



"We aimed for no more than to have dominion over every creature that moved upon the earth. And so it came to pass that we stepped down there on a place we believed unformed. Now you laugh, day and night while you gnaw on my bones. But what else could we have thought? Only that it began and ended with us."

The Poisonwood Bible – Barbara Kingsolver

The year is 1959 and the Price family have left their home in Bethlehem, Georgia for Kilanga – a remote village in the heart of the Congo. Reverend Nathan Price, firebrand Southern Baptist preacher aims for nothing less than the salvation of every soul in Africa, and to bring American farming methods to this untamed land. Weighed down with bibles, Kentucky Wonder Beans, and their own naïve convictions, the family march blindly into catastrophe. "Tata Jesus is Bangala!" proclaims Reverend Price – a word which in Kikongo means both holy and poisonwood.

Orleana Price and her four daughters tell the tale of a family's tragic undoing and gradual remaking. Told in the backdrop of Congolese revolution, this is a love story to Africa; a story of possession, independence, loss and regrowth. The four Price daughters "resist affinity like cats in a bag". Although treading the same path they each form different relationships with their new home and neighbours, and carry different things away. Their wildly differing voices add so much richness to the tale.

At times electrifying, heart breaking, and laugh-out-loud funny, this is a book that will draw you in. Kingsolver's beautiful descriptions of the family's surroundings come from her own first-hand experience as a child in the Congo. She will draw you in and keep you hooked until the bitter end.

My Favourite Book

Frances, Community Library Relationship Officer, Bradford Libraries.