

Allusions in *The Poisonwood Bible*

Book One: Genesis

Page	Narrator	Allusion
	Epigraph	Genesis 1:28
	Orleanna	“rode in with the horsemen and beheld the apocalypse.
		Dr. Livingston
		“darkness moved upon the face of the waters”
	Leah	“coin jingling sinners”
		“lilies of the field”
		“cross to bear”
	Ruth May	“Tribes of Ham”
		“Moses tromping down Mount Syanide” (sic)
	Adah	“all the world’s a stage”
		“Our Father”
		“Yes, Jesus loves me”
	Leah	“In the beginning”
		“the patience of Job”
	Rachel	“River Jordan” “no milk and honey on the other side”
	Ruth May	“forgive them for they know not what they do”
		Three little pigs
	Adah	<i>The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</i>
		“The Raven”
		Methuselah
		“like the first free pigs on the ark, eager to see what the flood had left us.”
	Leah	“like poor Lot’s wife”
	Adah	“backward version of the loaves and fishes”
		Susanna, Joakim, and Daniel
		Tower of Babel
		“[baptism] shrunk them away like water on a witch.”

Book Two: Revelation

Page	Narrator	Allusion
	Epigraph	Revelation 13:1,9
	Orleanna	President Eisenhower
		Kennedy boy
		Eleanor Roosevelt
	Leah	Garden of Eden ; “eaten the wrong fruits.”
		[the elderly] “as if Jack Frost lightly touched down on their heads”
		The Hardy Boys
	Ruth May	<i>Jeune Mou-pro</i> (Belgian Army men)
		Jimmy Crow
		“Ricky Ticky Tabby” (sic) ; Stuart Little
		Patrice Lumumba
	Rachel	Ripley’s Believe it or Not
		Father Knows Best

		Charlie Chaplin
	Adah	“the lion’s den”
	Leah	Genesis 4
	Ruth May	[Abraham] “Jesus turned [Adah] into a bushbuck”
		“Like a genie in ‘Laddin’s’ lamp
	Rachel	Soviet Plan Moves Forward in Congo
		Nikita Khrushchev
		French Proverb: “If your brother in going to steal your hen, save your honor and give it to him first.”
		Independence Day
		Mr. Potato Head
	Adah	“The Red Wheelbarrow”
		Noah
		“the last shall be first”
	Rachel	“Typhoid Mary”
		“the bear went over the mountain”
	Ruth May	---
	Leah	Inauguration day
	Adah	“Hope is a thing with feathers”
		“The Tell-tale Heart”

Book Three: The Judges

Page	Narrator	Allusion
	Epigraph	Judges 2:2-3
	Orleanna	Eve
		“as wide as Sherman’s”
		“no more room at the inn”
		“heart of darkness”
	Leah	<i>Tata Chobé</i>
		“In the beginning was the work, the war...”
	Ruth May	---
	Adah	The Little Red Hen
	Leah	Feed the Christians to the lions
		Like the hen who puffs up her feathers
	Ruth May	---
	Leah	---
	Rachel	Chef Boy-ar-dee
		“What to our wondering eyes should appear...”
	Adah	“To market, to market...”
	Leah	“just as the plague did on that long night in Egypt.”
	Rachel	Elizabeth Taylor in “Hot Tin Roof”
		Brigitte Bardot
		Gulliver among the Lepidopterans (sic)
		Zorro
	Ruth May	---
	Rachel	---
	Adah	“Like an oblivious Hester Prynne she carries her letter, the green capital D”

	Leah	Pharaoh
	Rachel	Humphrey Bogart
		“Everyone matters...even the sparrows”
	Adah	Presentiment – is that long shadow—on the Lawn...”
		We like Ike
	Leah	Like Simon Peter
	Rachel	Moses and the Egyptians
		How to Survive 101 Calamities
		Broken mirror / bad luck
	Ruth May	“Hush Little Baby”
	Adah	---
	Leah	“the valley of the shadow”

****Book Four: Bel and the Serpent****

Page	Narrator	Allusion
	Epigraph	Bel and the Serpent, 1:6
	Orleanna	January 17, 1961
		The Church Committee
		Mr. Allen Dulles
		Laurence Devlin
		Dr. Gottlieb
		Mobutu
		Waterloo
	Leah	Daniel and Bel
	Rachel	The Lord is my shepherd
		Robin Hood
	Adah	“thing with feathers”
		“the startled grass”
		“mice and men”
	Leah	---
	Rachel	White Castle
		PF Flyers
	Leah	“turn the other cheek”
	Rachel	“washed his hands”
		“The only thing we have to fear is fear itself.”
	Adah	“a tisket a tasket”
	Leah	---
	Adah	“Because I could not stop for Death he kindly stopped for me.”
	Leah	23 rd Psalm, 121 st Psalm, 100 th , 137 th , 19 th , 66 th Psalm, 21 st Chapter of Revelation, Genesis 1, Luke 22, I Corinthians, John 3:16

*****Book Five: Exodus*****

Page	Narrator	Allusion
	Epigraph	Exodus 13:19-22
	Orleanna	“entreat me not to leave thee”
		“the Pharoah died”
		Which one among us is without sin...cast my stones
	Leah	They say you thatched your roof and now you must not run out of your house if it rains.”
		“turned to stone”
		Jane Eyre
		Brenda Starr
		Aurora borealis
		Jezebel
	Rachel	“not to marry the cow so he can buy the milk for free.”
		“laid me down...prayed the Lord”
	Adah	“Tell all the truth but tell it slant.”
	Leah	Bay of Pigs
	Rachel	Big Girls Don't Cry – The Four Seasons
	Leah	An eye for an eye
		Kwame Nkrumah
		Agostinho Neto
		“moves in mysterious ways”
		“all its sins and griefs to bear”
	Adah	Physician heal thyself
		Three Blind Mice
		“This is my letter to the world”
		“Sleep, oh sleep, thou certain knot of peace”
	Leah	<i>Saturday Evening Post</i> Feb. 18, 1961
		Job 34:13
		Muhammad Ali and George foreman
		Pearl Harbor
		“Have mercy upon me O God according unto thy tender mercies.
		“heart of darkness
	Rachel	“leading them into temptation”
	Leah	Camp Hardy
	Rachel	---
	Leah	Etienne Tshisekedi
		“Damnistry International”
	Rachel	Marxists
		Agostinho Neto
		Henry Kissinger
		Ronald Reagan
		Punch and Judy
		Palace of Abomey
		Full Fathom Five thy Father Lies
		Things fall apart
		Second Maccabees 13:4

	Adah	Full Fathom Five
		Jekyll and Hyde
		We came, we saw...”
	Leah	“the promised land”
		Neto and Jose dos Santos

*******Book Six: Song of the Three Children*******

Page	Narrator	Allusion
	Rachel	American Bandstand
		Vietnam veterans
	Leah	“the meek inherit the earth”
		“parable of the loaves and fishes”
	Adah	“A Toad Can Die of Light”
		Eden

Notes and additions: