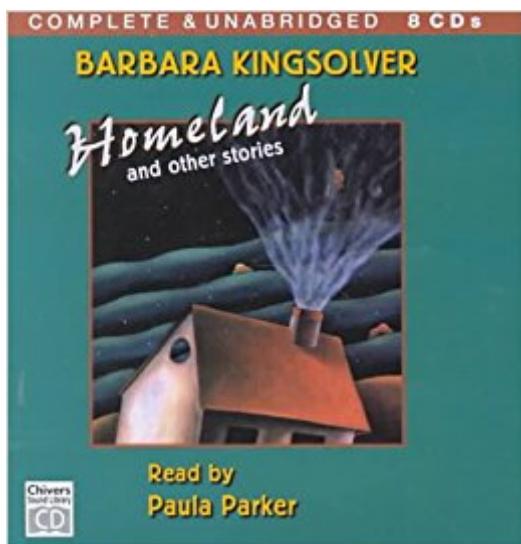


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# Homeland, And Other Stories (Chivers Sound Library American Collections (Audio))



## **Synopsis**

With the same wit and sensitivity that have come to characterize her highly praised and beloved novels *Animal Dreams* and *The Bean Trees*, Barbara Kingsolver gives us a rich and emotionally resonant collection of twelve stories. Spreading her memorable characters over landscapes ranging from Northern California to the hills of eastern Kentucky and the Caribbean island of St. Lucia, Kingsolver tells stories of hope, momentary joy, and powerful endurance. In every setting, Kingsolver's distinctive voice--at times comic, but often heartrending--rings true as she explores the twin themes of family ties and the life choices one must ultimately make alone. *Homeland and Other Stories* creates a world of love and possibility that readers will want to take as their own.

## **Book Information**

Series: Chivers Sound Library American Collections (Audio)

Audio CD

Publisher: Blackstone Audiobooks; Unabridged edition (November 1, 2000)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 079279978X

ISBN-13: 978-0792799788

Product Dimensions: 6.9 x 1.5 x 6.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 2,858 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #3,467,151 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #10 in Books > Books on CD > Authors, A-Z > ( K ) > Kingsolver, Barbara #520 in Books > Books on CD > Literature & Fiction > Short Stories #6245 in Books > Books on CD > General

## **Customer Reviews**

With this dazzling array of stories, demonstrating a wide range of characterizations, settings, situations and narrative voices, Kingsolver confirms the promise of her astonishingly accomplished first novel, *The Bean Trees*. Most of these dozen tales ring with authentic insights, leaving the reader moved, amused or enlightened. Kingsolver's knowledge of human nature, and especially domestic relationships, is breathtaking. She is able to convey the personalities and voices of such diverse characters as a feisty union organizer of Mexican ancestry; a young girl trying to be faithful to the legacy of her Cherokee grandmother; a life-scarred ex-con determined to go straight; an upper-middle-class wife and mother on a clandestine trip to the Petrified Forest with her lover; a middle-aged man whose cherished wife gives him an intimation of her mortality; a child from a poor

farming family who befriends an outcast in her Kentucky community. Among the standout stories is "Islands on the Moon," in which a single mother faces her pregnancy with added exasperation because her mother--also single--will be having a baby at the same time. Propelled by fresh, breezy dialogue, funny, tender and full of surprises, the story takes a poignant turn when the mother and daughter heal their estrangement on a portentous day. If the symbolism in a few of these tales is sometimes too obvious, Kingsolver handles every other narrative device with delicacy and subtle skill. First serial to Redbook and Mademoiselle. Copyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

Kingsolver's second book--her novel, *The Bean Trees* ( LJ 2/1/88), won high praise--consists of uniformly affecting short stories, enhanced by real wisdom and generous warmth. Her characters, mostly mothers and daughters, uncover those memories and truths, once deeply buried, that emerge in moments of sudden crisis. In "Rose-Johnny," a young southern girl clings tightly to the ostracized woman she befriends. In "Blueprints," an unmarried Sacramento woman endures and transforms a long relationship, once happy, that threatens to turn into cabin fever. Kingsolver is not an innovator, but her voice is sure and her narrative skill accomplished. Highly recommended.- Timothy L. Zindel, Hastings Coll. of the Law, San FranciscoCopyright 1989 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

This is the most fascinating book that I have read in many months. At times I felt as though I was living in the jungle too. The contrasts between the years of living there and the lives thereafter were in perfect harmony with the characters.

this book has all of the things i love in a book - characters with purpose, a fantastic setting and stunning language. it had its flaws, but ultimately, *The Poisonwood Bible* was an excellent read and i'm looking forward to more from Kingsolver. Nathan Price is a fierce Baptist minister who brings his wife and four daughters to the small village of Kilanga in the Congo during the late 1950's. his intentions to bring salvation are mighty, but he seems to be trying to over-fulfill his obligations by force-feeding his beliefs to the natives, nearly as much as his family seems to be trying to force their southern Georgia lives to fit into a Congolese way of life. "So determined he is to win or force or drag them over to the Way of the Cross."as the political situation in the country becomes dangerous, the family is urged to leave, but Nathan stubbornly refuses and, despite being cut off from their monthly stipend which leaves them penniless, he persists. the family dynamic becomes

obviously brittle and for the second half of the book we follow the various lives of each member for the next several decades. the story is told from the perspective of the mother, Orleanna, and each of the daughters, the eldest Rachel, the twins Leah and Adah, and the youngest Ruth May. each is distinctly different in their voice and this was probably the most accomplished component of the novel. of the daughters, Leah was by far the most entertaining to me. she was quick witted and intelligent, and as a child, fiercely and honorably loyal to her father, despite his misgivings. but, i loved the sections that were devoted to Orleanna! she was the most competent at displaying the emotions and choices in her life and this invoked an unbelievable sadness in me. her narratives read in a way that made me so sympathetic to her situation. "I had washed up there on the rip tide of my husband's confidence and the undertow of my children's needs. That's my excuse, yet none of them really needed me all that much." the Congo was depicted as a harsh and majestic place, much as i imagine that it is, even today. although i haven't read any other fiction set in Africa, this has definitely sparked an interest in me to read more. the landscape, as depicted by Kingsolver, was cruel and heartless - malaria killed nearly half of the children in the village - but it was also lush and thriving with the passion of the people and their cultures. really, if this book had been set anywhere else, i don't know that it would have been as powerful as it was. in the end, though, it was the language that made me absolutely love this book. there were so many amazing lines that just made me stop, take a deep breath and read them again. i went highlighter happy (thankfully it was on my kindle) and had hundreds of quotes by the time i was finished. if you are a fan of beautiful language, you will most likely love this book. although the story was a little slow at times, and although the first half was stronger than the second, in my opinion, i would recommend to anyone who loves a patient, yet intense, read.

I had noticed this book before but cast it aside thinking it was another book about the good work missionaries do in the underdeveloped world. How wrong I was. The Poisonwood Bible contains a strong message about all the negatives that can happen with missionary activity. The book tells the story of Nathan Price and his family and what happened when they went to spread the word in the Congo. Things went wrong from the start when arrogant Pastor Nathan ( wrong person for the job and his church tried to tell him so ) arrived with a basket of seeds from plants native to North America. The Congolese apparently are so primitive they didn't know how to grow their own food. The plants failed in the Congo and Nathan began a difficult learning experience. The brilliance of the book comes from how it operates on so many levels. The story is told through the eyes of his wife and four daughters and each sees a different reality. It is set against a background of massive

injustice inflicted on the Congo by the west ( Belgium and USA in the case). The culpability of President Eisenhower I found particularly disturbing. Unfortunately similar stories can be told of elsewhere with other western countries equally guilty. I would strongly recommend Mr Pip by Lloyd Jones about New Guinea. An amazing book I enjoyed it immensely and read it very quickly despite its not inconsiderable length.

Considering I have never read a Kingsolver book in my life, this book really signed me up to read another one of her works. Upon reading this, I felt for every single one of the characters (besides Rachel and Nathan). Though, this book really takes a lot to get through the first few chapters. The story is a missionary family long to the Congo in order to spread the word of God in 1959. what's fascinating about the book is that the perspectives are so vastly different which is really shown through the writing style. And also, the characters realization of the world they are in, such as, the world issues occurring in the rural area and the girls' opinions changing about the God they had been following for part of their lives. In the book, it excludes the father's perspective and only takes the mother and her 4 children into account. Rachel, Leah, Adah, and Ruth May (in order of age). In each of them, there is something to love or hate, which makes it harder to keep reading in fear that something terrible to happen to them (since that's how books usually go.) and for them, Africa had a impact of them whether they liked it or not.

I have read this book more than once and recommended it to friends. In the beginning it is a little confusing, but hang in there. This is a book where the characters became real people to me and I found myself thinking about them after I had finished the book. This book weaves together family relationships, religion, culture and history.

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