone is very confident and she says it as a statement to him. This is very different from the shy and timid Adah that lived in the Congo, and she even surprised herself when she was able to get her words out to him. A neurologist later tells Adah that she had no lasting effects on her physical mobility, and that she should be able to walk fine. Adah refers to the situation as, " Adah's falsehood" (pg. 439), and how she found it very hard to believe her whole basis of Adah was based on the miscommunication between her brain and body. This is representative of two things; she had just been doubting herself when she was younger, and all she needed to do was believe in herself, and that she had grown to embrace her differences. Throughout her time in the Congo, she constantly attacks herself with her negative diction, leading to her mindset that she wasn't as good as anyone else. She just needed to believe, and she would've been able to perform almost normally physically. The second part is that she had come to terms with her disability, and it has become who she is and embraced it as a part of her personality.

Adah Price shows immense change throughout the story, from a timid young girl haunted by a childhood disability, who lived her life with constant self-doubt because of it, into a confident and successful woman who overcame her challenges. All of this can be seen through the transformation from self-critiquing diction along with a depressing tone, into much more confident

diction and tone. These all contribute to the theme of Adah's made up physical impairment, due to her belief of uselessness and judgement of others shown throughout the novel.