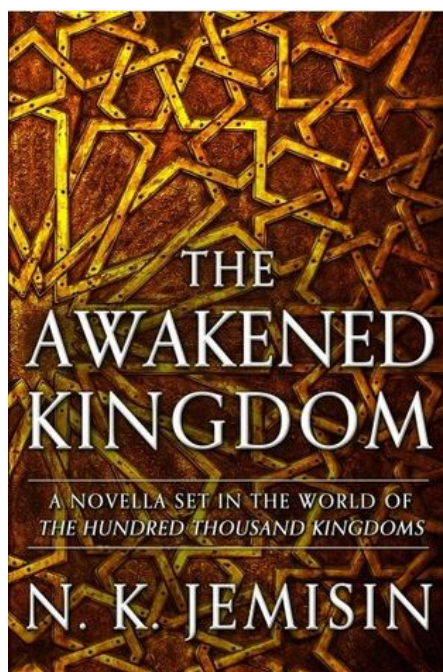




The Awakened Kingdom

N.K. Jemisin

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SOME TRUTHS MUST BE LEARNED THE HARD WAY...

As the first new godling born in thousands of years — and the heir presumptive to Sieh the Trickster — Shill's got big shoes to fill. She's well on her way when she defies her parents and sneaks off to the mortal realm, which is no place for an impressionable young god. In short order she steals a demon's grandchild, gets herself embroiled in a secret underground magical dance competition, and offends her oldest and most powerful sibling.

But for Eino, the young Darren man whom Shill has befriended, the god-child's silly games are serious business. Trapped in an arranged marriage and prohibited from pursuing his dreams, he has had enough. He will choose his own fate, even if he must betray a friend in the process — and Shill might just have to grow up faster than she thinks.

The long awaited sequel to the *Inheritance Trilogy* — a novella by award winning author N. K. Jemisin where a godling must struggle to grow in the shadow of her parents.

The Awakened Kingdom Details

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From Reader Review The Awakened Kingdom for online ebook

Lois says

This was delightful, light and hilarious. I loved it.

Sara says

I take back what I said about THE KINGDOM OF GODS being the most entertaining book in the Inheritance Trilogy. This novella, which is a sequel to TKoG, just unseated it - and I'm sure Shill would be super-proud to know that. XD

THE AWAKENED KINGDOM is about a baby godling's first sojourn into the mortal realm so she can discover her purpose (i.e., figure out what she's the god of). Being a baby godling, Shill embodies all aspects of childlike innocence: naivety, playfulness, and, um, well, immaturity. So naturally she gets into ALL kinds of trouble during her time in Darr and makes several characters - humans, demons, and older gods and godlings alike - very angry. (*lol*) But in the end, the story is more than a barrel of laughs, mischief, and silliness. Rather, it's a thoughtful take on the search of identity, the opening of one's eyes and mind to the injustices of the world, and the desire to empower the disenfranchised, told in a highly spirited and enthusiastic voice.

That narrative voice, which fits Shill perfectly, does take some getting used to. So does the frequency in which N.K. Jemisin breaks the fourth wall. (Though if I remember correctly, she does this in the other Inheritance novels... or at least the first two. It's just more noticeable here, IMO.) But Jemisin always has good reason for her narration choices, and like with her Inheritance novels (mainly THE HUNDRED THOUSAND KINGDOMS and THE BROKEN KINGDOMS) those reasons don't become clear until the end, and once again you think, "Man, I wish I could be that clever in my storytelling!"

Overall, I'd say I enjoyed this as much as Book #3 (THE KINGDOM OF GODS), but it didn't floor me as much as Books #1 and #2 did. The only other critique I have besides that and getting used to Shill's "voice" is that her nature (or, rather, purpose) wasn't clear to me until the final page, even though she clearly discovers it during the climax. I'd also recommend waiting to read THE AWAKENED KINGDOM until after you've read the entire Inheritance Trilogy, since this story gives away a MAAAAAJOR spoiler from THE KINGDOM OF GODS. ;)

Doc Opp says

This is what I've been waiting for from Jemison. The quality of writing has always been there, but I was waiting for a complete story, and this was fun almost the whole way through.

There is a not so subtle leftist social justice message interwoven through the story, at times a little heavy handed (not so heavy handed as Terry Goodkind's interweaving of objectivism into his novels, but not by any means subtle) and I could imagine some readers could be turned off by that, so if you are one of those readers, consider yourself warned.

I don't think this novella would stand alone - it requires the context of the rest of the trilogy. But if you've

read the rest of the trilogy, this is worth your time.

Alina says

This was simply delightful! A little summary, in the protagonist's voice:

"I am born! Hello! Many things happen. The end!"

I laughed quite a lot, as the narrator is a young, naive 'newborn' godling.

*"Also, Papa Tempa tells me I am doing a wrong thing again. I am supposed to respect TIME, because that is a thing he has made for the place where mortals live, and you come from there. You might forget this if I tell it to you now, so I will tell it to you later and you will remember it when you reach now. That will happen in the gods' realm, when you go there, which is where you are now, so don't forget! I do not know why you are confused. I explained it fine.
[...] Imagine that you have just been born. It is very confusing. (Not like time. Time is easy.)"*

I just love how Jemisin managed to have each of the books in the Inheritance series narrated by different characters, each of them with their own unique voice, so very different from each. Also, despite its very light and fun tone, the novella deals with topics like discrimination (it was nice to see more of Darr), discovering one's true self, coming-of-age, stereotypes, etc.

I'll leave you with some more fun and/or deep bits now:

"Some questions are dangerous, Sibling. It's time you learned that." Oh. Oh. So scared. "How will I know which ones I shouldn't ask if I don't ask them?"

"Mortals cannot perceive one another's souls," he explained. "They need names, and sight and other things, to tell one another apart." "That is so sad!" I looked at Fahno and put a hand to my mouth, because that was one of the worst things I'd ever heard. "You poor things." "We get by," said Fahno in a wry tone. "But names are one of the, ah, coping mechanisms we use."

[...] to visit the mortal realm, so I packed myself up and wrapped myself in skin and some bones and stuff.

Now I was very confused. "Why did you make me, then?" "To live." I was even more confused! "I'm alive, but I'm not what you want me to be." "There is nothing that we want you to be, besides yourself. You are everything we desired of you."

I understood now: Eino was like me, not the right shape for the role his parents needed him to fill. He was not the decorative, obedient thing that everyone in Darr wanted him to be, and it was hurting him that he couldn't be. Nobody should try to make children be what they aren't. Everyone should just be what they were supposed to be!

Sarah says

This was delightful

Lindsay says

A delightful addition to a brilliant trilogy.

Shill is a brand new godling, born to Mama Yeine, Papa Tempa and Naha. Against the wishes of her parents she visits "the Planet Where Gods Die" (which is also called "the Planet Whose Mortals Were Killed by Gods, Lots"). When she arrives we learn the new status quo of the world of the Inheritance Trilogy and Darre.

I've read almost everything this author has published. Given that, I think I could be forgiven for the expectation of something fairly grim. She turns that expectation on its head with this delightful little novella told from the point of view of a godling just over a month old, playful and naive. Shill is fantastic as she explores the world and discovers her nature. There's so many quotable funny bits, like Shill reflecting on being an amoeba (glurgle glurgle squishchomp) or meeting her brother Ral the Dragon (Then I talked to Ral the Dragon, which was hard because all it does is spit fire and roar. So I tried spitting fire and roaring along with it, and it didn't spit any fire at me, so I guess that was OK.) and when she trips all over tense when she tries to communicate happenings in the godrealm.

I loved this series, but this novella is definitely a reward for getting this far.

Gizelle says

My expectations were too high for this novella. I assumed that since it was NK Jemisin, and since it is yet another story from a world of her creation that I'm familiar with and invested in, that I would enjoy this story. And it was okay, in the same way that Grey's Anatomy is okay at season 13, compared to how it was in season 3. I knew the world, I understood the internal logic, and I missed many of the characters. But the story and the voice of this speaker and the writing in general were each underwhelming. If someone else wrote it, though, I might have given this more credit; but my high expectations for Jemisin made this a let down.

I will say, she did stay true to her way of queering a story. Gendered expectations were flipped on their head and men were viewed in her story the way women are viewed in this life. It was interesting enough, but in the end I couldn't get behind the idea of giving back power to men, who were the downtrodden in this society, after they had tried to overpower the matriarchs of the land. I'm super good on this.

Overall, this story gets a solid MEH.

Anya says

Just so everyone knows, this novella will definitely spoil a big thing that happens in book three of the trilogy,

but it can be easily enjoyed without having read the trilogy if you don't mind spoilers. The Awakened Kingdom reminds me why I LOVE Jemisin's writing so much: it is HILARIOUS as it breaks the fourth wall with a baby godling trying to explain the universe as she first experiences it. It is really a novella not to be missed because of how touching and amusing it is ;-).

Sunil says

A new novella set after The Inheritance Trilogy is cause for celebration, and *The Awakened Kingdom* delivers. This time our narrator is Shill, a newly born Trickster god who is *completely adorable* because she is basically a child with godlike powers who doesn't really know how to use them. Sometimes she kills people. Uh, oops. Her narrative voice is completely endearing and engaging, and I was instantly drawn to her struggle to understand who she was and find her place in the cosmology. As usual, the god befriends a mortal, Eino, who is essentially a Men's Rights Activist in a society where men actually *are* a marginalized group. N.K. Jemisin delves even deeper into the matriarchal Darren society, exploring the gender dynamics of our own world by flipping them on their head in her fantasy world. I got a bit lost in the power struggles of Eino's story, and I was much more interested in Shill, but their stories are, of course, connected, leading to a satisfying/bewildering climax. In conclusion, SHILL IS THE CUTEST.

Bibliotropic says

(Full review here: <http://bibliotropic.net/2014/12/08/th...>)

For fans of the trilogy, this is a must-have, because it's a wonderful return to a wonderful world. For those who have yet to read the trilogy and are intrigued by this review, take heart, because it's included in the omnibus edition that's soon to be released! Even had I not been lucky enough to get a copy of this for review, I was planning on rebuying the books just so I could get to read *The Awakened Kingdom*, which I think is a sign of a strong and influential series that's worth reading. Those who enjoyed the Inheritance trilogy will likely get the same kick out of Shill that I did, love the story as much, and, if they're anything like me, reading it will make them want to read the original novels all over again.

Blodeuedd Finland says

This is a sequel novella, and in a way it could even work as a sort of stand alone. Because it takes places hundreds of years later. But if you want the epicness you need to read it all.

In this one we meet a new young god, who names herself Shill, and with young I mean YOUNG. I will not spoil how young but hehe, young!

She goes out into the world, experiences things, messes up and meets a young man. Which makes her want to change the world.

I enjoyed this novella. Shill was so..well..such a god. Knew nothing, knew everything. The world is interesting because Jemisin knows her worlds. And I got to see Yeine again.

Enjoyable.

Ashley says

This is how you do a novella, people. I bought this on release day, actually, and I'm not sure why I waited to read it. I loved Jemisin's Inheritance Trilogy, and even now after reading this, I still want more from this world. But I just finished *The Fifth Season* over the weekend, and then I had a bad experience with another novella read for the Hugos, and this was just the perfect antidote to both of those. *The Fifth Season* was wonderful, but so, so dark, and *Binti* was just extremely disappointing. This book, though, is a bubbly fountain of joy and wonder and imagination and I fell instantly in love with it. Sometimes you do that in the first few pages and the book disappoints you in the end, but *The Awakened Kingdom* was good the whole way through. It made me want to do cartwheels.

(I refrained. It would only have ended in injury.)

"I did not mean to break that planet it was just in the way when I came into being and I fixed it and I said I was sorry and the planet said OK so since I'm supposed to learn from stuff like that I will tell you don't break planets, especially the ones with living things on them, or at least fix them if you break them. Also, don't go in black holes, no matter how much they look like cute little Nahas. They are not cute! They are actually very bitey and kind of mean. Also just OK I do not want to talk about any of this anymore."

That's Shill. She's a newborn god, the first to be born in a long while. She is adorable and an incredibly engaging and entertaining narrator. Jemisin absolutely nails her personality within about five sentences, and she maintains that characterization over the course of the novella, even as Shill grows and changes and realizes her true nature.

If you haven't read Jemisin's Inheritance Trilogy (and why not? It's great! Start with *The Hundred Thousand Kingdoms* and thank me later), in this world, gods have natures, but most don't know those natures right away. It's Shill's arc in this novella to find her nature, and her antithesis (that which is her opposite and negates her power). To find her identity, essentially. (Also, to grow up. One of the brilliant things about it is the way that Jemisin has Shill's narrative voice reflect directly her maturation. The above excerpt is from the beginning when she is still very new.) Her parents are two of the three main gods, and they still mourn for her lost sibling (again: read the original trilogy). She keeps trying to fit herself into the hole he left behind, but it's not working, so she seeks out the mortal world, hoping to find what she's looking for there. What she finds is a brilliant reversal of some things I don't want to spoil, but the whole thing made my insides squishy with love and friendship.

I'm not sure this would play as well for people who haven't read the original trilogy first, but I'm convinced even people who haven't will succumb to the charms of Shill. Why wasn't THIS book nominated for a bunch of awards, huh? WHY. Because it's seemingly light and silly? Because funny can't be serious at the same time? Well BOOOO. BOO TO THAT. This novella was awesome. Five stars easy.

Katrina says

CUUUTE! (yep, that's my whole review. you're welcome.)

Nikki says

This novella has been released both separately as an ebook, and bundled in with the omnibus of the trilogy. I don't know quite how I managed to miss that it existed, but I did. I quickly rectified my ignorance by grabbing a copy, and couldn't resist getting stuck in right away. It helps that the narrator's voice is infectiously fun; the godling who narrates is a child, full of enthusiasm to live and do and learn and grow. And she does all of this, of course, giving us glimpses in the meanwhile into the world without Sieh, a world where Itempas is learning to change and there is a fragile agreement between mortals and godlings that allows them to live in the same plane of existence. It shows us the world changing in other ways, too — the society in Darre, the actual physical conditions of the world changing and forcing society to change...

And there's glimpses, just at the end, into the world that comes after that.

Mostly just glimpses, though; this is a novella. I would love to have more of it, although Shill's voice might get a bit more annoying at length (though I think Jemisin is, as usual, a genius with her narrators). It could sort of stand alone from the three novels, too, but to really understand what's going on, I wouldn't recommend it. At this length, it feels that little bit unsatisfying because I think there's always more I'd want to know about the world, but on the other hand, it ends just where it needs to end to leave you space to imagine.

Merve Özcan says

Bu seri sonsuza dek devam edebilirdi. Okurdum. Ama o zaman böyle güzel olmazd?. Tad? dama??mda kald?. Ama ke?ke bildiklerine dair bir cümle geçseydi. Yine konu?tuklar?na falan. ? Niye böyle özlemimizi kursa??m?zda b?rak?yorsun ki?

?unu da eklemek istiyorum: Bu seri kadar gender bender bir seri daha görmedim. Çok svyrm tnrm :'(
