

## Amicability of Nature: Embracing Profound Environment in Barbara Kingsolver's *Prodigal Summer*

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### Abstract

Barbara Kingsolver, a recognized American writer, novelist, and brief tale essayist, is known for her scholarly investigation of subjects like civil rights, biodiversity, and the unpredictable connection among mankind and the encompassing biological systems. One of her prominent books, *Prodigal Summer*, distributed in 2000, drenches peruse in the embroidery of a little Appalachian town during a solitary, hot summer. Through three interconnected accounts of love, misfortune, and family, the novel unfurls against the rich wild of the Kentucky mountains. *Prodigal Summer* remains as a demonstration of Kingsolver's capacity in entwining the human involvement in the many-sided magnificence of the regular world.

This paper plans to dig into the appearances of profound biology in the clever *Prodigal Summer*, explicitly trying to disentangle the unpredictable associations among people and the non-human elements. Prominently, conversations inside the story centre around the existence of coyotes, moths, and chestnuts, which act as a medium that backers for the safeguarding of these species. Through different account strings, the creator accentuates the requirement for interconnectedness of all living and nonliving components. *Prodigal Summer* arises as a scholarly work with significant biological contemplations, and consequently proposes a profound environmental perusing of the book.

**Keywords:** Deep ecology, Ecological Consciousness, Barbara Kingsolver, *Prodigal Summer*

### Introduction

In her book *Prodigal Summer*, modern American novelist and environmentalist Barbara Kingsolver examines the complex issues that the natural world and its inhabitants face. The book highlights urgent environmental problems such biodiversity loss, animal and species extinction, and climate change. During a single, muggy summer, the book takes place in a small southern Appalachian hamlet. The three interconnected tales, "Predators," "Moth Love," and "Old Chestnuts," chronicle the travels of forest ranger Deanna Wolf, young widowed and newly married Lusa, and organic agricultural activist Nannie Rawley, respectively. Kingsolver offers a comprehensive examination of the deep ties that exist between people and the natural world via these protagonists.

### The Worth of nature and the Environment

The idea that humans are the center of the universe is profoundly challenged by deep ecology, which takes an ecocentric and biocentric viewpoint. Anthropocentrism's unwelcome popularity opened the door for deep ecology to become a prominent theory. This concept emphasizes the inherent worth of nature and the environment in an effort to downplay the perceived significance of humans. An in-depth ecological interpretation of Kingsolver's eco-novel *Prodigal Summer* is encouraged. The characters in the book can be roughly divided into two groups: ecocentric and egocentric, with the former putting human needs ahead of the environment. The main protagonists, Deanna Wolfe, Lusa Landowski, and Nannie Rawley, all have strong ecological viewpoints and fervently support

an ecology in which non-human species live side by side in harmony.

The Zebulon National Forest's forest range officer, Deanna Wolfe, has a longstanding bond with the forest in which she resides. She unquestionably promotes environmental protection by her committed work protecting wildlife. The forest has undergone a spectacular rehabilitation over her two years in charge, becoming a complete ecosystem. Her passion in preserving wild creatures, particularly coyotes, which are in danger of going extinct, is also demonstrated by her thesis on the subject.

Deanna is concerned when she sees hunter Eddie Bondo in the wilderness because she believes he is there to hunt coyotes. Eddie is a patriarchal figure who represents the desire for money and sexual fulfillment in human nature. Eddie and Deanna end up spending a few days together in Deanna's cottage in the forest, despite their divergent ideologies. This surprising link emphasizes how all living things are inextricably linked to one another.

Deep ecological overtones throughout the book are enhanced by Deanna's caring regard for non-human animals. She goes back to her cabin in a state of hunger, only to find that mice had opened and eaten most of the food jars. Her comprehension, as articulated in the lines, "She could blame the mice if she wanted to, little devils. But they were only doing their job, which was the same as everybody else's: surviving" (Kingsolver 67). In addition to showcasing Deanna's exceptional sensitivity, this passage gently alludes to the physical transformation—her pregnancy, which she is ignorant of. Rather than placing blame or expressing rage, Deanna sympathetically compares the mice's hunger to her own, demonstrating a stronger bond between mice's hunger with her own, demonstrating a closer bond between all living things in their common quest for existence. Her empathy also draws attention to the profound ecological concern—a close identification with all living things.

Deanna is dedicated to maintaining the forest ecosystem's natural equilibrium. For this reason, she is in favor of allowing animals to murder their young in the wild without human interference. "I

would never kill for fun," she declares. "I'd never kill just for fun. May be to eat, if I was hungry, but never a predator. To kill a predator is a sin" (Kingsolver 180-181. Eddie questions Deanna's lack of remorse for murdering the turkey. She had previously stopped him from squashing, so he asks her why this is the case a spider with his shoe in the outhouse. She explains that since a spider is a predator, killing it would make things worse by increasing the number of flies. The idea put forth by Naess that "the flourishing and well-being of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves" is symbolized by this. The usefulness of the nonhuman environment for human objectives is unrelated to these ideals (Garrard 23).

Deanna discovers the black snake that killed her favorite phoebe bird's young. Despite the snake's departure after devouring her beloved birds, she tries to console herself by viewing it as the rule of the forest. Though the occurrence greatly shocks her, she experiences a sense of mental relaxation as she muses, "the world was what it was, a place with its own rules of hunger and satisfaction. Creatures lived and mated and died, they came and went, as surely as summer did. They would go their own ways, of their own accord" (Kingsolver 368).

"Snakes have manners, at least they stay out of your way" (Kingsolver, 269). This point is worth noting because it demonstrates the anthropocentric mindset. The other animals prefer to avoid human contact, but they attempt to infiltrate and live in human homes. In reality, man is depriving them of their equally legitimate right to have a pleasant existence by doing this.

The protagonist in the subsequent story is Lusa Landowski, a youthful widow who has the picture of an eco-champion, and contends for natural equity. Her profound love towards nature keeps her from tobacco cultivating. However, she realizes it well that tobacco is the yield that brings her the greatest benefit, she turns her face against it. She is profoundly obvious to say that she has chosen not to establish tobacco for the approaching year. Other than she intends to raise goats which will give the buyers something better for their health. The hero in the subsequent story is Lusa Landowski, a youthful widow who has the picture of an eco-fighter, and contends for natural equity. Her profound love

towards nature keeps her from tobacco cultivating. However, she realizes it well that tobacco is the harvest that brings her the most extreme benefit, she turns her face against it. She is exceptionally apparent to say that she has chosen not to establish tobacco for the approaching year. Other than she intends to raise goats which will give the buyers something better for their wellbeing. "Bookchin, for instance, insists that humans have a "second nature" (culture) which gives them not only the right but the duty to alter, shape and control "first nature" (the nonhuman world)" (Glotfelty 23).

Lusa's discussion with Jwell about the overflow of cherries portray that they are in bounty, especially the sweet cherries of the two fold trunked tree over the apple plantation. Jwell recollects that their dad probably established that tree before his marriage since it was at that point huge when they were kids. This demonstrates the unit of new age individuals from cultivating and the connected practices. Our ancestors were more cognizant and fretted over the group of people yet to come and they had a decent connection with nature. They have an existence which was extremely near nature and they lived as one with 'incline toward toleration' strategy.

The discussion among Lusa and Jwell underlines the significance to establish trees. It is mankind's liability to save and establish trees for the people in the future. On the off chance that people have the option to use these assets, it is similarly their obligation to save and proliferate them to support the people in the future. The story fills in as an update that we were equipped for using the normal assets not on the grounds that we were perfect, however extraordinary were our ancestors. Something else the creator features is that people are not the sole animals in this planet, but rather there are various different animals. For the legitimate running of a reasonable biological system, those animals too are fundamental. The offices which we appreciate now are not a direct result of our endeavors, not the commitment of our own, yet the extraordinary commitment of our ancestors.

Lusa gives a long portrayal of how the monarch butterfly saves its caterpillars from the birds by causing them to eat poison. The 'monarch butterfly lays its eggs on the leaves of the plant named

'butterfly weed' and the caterpillars eat its leaves when they hatch out. She says, The caterpillars eat the harmful leaves and their bodies turn poisonous. Thus, on the off chance that a bird eats them, it heaves! It's sort of a stunt the butterfly plays on the birds to hold her caterpillars back from getting eaten. However, the birds gain proficiency with their example, so the majority of them don't get eaten. It's a logical reality. Birds try not to eat the caterpillars of monarch butterflies (Kingsolver 292).

The discussion among Lusa and Crys features the significance of trees and the complicated environmental equilibrium they add to. Lusa calls attention to the possible monetary benefit from chopping down the trees, however she stresses the more extensive outcomes of such an activity. Lusa likewise subtleties the fundamental jobs trees play in supporting a bunch of living things, from bugs to birds. She highlights the fragile equilibrium of the backwoods, making sense of that the different exhibit of trees and plants, each with its particular reason, makes a mind boggling, reliant framework. The section fills in as a strong outline of the serious results that changing common habitats can have on the fragile concordance of a biological system.

The wild experience of dejection turns into the directing power for Lusa to embrace Deanna's decision that isolation is the human assumption. This viewpoint additionally gets upheld by the 'Old Chestnuts' story, which depicts Nannie's outrageous satisfaction at Deanna's looming parenthood. Every one of these shows the generally accepted fact that interconnectedness is a fundamental aspect of human life. Everything is interconnected and it likens with Barry Average person's most memorable law of environment that "Everything is connected to everything else" ( Glotfelty 19).

Lusa's position on cutting trees additionally is essential. Regardless of being a city young lady, her profound proclivity for nature wins. She is never prepared to cut the trees in her yard at any expense. She knows the crucial job of trees in an environment and thinks about them as the lungs of the earth. She is a moth researcher and has an abundance of information about the biotic networks. She knows well how much a tree adds to the prosperity of the living things around it and the advantages frequently underestimated, to carry on with a

superior life. Her remarks about the danger of involving insect sprays in both the nursery and the field are vital. As she would see it, showering insect spray resembles dropping a bomb in the city, just to dispose of a couple of individuals. She lauds her goat cultivating, accentuating that she needs to utilize no synthetic substances to raise them. Through her commitment to goat cultivating, she shows how she abstains from utilizing insect poisons and pesticides and, along these lines save those bugs. The goats are mainly meant for religious feasts conveying her desire to provide something good for the people, physically as well as spiritually.

Lusa specifies the basic need of a particular eating regimen that every animal has and the expected risk on the off chance that they don't get it. She amusingly states: "If their food die, they die. They can't just say, 'Oh, never mind, my tree went extinct, so now I'll just order a pizza'" (Kingsolver 351).

Lusa is equipped for communicating extraordinary things with a hint of humor and straightforwardness. However it appears to be entertaining at the fringe level, the hidden reality is obvious to the readers.

Lusa's temperament love and the propensity for giving worth/taking into account exact moment things as something extraordinary is perfectly brought to the peruser, with her demonstration of planning pickles with the peaches which are in a lot in her plantation. She is never prepared to squander anything that nature offers her. She believes it to be wrong to discard the contributions of nature. She says in this manner: "The truth is, I like doing it. I won't have to spend money on food this year. And it seems like hard work is the only thing that stops my brain from running in circles" (Kingsolver 404).

In the story, "Old Chestnuts," Garnett Walker, a retired horticulture educator enthusiastically for developing curse safe American Chestnut trees, winds up in struggle with his unique and baffling neighbor, Nannie Rawley. Their essential conflict revolves around natural versus inorganic cultivating strategies, with Garnett upholding for customary pesticide and insect poison use, while Nannie, his natural disapproved of enemy, resolutely goes against such synthetics.

Garnett's letter to Nannie is exceptionally huge as it discloses his egocentric point of view towards the climate. The inquiries presented by Garnett, uncovering his human-centric position, incorporate contemplating whether people ought to see themselves as just as one animal categories among many. He questions on the off chance that people hold not any more unique expert in that frame of mind than, for example, a Japanese creepy crawly or a lizard. The letter difficulties living as one with nature, raising provocative requests about the worth of different species in the environment.

Nannie's reaction, well established in biological points of view, mirrors major areas of strength for her with nature. She accepts that humanity shares an exceptional spot on the planet, likened to a mockingbird or a lizard, each seeing themselves as the focal point of everything. Each living thing has its extraordinary importance, and the deficiency of any species would be a misfortune for another animal relying upon it. Nannie accentuates the significance of concealed components in nature and the expected outcomes of attempting to control them. She features the complicated connections inside the environment, depicting natural products as something other than food however as a fundamental piece of a tree's presence. She closes by highlighting God's arrangement of green spices for every single living being, including the interconnectedness of all life.

In their discussion in regards to the utilization of herbicide, the dissimilarity in perspectives among Garnett and Nannie becomes clear. Nannie challenges the idea of "Good fences make great neighbours," attesting that individuals are made a big deal about walls, not nature. Her case is that the breeze made the weed executioner on Garnett's side roll over into her plantations. Their discussion unfurls as follows:

"Garnett: "One application of herbicide on my bank will not cause your apple trees or anybody else's to drop off all their leaves."

Rawley: "Not to drop their leaves, no. but what if some inspector came tomorrow to spot-check for chemicals on my apples? I'd lose my certification." (Kingsolver 88)

While Garnett upholds the utilization of herbicides and pesticides in his plantation, Nannie Rawley takes the contrary position. She sticks to natural cultivating and sincerely upholds it. She invests heavily in being the main natural producer guaranteed in Zebulon District. She had been seeking after her natural cultivating for the beyond fifteen years. She had proclaimed battle against the bug sprays, for example, Two-Four-D, the Sevin dust, etc. Nannie is constantly derided by Garnett for her fertilizer heaping. As Garnett tends to ridicule Nannie for all that she does, he doesn't give ear to Nannie's words.

Garnett observes that Nannie is a cheerful lady more often than not and Garnett, then again, a desolate man. Garnett considers his departed spouse, Ellen, who passed on cancer and, his grandkids whom he had never attempted even to see. He wants his significant other to be alive to see their grandkids together. Here, an ongoing idea goes through the characters' mentality as they maintain that they should be local. This feeling highlights the well-established thought that man is a social creature. Afterwards, it is seen that Nannie and Garnett together offer their bliss as the two of them will get family members.

Nannie says Deanna is coming to stay with her. "I've inherited a relative. Two of them, in fact" (Kingsolver 427). When Garnett expresses doubt about Deanna's pregnancy, Nannie declares: "I don't know, and I don't care. I don't care if the daddy's a mountain lion, I'm going to have a grandbaby!" This reflects her extreme happiness in gaining relatives, after leading a life of loneliness for so many years. This makes Garnett think: "Women and grandbabies, there was nothing on this earth to beat it. Like Ellen fretting on her deathbed over that child of Shel's" (Kingsolver 428).

Afterwards, Garnett uncovers to Nannie that his grandkids are going to visit him with Lusa, to see him and his extraordinary Chestnut trees. Garnett likewise communicates his relief, expressing that he no longer needs to stress over the fate of his chestnut trees even after his demise. Presently, he can show them how to pack blossoms and make crosses, guaranteeing a long life for his dearest chestnut trees. Progressively, an implicit warmth is created between them. The two of them track

down significant straightforwardness in offering their certifiable viewpoints, prompting a profound association between the natural organic farmer and the inorganic farmer, eventually cultivating a dear kinship. Arne Naess states, "The maxim 'live and let live' suggests a class-free society in the entire ecosphere, a democracy in which we can speak about justice, not only with regard to human beings but also for animals, plants and landscapes (Naess 173).

### Conclusion

The three characters — Deanna, Lusa and Nannie — reject an ego-centric self-driven perspective and on second thought recognize their characteristic association with nature. They abstain from looking for outright command over the climate, perceiving the significance of permitting non-human components to flourish. They concede the way that they are essential for nature and never regret to have the climate completely in their control. The original joys the readers with major ecological worries like animal conservation, afforestation, natural cultivating, and association. The three particular plotlines meet towards an end that highlights the intrinsic and considerable force of nature.

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