

OCTOBER 2018:

Still reading:

The 12 Key Pillars of Novel Construction Workbook, by C. S. Lakin.

Layering Your Novel, by C. S. Lakin

Dune, by Frank Herbert. It's a classic, but I'm having a hard time getting into it.

The Physics of Angels: Exploring the Realm Where Science and Spirit Meet, by Matthew Fox and Rupert Sheldrake. Interesting commentary, mostly on the ideas of Thomas Aquinas, concerning—you guessed it—angels.

Creating Character Arcs, by K. M. Weiland. I'm reading this for the second time in the last two months.

A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows Through Loss, by Jerry Sittser. Jerry lost his wife, his toddler, and his mom in a car accident and was left to father his three remaining children. This book refers to that tragedy and is a salient and deep-digging memoir of sorts. Having just lost my daddy, it has been a warm blanket, an inspiration, and a look in the mirror. If you are grieving, you'd probably like it—a little here, a little there.

Experiencing the Impossible, by Bill Johnson. This is a devotional and I read passages from it often.

The Passion Translation: The New Testament (2nd Edition), by Brian Simmons. I'm loving this translation. I loaded this on Audible a few days ago, and listened to the entire book of Hebrews on my morning walk yesterday. Brian Simmons, the translator, is also the narrator. I'm picky about narrators. He's good.

Finished:

Bible Faith Study Course, by Kenneth E. Hagin. This is a workbook that I worked through over the last three-four months during my morning quiet time. It was so helpful in teaching me more about the mechanics of faith, that I'm reading back through it again.

The Dark Tower: The Gunslinger, by Stephen King. This book was like a long, drawn out bedtime story that ended too flatly for me to go on and read the next book in the series. I was looking forward to watching the movie, "The Gunslinger," based on the book and starring Idris Elba and Matthew McConaughey, but I'll have to get over my glassy-eyed experience with the end of the book first. I will inevitably hunger for some more Stephen King, though, and may try the second book, eventually. I may resort to the library. What's that, again?

Out of the Silent Planet, by C. S. Lewis. This is the first book of the Space Trilogy starring "Ransom," Lewis' time and space-traveling protagonist. If I would have been reading it instead of listening to it, I probably wouldn't have finished it. It's very "Old British," so, a wee bit stuffy-sounding. But the story is written well, Lewis has to build his world, "Malacandra," which takes a while, but pays off.

Perelandra, by C. S. Lewis. This is the second book of the Space Trilogy, still starring "Ransom." I liked it more than the first. The ending has some of the most spectacularly-worded theology I've ever read. What a loving and profound man! Would that all Christians approached their faith as he describes it.

Crimson Lake, by Candice Fox. This book was recommended by C. S. Lakin at her workshop I attended last month. Candice Fox has worked with James Patterson some. It was not exciting enough to me. The two main characters (Ted and Amanda) are likable, but left me a little ambivalent. I didn't care enough about them to read the second book, but I can't really say why, other than I don't think I saw enough of their hearts.

The Elementals, by Michael McDowell. Whoa. I loved this book! It was set in Gulf Shores and Mobile, Alabama. I listened to it on

Audible. The narrator was sooo southern and perfect! I'll probably listen to it again soon. Be advised, though, there is some bad language.

The Poisonwood Bible, by Barbara Kingsolver. Great for the first three-fourths of the book. Kingsolver is peerless with point of view. If you teach English or composition and want your students to learn about point of view, this is your book. It's about the southern, Baptist (I don't think they were Southern Baptist) Price family that leaves Georgia to go to the Congo as missionaries in the late 1950's. The mother was born in Pearl, Mississippi, and makes references to places in Mississippi, which is always cool. There are four daughters and each of them and the mother take turns telling the story of their experience in the Congo. Very entertaining, but also razor-sharp. Kingsolver is extremely gifted. The last fourth of the book is TMI about the later years of the girls and their mother and the politics of the Congo/Zaire, the conspiracies of the US over there, and the flagrancys of the leaders of the Congolese government after the Belgians pulled out. Also, it was a little too preachy about all this. Sometimes, I think authors can't bear not to use all the research they've spent months gathering to build the worlds their characters live in. It seemed like Kingsolver decided to just dump it all out at the end of this book. There wasn't enough action with the characters to merit all that. Just get to the point. If I want the intricacies of history—which I usually don't—I'll go read the reference books myself!