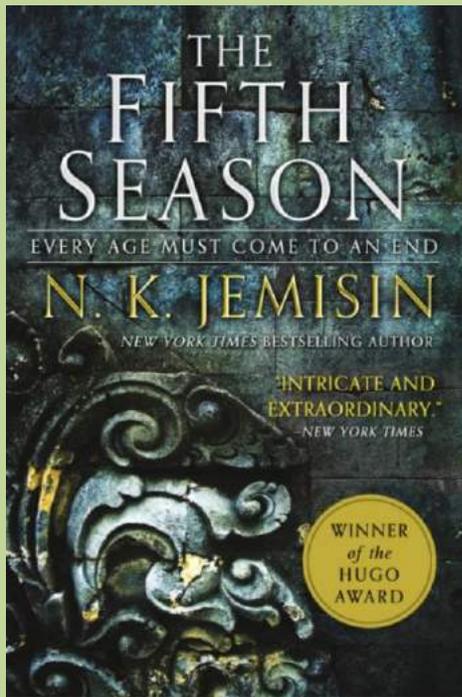


# The Dragon's Scribe

J.L. Henker, Author – Quarterly Newsletter



The Fifth Season by N.K. Jemisin – Book one in the Broken Earth Series (2015)

## IN THIS ISSUE

### **Inequities in Publishing (1-2)**

Are roadblocks to BIPOC authors finally being addressed?

### **What I'm Reading (3)**

N.K. Jemisin – The City We Became (2020)

Holly Bernabe  
By Her Grace (2023)

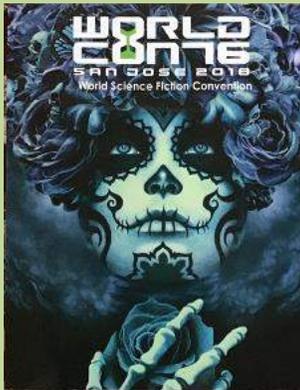
Krista Wallace – The Gatekeeper's Key (2020)

Rivers Solomon – An Unkindness of Ghosts (2017)

### **Free Content for Subscribers (4)**

Bookmarks, magnets & more...

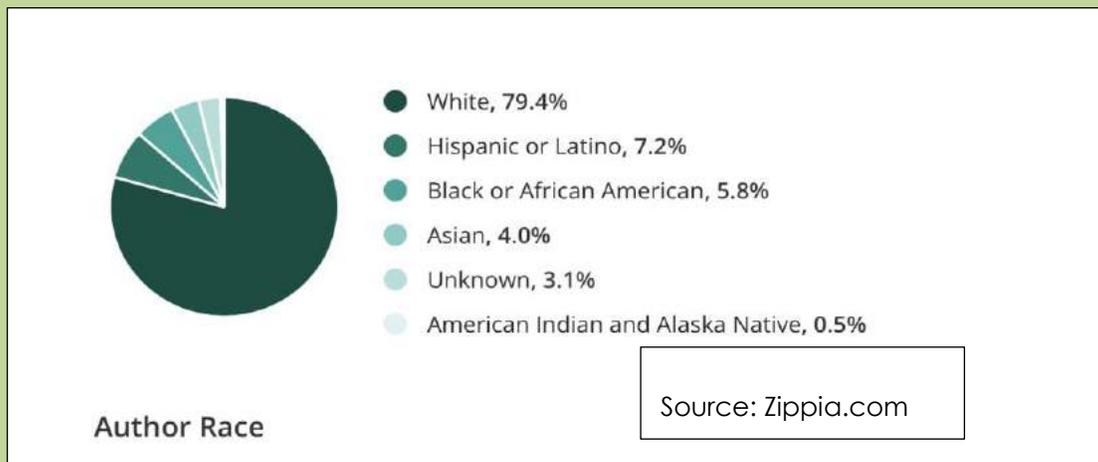
## I Was There:



...at World Con 2018 (San Jose) when N.K. Jemisin accepted her award for best novel for *The Stone Sky* (Book 3 in the Broken Earth series). She was direct about the difficulties she faces as a black author...she worked harder and longer than her white contemporaries to get to this point and still there would be people who questioned her right to be standing on that stage accepting her (record-breaking) third Hugo in a row for her brilliant, groundbreaking work. Have we made progress since then?

## Current Reality for BIPOC in Traditional Publishing

Recent statistics are sobering:



This no doubt reflects the fact that the majority of major publishing houses are owned and staffed by white people. After the George Floyd killing, a group of publishing industry staffers (mostly junior members) did a one-day off the job protest & issued a [statement](#) to highlight how their industry contributes to systemic racism. Penguin House responded: "our company and our industry haven't published enough works by authors of color. We can, and must, do much more, and in particular, we must live up to our goal of publishing books for all readers." Nice statement. Now let's see some action.

The disparity doesn't end there. Author L.L. McKinney started a Twitter thread with the hashtag [#publishingpaidme](#) with the goal of exposing the differences between advances paid to white people versus people of color. The results were exactly what you would expect: people of color are paid a lot less for their initial book advances.

McKinney tweeted, "When books by white authors don't perform, they're likely to get another chance and another 100k advance. When books by Black authors don't perform, the ENTIRE demographic gets blamed and punished. Black authors are told our books don't sell. No one wants them. #PublishingPaidMe is part of a bigger conversation about the system issues in publishing that Black people face. Issues we've been talking about, and screaming about, for years, but we've largely gone ignored."

As readers, we have a chance to help change this dynamic. If you are looking to expand your reading list to include more authors of color, here are some resources:

[15 Black Instagrammers You Should Follow on Instagram](#) – Sharee Hereford

[15 Must Read LGBTQ+ Fantasy/Sci-fi Books by BIPOC Authors](#) – Olivia Helling

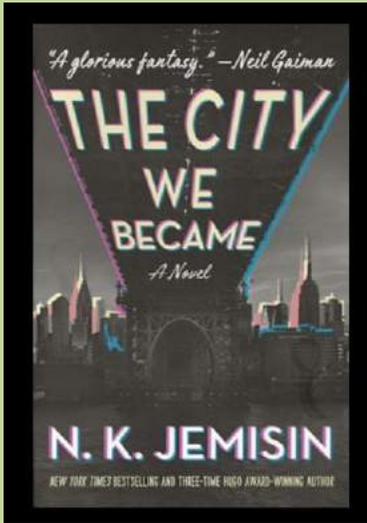
[BIPOC Science Fiction and Fantasy](#) – Yvonne Auburro

[FIYAH Magazine of Black Speculative Fiction](#) – Troy L. Wiggins, Publisher

[20 Book Bloggers of Color to Follow in 2020](#) – Dana Cuadrado

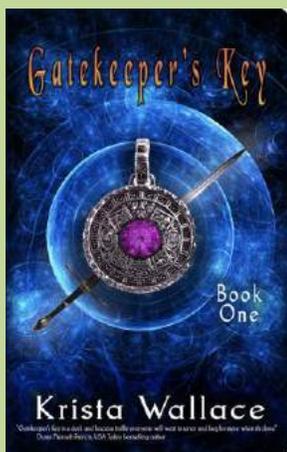
## WHAT I'M READING:

**N.K. Jemisin**  
**The City We Became (2020)**



Victoria Schwab says in Goodreads, “Holy shit, this book was so weird and so good.” I’ve just started it, and I expect more of N.K. Jemisin’s brilliant storytelling.

**Krista Wallace**  
**The Gatekeeper’s Key (2020)**



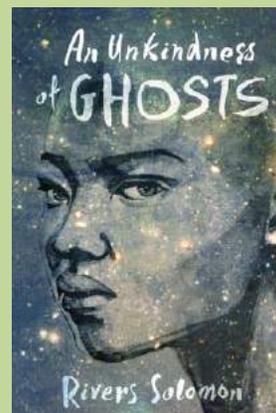
I love a story with a hard-hitting female protagonist, and this is it. Kyer embarks on a journey of self-discovery as forces she doesn't fully understand pull her into a conflict that will define who she really is and reveal why she was chosen to train with a master swordsman and travel with a legend.

**Holly Bernabe**  
**By Her Grace (2023)**



Holly is in my Fantasy Women Writer's Support group, and I was thrilled to see her release her first novelette with an unexpected heroine and a magic frying pan. It's cozy with a punch. See my interview with Holly [here](#).

**Rivers Solomon**  
**An Unkindness of Ghosts (2017)**



Unique and haunting, a story that takes an unflinching look at what it means to be oppressed within a larger, constructed universe. It also pushes the boundaries of gender norms. Rich world-building and complex characters.

## Free Content for subscribers:

- Dragon Bookmark\*\*
- Dragon Magnet\*\*
- Download Free Tip Sheet:  
[Writing Battles from the Inside Out](#)  
(Password: DragonsRule!)
- A personal reading by me with the  
Heart of Faerie Oracle Cards  
(One subscriber picked each month)

\*\*US/Canada Shipping Only (email me)



A 3-card reading is available to anyone who makes a donation on Ko-fi.



Website: <https://jlhenker.com>  
YouTube Channel: [Women Fantasy Writers](#)  
Post.News: @jlhenker  
Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/jlhenker>  
FaceBook Group: [Dragonshire - A Community of Dragon Lovers](#)

[Buy me a coffee \(Ko-fi\)](#)

