

Chapter One Summary

(In Chronological Order of Present/Flashbacks)--is it?

Present (1873) Third-person omniscient.

"124 was spiteful." The house that Sethe and Denver lived in was haunted with a baby, supposedly with Sethe's third child. Because it was haunted, it caused Howard and Buglar, Sethe's sons, to leave. Buglar left after he "witnessed the mirror shattering." Howard left "as soon as two tiny handprints appeared in the cake." During winter in Ohio, Baby Suggs got sick.

Flashback (1856) Third-person omniscient

The transition to the flashback is, "Her past had been like her present-intolerable-and since she knew death was anything but forgetfulness, she used the little energy left her for pondering color."

This section shows that Sethe and Denver began to notice a supernatural presence in their house and how they dealt with "a perfunctory battle against the outrageous behavior of the place..."

Flashback (1863-1864) Third-person omniscient

"Shortly after" the boys left, Baby Suggs had died. This had showed the effects Beloved had on everyone that lived in the house: the fact that the boys left after their experiences with Beloved, and Grandma Suggs had died right after the boys had left. "Sethe and Denver decided to end the persecution by calling forth the ghost that tried them so. Perhaps a conversation, they thought, an exchange of views or something would help." Sethe and her daughter Denver decided to stop the hauntings by Beloved by "calling forth the ghost."

back

Flashback (Dec-Jan 1855) Third-person omniscient

The transition to this flashback is, "No more powerful than the way I loved her," Sethe answered and there it was again."

This section talks about when Sethe agreed to intimacy with the engraver for the payment of her daughter's grave stone to be: "Dearly Beloved." "You got ten minutes I'll do it for free," the engraver said. However, he only put Beloved.

Reminiscing (1856) Third-person omniscient

The transition to this flashback is, "We could move", she suggested once...

Sethe and Baby Suggs discuss how they're lucky that the ghost is only a baby. Baby Suggs also tells Sethe to "be thankful" because she had eight kids and all were taken from her, "four taken, four chased."

Then, Sethe recalls how bad her memory is and how much energy she uses to repress her memory about her boys playing and their stay at Sweet Home.

Present (Aug. 1873) Third-person omniscient

The transition to this flashback is, "When the last of the chamomile was gone..."

After she washes away the sap that she stepped on, Sethe sees Paul D on her front porch. They converse there, reminiscing about the past and their memories of the times that they weren't together. Both observed the other's appearance: Sethe notices his skin and back and face and Paul D. notices her new hair and eyes that were "two open wells that did not reflect firelight". As Paul D. enters the house he feels the force of the dead baby's sadness, the baby that is haunting the house.

Flashback (end of 1850) third-person limited (Paul D)

The transition to this flashback is, "Paul D. smiled then, remembering the bedding dress."

Paul D. thinks about how Sethe was thirteen when Halle bought her and brought her to Sweet Home. The five Sweet Home men had raped cows while they waited for Sethe to make her choice for her husband. Then there is a small excerpt of dialogue between Garner and other white men to explain why the Sweet Home men do not rape Sethe

because they wanted to wait for her to make her choice for her husband, in which they found out her decision when they “saw the corn stalks shake.”

Present (1873) third-person omniscient

The transition to this part is, “Won’t you stay on awhile?”

A obscure description of the house is placed directly after this while Paul D. observed 124. Sethe introduced Denver to Paul D. The omniscient point of view shifts to Denver

Flashback (1863) Third-person limited (Denver)

“It had been a long time since anybody... sat at their table.”

Denver talks about how since even before Baby Suggs died, there was no one that visited like Paul D., one that was African American with nothing offer but this presence. Denver starts to talk about how strong her mother is and how she is usually and how she isn’t this way in front of Paul. Sethe’s strong character is characterized by Denver’s point of view and diction regarding her, saying that she “never looked away when a man got stomped by death... did not look away”. Denver lists a multitude of examples, including “when the baby spirit picked up Here Boy and slammed him into the wall hard enough to break two of his legs and dislocate his eye.. still her mother had not looked away.” However, when Paul D. comes she starts to look away and act girlish, despite the toughness that Denver has seen from her mom.

Present (1873) Third-person limited (Denver)

“Now here was this woman...”

Paul D. also makes reference to her dad making Denver feel even more isolated and lonely because she didn’t know him. “Only those who knew him could claim his absence for themselves.” This quote continues in Denver point of view clearly showing her feelings about the subject. Sethe’s easygoing attitude with Paul D and feelings of isolation makes her wish that the baby ghost would come, leading Denver to make uncomfortable comments -- ““We have a ghost in here’, she [Denver] said...”. Denver and Paul D. start a conversation about the evilness of the ghost in which Denver believes is not angry, but “rebuked”. Denver explains to Paul D., rudely, about her sister’s circumstances and her death. Denver feels excluded from the conversation when Paul D discusses how the ghost is similar to one of Sweet Home’s, and she starts to cry. Denver then talks about how lonely she is. Paul D ask why they don’t move, but they say that it is alright and Sethe got mad at Paul D because Sethe believes that the house that they have is too precious to leave.

Flashback (1855): Third-person limited (Sethe)

“I got a tree on my back, and a haint in my house and nothing in between but the daughter I am holding in my arms.”

Sethe starts to talk about the “tree” on her back, answering Paul D’s question. She later goes into detail about the milk that was stolen from her by the schoolteacher’s nephews and about how she got beat by cowhide, resulting in the “tree” on her back. Then, Sethe describes Paul D as a man that women come to in order to release their feelings like Denver who cried and Sethe who opens up to him. Paul D comes from behind Sethe and holds her breasts, relieving Sethe “the responsibilities for her breasts... was in someone else’s hands.” The spirit of the house interrupts the intimacy of the moment, however, and “...his legs were not shaking because of worry, but because the floorboards were and the grinding, shoving floor was only part of it.” Paul D fights against the attack “bashed [two legs] about, wrecking everything” until everything was “rock quiet”.

Present (1873): Third-person limited (Denver)

Denver goes out on the porch to eat a biscuit “slowly, methodically, miserably”.

This shows how lonely Denver had become upon the arrival of Paul D since she no longer had her mother’s company nor something to relate to the two of them because they shared a past that she was not a part of.

Chapter Two Summary

Present (1873) Third-person omniscient. 124

Paul D and Sethe head upstairs to make love hurriedly, half dressed “where light came straight from the sky” from the ceiling. The setting reflects the action they take: although they are in a room with solid walls, the ceiling shows the freedom that they take when making love while someone trapped by slavery.

Paul D is unable to wait because of “dropp[ing] twenty-five years from his recent memory”, in which he reminisces about the time when he longed for Sethe and “fucked cows at down while waiting for her to choose”. Merely kissing her back made him even more restless. Sethe was eager but hesitant because she hasn’t had this experience in a while; “she had forgotten how it worked”. We are introduced into Sethe’s point of view as her thoughts are revealed about the event. Sethe thinks of the house as “interference” because of the “door knobs, straps, hooks, the sadness that crouched in corners, and they passing of time” so we can infer that she is eager and everything revolves around their activity.

Afterward, “they lay side by side resentful of one another”. Paul’s desire for her was “too long ago”, making the love-making unsatisfying and “sorry and too shy to make talk”. Paul no longer saw her breasts as the “most expensive part of himself” and he noticed Sethe’s “revolting clump of scars.” Sethe’s back reminds Paul D about a tree, and so he starts to think about a tree back at Sweet Home.

Flashback (before 1855) Third-person limited Paul D. Sweet Home

The transition is, “Sweet Home had more pretty trees than any farm around.”

He talks about the tree he always sat under that “he called Brother”, sometimes with the other slaves. He then describes the actions of of the slaves, especially Sixo.

Flashback (1850) Third-person omniscient Sweet Home

The transition is “but more often with Sixo...”.

Sixo is described as who painstakingly “experimented with night-cooked potatoes”, “get[ting] up in the middle of the night”. These actions, no matter how horrible the result, adding to the sense of camaraderie of the slaves where they “ate those.. potatoes, laughing, and giving him advice”. giving the readers a sense of life on the farm with his description of the potato cooking. Sixo also had trouble estimating time on one occasion while wooing a woman thirty-miles away where he only met up with her for an hour. He called her the thirty-mile woman for he made a trip to see this lady. The third person omniscient point of view gives us the story of when Sixo tried to visit his lover.

Present (1873) Third-person limited Sethe 124

The transition is “himself lying in the bed and the ‘tree’ lying next to him didn’t compare.” Paul D saw himself as not a man, but “a tree” compared to Sixo because Sixo had risked everything for his lover while Paul only waited for love by Sethe. Paul D described Sethe as a tree because of the scars upon her back but he knew that he was in fact more of a tree than Sethe was. Paul’s third-person limited point of view shifts to Sethe’s third-person limited point of view as “the touch of cloth on her skin startled her.” We see Sethe’s thoughts about what had just happened, “considering how quickly they had started getting naked.”

Flashback (1856) Third-person limited Sethe Sweet Home

The transition is “She needed to get up from there... he told her to leave as though a house was a little thing... she who left a dirt floor to come to this one”

Sethe begins to remember the time during Sweet home and how she wanted to “feel like some part of it was hers, because she wanted to love the work she did” so she brought “a fistful of salsify... a few yellow flowers or some myrtle”. She feels like the work she does is “ugly”. Then she reflects on the behavior of the men because who were polite to her and “touched their raggedy hates when they saw her”. She then shifts to talk about Halle who “of course, was the nicest”.

Flashback Third-person limited Baby Suggs

The transition to another flashback is “Baby Suggs’ eighth and last child, who rented himself out all over the county to buy her away from there. But he too, as it turned out, was nothing but a man.”

Baby Suggs then explains the dehumanization of slavery where people were “moved around like checkers” even when the “pieces including her children” where “God [took] what He would”, and “He did, and He did, and He did”. She was able to keep Halle the longest, for twenty years, “a lifetime”, but she gave away her two girls when neither of them “had their adult teeth”.

Present (1873) Third-person limited Sethe 124

The transition back to the present is “Sethe had the amazing luck of six whole years...”

She talks about how “a bigger fool never lived” for taking for granted the blessing of having someone who “fathered every one of her children”. She goes back to the situation at hand where they both lie there in bed, uncertain of what to do next. Paul D “felt obliged to try again...but the appetite was gone.” He thought “actually it was a good feeling--not wanting her.” This brought back Paul D’s memory of Sixo and Patsy the Thirty-Mile Woman.

Flashback (1850) Third-person limited Paul D Sweet Home

The transition begins with “Twenty-five years and blip! The kind of thing Sixo would do--like the time he arranged a meeting with Patsy the Thirty-Mile Woman.”

Paul D remembers the time when Sixo tried to meet up with his lover but they had some trouble finding each other and “now it was too late for the rendezvous to happen at the Redmen’s house, so they dropped where they were.” This was kind of like how Paul D waited too long to make love to Sethe and “because of the Thirty-Mile Woman Sixo was the only one not paralyzed by yearning for Sethe.” Paul thought “nothing could be as good as the sex with her” and he “had been imagining off and on for twenty-five years” about this. However, despite this long yearning, the wait like Sixo’s too long wait made the love fade.

Present (1873) Third-person omniscient 124

The transition is “His foolishness made him smile and think fondly of himself as he turned over on his side, facing her”.

Paul D thinks about how “her face was not so attractive, minus the polished eyes”. Then, Sethe notices his gaze and notices that it feels “soft in a waiting kind of way”, “interested, as though he were examining an ear of corn for quality”. She remembers how “Halle was more like a brother than a husband” and “his care suggested a family relationship rather than a man's laying claim” because, “For years they saw each other in full daylight only on Sundays.”

Flashback (1873) Third-person omniscient Sweet Home

The transition is “When he asked her to be his wife, Sethe happily agreed...”

Mrs. Garner and Sethe are not sure about whether there should be a ceremony. Since Mrs. Garner didn’t see it as necessary, “Sethe made a dress on the sly” and they “coupled for the third time... scrunched down among the stalks”.

Reminiscing (1873) Third-person limited Paul D. Mind

The transition is “The jump, thought Paul D, from a calf to a girl wasn't all that mighty.”

Paul D doesn’t think that having sex with Sethe is much different than having it with a cow. He believes Halle to be foolish when he “got public display” when he “wanted privacy”. The other slaves watched “sitting there erect as dogs” watching them.

Present (1873) Third-person limited Sethe 124

The transition is “Paul D sighed and turned over.” We get a shift into Sethe’s point of view as she remembers the time when she made love to Halle, “how loose the silk. How jailed down the juice.”

Flashback (1850) Third-person omniscient Sweet Home

The transition is “The jealous admiration of the watching men melted with the feast of new corn they allowed themselves that night.” We get a sense of jealousy from the other men of Sweet Home as they watch Sethe and Halle. However, Sethe and Halle were oblivious to their exposure and tried to stay cautious in their actions. Then, a description of a corn, mirroring the action of sex, concludes the chapter.

Chapter Three Summary

Flashback (Sometime within 1861-1865): Third-person limited (Denver) behind 124

“Denver’s secrets were sweet” was the first line of this chapter, introducing Denver’s point of view. By secrets, though, the narrator speaks of Denver’s secret hiding spot rather than abstract secrets. A specific flashback shows that during the Civil War, Denver came to the boxwood for solace; “Talking of a war full of dead people, she looked happy–flush-faced, and although her voice was heavy as a man’s, she smelled like a roomful of flowers–excitement that Denver could have all for herself in the boxwood.” This place “began as a little girl’s houseplay, but as her desires changed, so did the play.” At first, it was Denver’s playroom until it was a means of escape “from her brothers’ fright”. Her secret hiding spot, or the boxwood, served to ease Denver’s loneliness.

Flashback (Autumn sometime within 1861-1865): Third-person limited (Denver) 124

Denver stepped out of the boxwood and encountered snowfall which made her think of the scene of her birth as told by her mother. She cautiously returned to the house, which she acknowledged as “a person rather than a structure.” Denver looked in Baby Suggs’ room and saw that her mother was praying on her knees, and that “a white dress knelt down next to her mother and had its sleeve around her mother’s waist.” This scene, along with the snow, makes Denver “remember the details of her birth.”

Flashback (Winter of 1855): Third-person limited (Sethe) Near the Ohio River

Denver introduced the subject of her birth, but as she reminisces her conversations with her mother, the story transitions into Sethe’s memories which bring up the events leading up to Denver’s birth. Sethe was running away from her slave plantation, and was making her way to Baby Suggs and her children. She details the struggles of including how her “two feet” “were so swollen she could not see her arch or feel her ankles.”, her headache, how “her leg shaft ended in a loaf of flesh scalloped by five toenails.” Sethe was suddenly lying down, and thought she was going to die since her thoughts were, “Well, at least I don’t have to take another step” meaning that she was somewhat relieved that she wouldn’t have to go on. However, as she thought of her unborn baby dying, she groaned which caught Amy Denver’s attention. Amy comes over to help Sethe. Sethe tells Amy that she’s running, and Amy tells Sethe that she’s going to Boston to find velvet. To be safe, Sethe tells Amy that her name is Lu. Amy helped Sethe to a lean-to where she massaged Sethe’s feet “back to life”.

Flashback (Autumn sometime within 1861-1865): Third-person limited (Denver) 124

Denver wonders if the white dress next to Sethe was in pain, and she relates this thought with her idea that “the baby ghost had plans.” Denver tells Sethe about the white dress which Sethe claims isn’t hers or Baby Suggs’. When Denver asks Sethe what she was praying about, Sethe says that instead of praying, she was talking about time, memory, and the idea that “nothing ever dies”. Sethe starts to talk about schoolteacher in which she says that he replaced Mr. Garner to run Sweet Home even though he didn’t have to and that he brought his two nephews with him. Sethe then agrees with Denver that “maybe [the baby ghost] does have plans.”

Present (One day earlier--Summer 1873): Third-person omniscient (Denver) 124

Paul D seems to have ruined the baby ghost’s “plans”. Denver’s brothers were scared of the ghost’s presence, Grandma Baby was saddened by the ghost, and Sethe “didn’t love it” but just “took it for granted”. However, since the ghost left, Denver’s life became dull, and all she had left was the “emerald closet standing seven feet high in the woods,” or the boxwood. Denver felt that her mother didn’t share everything with her, so Denver had things--such as the cologne she hid--to hide from her mother.

Present (Next day--Summer 1873): Third-person limited (Sethe) 124

After sleeping with Paul D, Sethe thinks about what Denver said about plans and realizes that the only plans she's made were the ones to escape from Sweet Home. Since her plans "went awry so completely," she hasn't made any plans since then. She wonders if it'll be safe to trust and depend on Paul D, and she leaves the bed. Sethe goes to the keeping room where she realizes that she hasn't been aware of color ever since she saw, "red baby blood, [and] another day the pink gravestone chips, and that was the last of it."

Flashback (after 1864): Third person limited Sethe 124

When regarding how "124 was so full of strong feelings", Sethe begins reminiscing on the times after Howard and Buglar left when she would stand at the open window, unmindful of flies, her head cocked to her left shoulder, her eyes searching to the right for them." She would at first think about their thirteen-year-old faces, but then "they would fade completely into their baby ones, which came only in her sleep." And she's thinking about them pleasantly, hoping and imagining that they're happy wherever they are.

Present (1873): Third person limited Sethe 124

The transition is "when she woke the house crowded in on her".

Sethe describes the room and the house lovingly, using phrases like "the door where the soda crackers were lined", "the white stairs her baby girl loved to climb", and "the corner where Baby Suggs mended shoes". But she contrasts it with the mention of the "spite of the house itself". She notices "how barren 124 really was" after Paul D's arrival, which she blames Paul D for. Paul D's singing is transcribed. However, the songs "didn't fit" because they "were too loud, had too much power for the little house chores he was engaged in".

Present (1873): Third person limited Paul D 124

The transition is "He couldn't go back to 'Storm upon the Waters'...".

Paul D then wants to change the words to reflect his thoughts on staying with Sethe. "He didn't believe he could live with a woman--any woman--for over two out of three months." His past experiences showed him that he would walk off to ensure that he would "no longer have to sleep, pee, eat or swing a sledge hammer in chains." He hopes that this situation would be different because this was not "normal woman" and believes "the rest of the world was bald" after stepping into the house. "He ask[s] for no more" from his life to prevent "dwell[ing] on Halle's face and Sixo laughing" Although the feel of the hammer in his hands bring bad memories, of being in prison, which has "done what Sweet Home had not, drove him crazy", the daylight and singing helps. And when he got to 124, he "could not account for the pleasure in his surprise at seeing Halles wife alive..." despite all the suffering he's gone through. Seeing Sethe rekindled his memories; "The closed portion of his head opened like a greased lock." Then, Paul D asks about jobs, looking for work. Paul D believes Denver to have a "waiting way about her. Something she's expecting", but Sethe thinks her to be a "charmed child", using her experiences as evidence like her "pull[ing] a whitegirl out of the hill" and the "rats [biting] everything but her" while they were in jail. And when she mentioned jail, she mentioned schoolteacher in which Paul D questions, but only to a small extent for it reminded him of his jail time in Alfred, Georgia. And then they went about talking about work again; casually which is a significant jump from lovers which they were in the night previous.

Chapter Four Timeline Summary

(In Chronological Order of Present/Flashbacks)

Present Third-person omniscient. The Kitchen of 124

"PLEASANTLY TROUBLED, Sethe avoided the keeping room and Denver's sidelong looks."

Denver feels that Paul D has overstayed his welcome and rudely asks him when he will leave to which Paul D feels hurt by and Sethe immediately chastises Denver. Once Denver leaves the kitchen, Sethe tries to make amends but, Paul D's volatile behavior causes her to immediately defend Denver.

Present Third-person Limited (Paul D) The Kitchen of 124

“Risky, thought Paul D, very risky.”

This section refers to how Paul D feels that it is risky for him to compete with a mother’s love for her daughter.

Present Third-person omniscient. The Kitchen of 124

“I don't care what she is. Grown don't mean nothing to a mother. A child is a child.”

Sethe explains her love for her daughter while Paul D tries to placate her by saying that he is not trying to take any of her love away from Denver and invites her and Denver on a trip to the carnival as compensation.

Present Third-person Limited (Sethe) On the way to the Carnival

“Sethe was badly dressed for the heat, but this being her first social outing in eighteen years, she felt obliged to wear her one good dress, heavy as it was, and a hat.”

Sethe is glad that they went to the carnival, for when she looks at their interlocking shadows she believes for the first time that they could be a family together and have a good future and no longer wants to put up pretenses.

Present Third-person Limited (Denver) At Carnival

“But Denver was not doing anything to make this trip a pleasure.”

Denver is still sullen about going with Paul D and her mother to the carnival and tries to keep up her attitude on the journey there, however, upon arrival, Paul D’s happy exterior influences both her and her mother to think about a brighter future and be more optimistic about the whole trip.

Flashback Third-person Limited (Sawyer) Near Carnival

“The sawyer who had planted them twelve years ago to give his workplace a friendly feel--something to take the sin out of slicing trees for a living--was amazed by their abundance; how rapidly they crawled all over the stake-and-post fence that separated the lumberyard from the open field next to it where homeless men slept, children ran and, once a year, carnival people pitched tents.” (for later-flash back about the roses)

This section is background information referring to the roses that are growing near the carnival and the cycle of life they went through which then lead to the flashback.

Present Third-person omniscient. Near/In Carnival

“The closer the roses got to death, the louder their scent, and everybody who attended the carnival associated it with the stench of the rotten roses. It made them a little dizzy and very thirsty but did nothing to extinguish the eagerness of the colored people filing down the road.” (Transition from the past into the present until Paul D called everyone’s attention)

This section is a transition of the time shift of the roses’ life cycle into the present day, also employs irony because the roses which were once so beautiful and well kept are now causing trauma to those who visit the place that the sawyer once wanted to convey such joy. This is a parallel to Paul D’s joy for there is a juxtaposition between him and the roses with the joy and the hope for a happier future.

Present Third-person Limited (Denver) Carnival

“Soothed by sugar, surrounded by a crowd of people who did not find her the main attraction, who, in fact, said, "Hey, Denver," every now and then.”

This section represents Denver’s mindset in which she reveals how lonely she actually had been once greeted again by other people.

Present Third-person Limited (Paul D) Carnival

“...no one, apparently, able to withstand sharing the pleasure Paul D. was having.”

The last section of the chapter employs the greatest amount of irony for although the setting is a carnival which is supposed to represent joy, the people enjoying the event are really being discriminated against because they are cheated out of their money with performances being cut short and the performers spitting at the “coloredpeople”.

Chapter Five Timeline Summary

Present *Third-person omniscient.* Lake in Alfred, Georgia

“A FULLY DRESSED woman walked out of the water.”

This beginning section is meant to introduce Beloved and give her an aura of mystery because of the fact that she has come out of the water. Archetypally water symbolizes spirituality and the unconsciousness and the fact that Beloved is coming out of the water gives the implication that she is otherworldly.

“But their skin is not like that of the woman breathing near the steps of 124.” (comparison of beloved to other women)

This represents the fact that Beloved is different from other women with the fact that “she had new skin” and most of the women in Alfred, Georgia had rougher hands and skin due to the work they had to endure in order to survive.

Present (Late afternoon/1873) *Third-person omniscient.* Carnival

“By late afternoon when the carnival was over, and the Negroes were hitching rides home if they were lucky--walking if they were not--the woman had fallen asleep again.”

On their way home from the carnival, Sethe, Paul D, and Denver saw someone in a black dress resting near their house and also noticed that Here Boy was gone.

Present *Third-person Limited (Sethe)* 124

“And, for some reason she could not immediately account for, the moment she got close enough to see the face, Sethe's bladder filled to capacity.”

Sethe had the sudden urge to urinate after she saw Beloved’s face for it’s parallel to Sethe giving birth to Beloved because she was reincarnated into a real human. She was in a such a hurry to urinate that she couldn’t manage to make it to the outhouse and did her business outside which could also represent dehumanization since she was forced to use the bathroom in an unsanitary area.

Flashback *Third-person Limited (Sethe)* Boat on the way to Alfred, Georgia

“So much water Amy said, "Hold on, Lu. You going to sink us you keep that up."”

This was the only sentence in which Sethe flashes back to the memory of giving birth on the boat to compare the feeling of her bladder being full again, just as the feeling of her water breaking had been.

Present *Third-person Limited (Sethe)* Outside of the outhouse of 124

“But there was no stopping water breaking from a breaking womb and there was no stopping now.”

Referring to the information above, this is parallelism to her giving birth to Beloved due to the reference in her water breaking. In this section, she also hoped that Paul D wouldn’t be considerate enough to search for her while she was out because she was ashamed.

Present *Third-person omniscient.* Inside 124

“All three were inside and Paul D and Denver standing before the stranger, watching her drink cup after cup of water.”

All three characters were amazed at how much water Beloved consumed and each commented saying their thoughts about her.

“The woman gulped water from a speckled tin cup and held it out for more. Four times Denver filled it, and four times the woman drank as though she had crossed a desert.” This important quote in this section hints at Beloved’s transformation into a human being because the number four archetype in the sentence refers to solidity of the earth and wholeness. This represents that Beloved is no longer a spirit and now has a physical form, while the desert refers

to spiritual emptiness until Beloved becomes tangible on the earth because “she had drank water as though she had crossed the desert.”

Present Third-person Limited (Sethe) Inside of 124

“Poorly fed, thought Sethe, and younger than her clothes suggested...”

This section shows Sethe’s maternal affection towards caring towards someone who needs her love, affection, and care which is similar to a nursing mother. This confirms to Sethe that Beloved was not from here and reinforces the idea that Sethe is a truly caring person because of her observation on the details on Beloved.

Present Third-person Limited (Paul D) Inside of 124

“He recognized the careful enunciation of letters by those, like himself, who could not read but had memorized the letters of their name.”

This portion of the chapter was when Beloved had actually introduced herself and stated her name. All three of the other characters were astonished on how low and raspy her voice was and that was their main focus, the letters came after. From this observation, we can assume that Paul D felt a connection towards Beloved through their lower education status.

Flashback (1870) Third-person omniscient. Schenectady to Jackson

“The War had been over four or five years then, but nobody white or black seemed to know it. Odd clusters and strays of Negroes wandered the back roads and cowpaths from Schenectady to Jackson.”

This section was a flashback to years after the Civil War when the Great Migration was occurring and all the coloredpeople were wandering up to the North in search of homesteads despite all the assaults from the white folk. It also gives voice to the suffering of the coloredpeople because even though they were now free, they were still enslaved and had nowhere to go.

Present Third-person Limited (Paul D) Inside of 124

“So he did not press the young woman with the broken hat about where from or how come.”

This quote inferred that Paul D’s curiosity of where Beloved had come from stemmed from his thoughts on the Migration. He wanted to give Beloved the right to tell them of where she came from when she had the strength to do so. For that question would topple another.

Present Third-person omniscient. Inside 124

“Underneath the major question, each harbored another.”

Paul D wanted to give Beloved the right to tell Sethe, Denver, and himself of her origin because it would require her nursing back to health. Furthermore, that one single question would uncover questions that would follow out of their curiosity.

Present (Four days after) Third-person Limited (Denver) Inside of 124

“Four days she slept, waking and sitting up only for water. Denver tended her, watched her sound sleep, listened to her labored breathing...”

In this section, the four days archetypally refer to the fact that the number four represents solidity on the earth and wholeness which represents how Beloved was sick and when she was nursed back to health. Her spirit soon became reincarnated into a human which is tangible and refers to her transformation from a ghost into a real human.

Present (Three days after) Third-person omniscient. Inside Baby Sugg’s Room

“It took three days for Beloved to notice the orange patches in the darkness of the quilt.”

In this section, the three days refer to the archetypal idea of the number three which denotes overcoming separation and birth. This is relevant because Beloved was separated from Sethe after her birth. It took Beloved three days after she was well in order to be able to fully look at the world and speak as a normal human would further implying that

she needed time for her transformation to be complete. Throughout the story, however, the reincarnated Beloved was still similar to a baby: without the experiences of human life.

Present Third-person Limited (Denver) Inside of 124

“Patience, something Denver had never known, overtook her.”

In this section, Denver had undertaken a transformation in which she was “a model of compassion” which referred to how lonely she was because she did not want Sethe to take care of Beloved but only herself to because she had become possessive of the only other company present in 124.

Present Third-person Limited (Sethe) Inside of 124

“Sethe looked at her daughter and thought, Yes, she has been lonesome. Very lonesome.”

After Denver snaps at her mother, Sethe realizes just how lonely she had made Denver’s life because Denver only had herself to talk to all these years. In order to change the topic which focused on Beloved, she asked Denver where Here Boy had gone. In response, Denver had known that otherworldly vibe that Beloved gave off had forced Here Boy off the property by knowing he won’t come back.

Present Third-person Limited (Denver) Inside of Baby Sugg’s Room

“Back in the keeping room, Denver was about to sit down when Beloved’s eyes flew wide open.”

This is the first time that Denver had confirmed that Beloved was in fact from another world due to the fact that she noticed Beloved’s eyes were not just white but had a blue hue to them. Archetypally blue symbolizes tranquility while white represents wholesomeness, spirituality, and rebirth referring to Beloved’s reincarnation. The blue also refers to how Denver’s racing heart had returned to normal after offering Beloved sweet bread.

Present Third-person omniscient. Inside 124

“From that moment and through everything that followed, sugar could always be counted on to please her.”

The idea of sweets being able to placate Beloved stems from the idea that Beloved was still in fact an infant at heart because she had many cravings for anything that had sugar, quite like a child would. Sethe believed that it was a recovering body’s need for strength but it became a craving that was continuous. Paul D became irritable with having Beloved around because he felt something odd about her, noticing that she acted sick but didn’t look like it and had great strength for she picked up a rocker with one hand, but no one else noticed these things but Denver and when he tried to warn Sethe, she didn’t believe him with Denver also lying to him and Sethe in Beloved’s favor. This inferred how Paul D had felt closed off from Denver and Sethe ever since the arrival of Beloved.