



The Stone Sky

N.K. Jemisin

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THIS IS THE WAY THE WORLD ENDS... FOR THE LAST TIME.

The Moon will soon return. Whether this heralds the destruction of humankind or something worse will depend on two women.

Essun has inherited the power of Alabaster Tenring. With it, she hopes to find her daughter Nassun and forge a world in which every orogene child can grow up safe.

For Nassun, her mother's mastery of the Obelisk Gate comes too late. She has seen the evil of the world, and accepted what her mother will not admit: that sometimes what is corrupt cannot be cleansed, only destroyed.

The remarkable conclusion to the post-apocalyptic and highly acclaimed trilogy that began with the multi-award-nominated *The Fifth Season*.

The Stone Sky Details

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Author : N.K. Jemisin

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From Reader Review The Stone Sky for online ebook

Petrik says

Buddy read with my favorite Orogenes: Melanie & Mary

Jemisin has truly outdone herself with this book and trilogy. The Stone Sky, contrary to my expectation, has somehow become one of the best conclusions to a trilogy I've ever read, it's simply extraordinary.

My experience reading this trilogy can be summed up as if I'm on a see-saw. I loved the first book, dislike and disappointed with the second book, and then this one, I absolutely loved it. I was never bored with it and loved every single moment reading this book. I'll be honest here, somewhere around the middle of this book, I thought to myself *"Hmm okay this is great but it seems like Jemisin can't surpass what she did in The Fifth Season"*, I couldn't be more wrong.

If I was to judge this trilogy only from the first book, I would never have thought that the scope of the story will ever become this gigantic. I mean, the story spanned for thousands of years, and I love how it reminds us that the past will always influence the future, but it doesn't mean we have to live and be stuck in it.

"How can we prepare for the future if we won't acknowledge the past?"

Every question you have on the story so far will be answered here, what the Obelisk Gate truly is, the origin of Orogene, how the Shattering occurred, what caused the endless Fifth Season, everything and I mean literally everything from the first book is a preparation for the last five chapters of this book, which was full of revelations and imbued with emotionally thrilling climax sequences. **It was without a doubt groundbreakingly marvelous.**

I have to also note that the world-building and prose in this installment are insanely good. Anybody who's a fan of great world-building will definitely love this book and overall trilogy. However, the best part about The Stone Sky imo is its stellar character developments and interactions. As Jemisin said, the main theme of the trilogy is not about the post-apocalyptic world, the science, nope, they're all great but the main theme at its core is about love and motherhood.

"I think," Hoa says slowly, "that if you love someone, you don't get to choose how they love you back."

I can't stress this highly enough, **this trilogy contains one of the finest storytelling on the topic of motherhood and parenthood in a sci-fi fantasy story I've ever read, probably ever.** It tells us once again just how important love is, not even in a romance kind of way but just loves, towards your friends, family, and even strangers. Because this book is wonderful in its way of telling us how not only someone blood

related, but a stranger could also become someone you can consider family within a short period of time.

“She has seen him fight his own brutal nature, and the Earth itself, in order to be the parent she needs. He has helped her learn to love herself for what she is.”

I haven't read any of Jemisin's other series but I highly doubt that she ever wrote something as great as this installment. I don't even know how she'll be able to surpass this particular book in the future. **The Stone Sky is truly a stunning conclusion to a trilogy, I didn't expect to love this one as much as I do, but this is definitely going on my 'favorites' shelf.** It's beautiful, poignant, and most of all, emotionally impactful. This is due to the reason that Jemisin faced truly hard moments during the time of publishing this book, specifically on her mother's passing.

You can read it in detail in the acknowledgment section, and you **MUST** do so. I legit almost cried reading the acknowledgment, I'm closing this review with a small section from it, and what I'm sure Jemisin is trying to convey to us all on what 'The Stone Sky' means to her and her readers. Even with my personal dislike about the second book, **The Broken Earth trilogy is still a journey worth undertaking, Jemisin has poured all her emotions into this book and you won't regret reading it.**

“I definitely haven't been in the best place while working on this book, but I can say this much: Where there is pain in this book, it is real pain; where there is anger, it is real anger; where there is love, it is real love. You've been taking this journey with me, and you're always going to get the best of what I've got. That's what my mother would want.” – N. K. Jemisin

Series review

The Fifth Season: 4.5/5 Stars

The Obelisk Gate: 2.5/5 Stars

The Stone Sky: 5/5 Stars

The Broken Earth trilogy: 12/15 Stars

You can find this and the rest of my Adult Epic/High Fantasy & Sci-Fi reviews at BookNest

Mary ~Ravager of Tomes~ says

Oh well gee, golly, gosh, let me just to review this masterpiece, no problem, easy peasy???

The further I get into a series, the harder it is for me to review each individual book because **so much of my**

opinion relies on understanding everything that happened in the preceding books. More than usual, I find it so difficult to express what this series has made me feel.

Just saying "*it was amazing*" or "*it was mind-blowing*" starts to feel repetitive & those common compliments don't really do the novel justice. That is 1000% the case with *The Broken Earth* trilogy.

This series is **so complex, so full of raw emotion, & so beautifully distinct from other books of this genre.**

The writing here is some of the most engrossing I've ever read in my life. Jemisin is equal parts artist & scientist with her eloquent prose & meticulously organized plot points.

I always say that I struggle to stay engaged with Hard Sci-Fi. I don't know if these books should be classified as Hard Sci-Fi, as they don't drone on & on in bouts of irrelevant tech speak, but they're similar in that there are **so many facets to the science.**

But where Hard Sci-Fi often strikes me as boring, this series had me solidly engaged. It seems almost as though it's morphed together a handful sub-genres under the SFF banner & created an umbrella all its own.

The scope of this story makes me feel *so small*; it is so full of detail & history that I feel as though I'm reading about events that have actually played out in some far away universe.

Something I really appreciate in a series is **reread value**. I have no doubt *The Broken Earth* is a series that will have more to reveal upon each read through.

The wrap of to this series is **devastating** but also **wonderfully appropriate & well-crafted**. I believe with this concluding novel Jemisin has **truly set herself apart**, not just as an author, but also as a vital contributor to the direction in which Fantasy will evolve as time goes on.

I can say no more than to **read this series** & take the journey for yourself, but I will caution you that you **must have patience**. Nothing is immediately clear, and this story takes its time revealing itself to you, but I promise it is *more than worth it*.

Honored to have read this with the wonderful, beautiful, amazing Melanie ? and the sweet, adorable, darling Petrik! ?

This review and other reviews of mine can be found on Book Nest!

Scott Hitchcock says

1. Malazan Book of the Fallen
2. Stormlight Archives
3. Manifest Delusions
4. Long Price Quartet
5. Broken Earth

Needless to say cracking my top 5 series of all-time list every book in this series was a full five stars. The top

two are set in stone but the next three are all pretty close and yet so distinctly different in concept.

This story hit home for me on so many levels. First it's an epic story transitioning over 40,000 years. The back story given to us in a trickle is brilliantly dispatched both in conceptual content and empathetic delivery. The cause and effect of humanities choices and their battle with the earth is so symbolic of some of today's current issues. This book took on a lot of social issues.

The stories of slavery both in the traditional sense and also to the capitalist ghosts in the machine as well were well delivered. Using the name Briar Patch and it's connotations in conjunction with an almost Matrix like theme of sucking the life and magic out of people also resonated with me.

The magic system was so unique and thought out but what really made it for me was you could feel the magic. That's the difference between a fair to good story about magic and an epic one. What is the character feeling both physical and emotionally. NKJ puts you in the midst of that swirling silvery magic and you truly experience it. Simply brilliant.

Last but not least what made this story epic for me and it's the theme in all my top books/series the author had empathy bleeding out of the characters. You felt their pain. Experienced their grief. The sadness permeated from the pages. And yet you also experienced their hopes and dreams even when things were so dark they should be all but snuffed out.

The climax of this book was cannot put it down, just have to get to the last page to see how this turns out reading. So many complicated story lines coming together. There were 4 big reveals during the books. Who were the different characters perspectives in relation to each other and the master narrator being the crux. All were brilliantly delivered. I figured them all out in advance but was still thrilled with how clever the breadcrumbs were leading to their discovery.

This series blends GrimDark, Sci-fi and dystopian genres. If you're a fan of any I would highly recommend it.

Mayim de Vries says

If you had the power to end the world, would you do it? Looking around, seeing the structural injustice, the corrupted power, contentment of the few and misery of the millions, would you just decide to erase or would you devote your life and try to fix it? Is humanity worth saving or is it beyond redemption?

As we conclude our journey through the Broken Earth, this is the main question N.K. Jemisin invites us to ponder over. Would you side with Essun, who warped and broken, reborn under different names but still with the same damaged legacy, stubbornly believes that the better world is possible? Or would you rather concur with her daughter, Nassun, that as a monster of a never-ending apocalypse, she has only one option.

“Some worlds are built on a fault line of pain, held up by nightmares. Don't lament when those worlds fall. Rage that they were built doomed in the first place.”

“Burn for me, says Father Earth.”

Essun is on the road with the survivors of Castrima comm and traverses the dying but still deadly, ashen landscape of Stillnes. After the destruction of geode, they need to reach Rennais in order to survive. The use of Obelisk Gate has taken its toll on her, but more importantly, if she truly wishes to save Nassun from the same fate she suffers, she needs to grapple with her Fulcrum-malformed sense of identity. Nassun leaves Found Moon behind, but as she embarks on the final journey, she also has to consider whether the sense of humanity is innate and hereditary like orogeny. Whether it can be cast away. Or cast in stone.

This is the second question placed at the very fulcrum of Stone Sky - **who is humanity? Who and on what grounds merit the ‘personhood’ categorisation.** Is it the race? Skin colour? Or is it your genetic code that matters? When reading Stone Sky I kept thinking that we would have just aborted all the orogene babies (just like we are aborting babies with Down syndrome). Our grand civilisation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is very good at deciding who is and who isn't worthy to be called and considered a human being. Also, excels in genocides without bodies (*“But breathing doesn't always mean living, and maybe... maybe genocide doesn't always leave bodies.”*). After all, people who live in the glass house shouldn't throw stones. Even at the sky.

“There's nothing we did to provoke their fear, other than exist. There's nothing we can do to earn their approval, except stop existing – so we can either die like they want, or laugh at their cowardice and go on with our lives.”

One of the most poignant scenes is the conversation between Ykka, the leader of Castrima, and Essun and then later between Essun and her former fellow from Fulcrum, Maxixe. Ykka says: “Unbelievable. You think I'm pissed about the geode, don't you?” Ms Jemisin shows the **two universes of perception, one geared towards survival, the other being an attempt to have life. Real life. As a prerogative of every human person (survival is for animals, isn't it?).** *“You didn't think about any of us while you were using those obelisks, did you? You thought about destroying your enemies. You thought about surviving - but you couldn't get beyond that.”* And then Maxixe concludes: *“We don't have to be what they made us”*, i.e. the monsters people imagined orogens to be.

The Stone Sky can be read on many different levels: as a political manifesto, as a philosophical treaty, as a sociological study or on a psychological level as a mother-daughter story. It is also **one of the greatest tales in modern fantasy/sci-fi told with an awe-inspiring boldness, it takes the genre to another level and redefines it.** It spans thousands of years, encompasses different cultures, races, civilisations, and forms of existence. **It is deep but it is also immediate, it is universal but touches on the very particulars of every soul. I am simply stoned by Jemisin's talent to my very core.**

It is not the question whether you should read this series - it is rather the question of how soon you can do it. The answer is - the sooner, the better. I will need a couple of days to calm down. Or months. Or seasons.

(might also try to eat some stones for breakfast)

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My review of The Fifth Season
My review of The Obelisk Gate.

Hannah says

And this is how you end a trilogy.

This book was quite possibly (/definitely) my most anticipated book of the year; N. K. Jemisin has yet to disappoint me and I just love love love her brand of fantasy. I love how intricate and well thought out her worlds are and how political they are at their core while she still never ever sacrifices her story to make a point. The final installment made me appreciate the overall brilliant work she has done in creating this cruel, wonderful, amazing world even more.

This world and its social structure makes so much sense and feels so real that it made me sad. It is perfectly structured to mirror our own world in miserable ways. I adore this political core and its relevance ((view spoiler)). I adore the originality of the stone eaters (and their creation myth in particular) and how their interactions are always just a little bit off to never let the reader forget that they are *different*.

But even more than the world building I adore the characters. They are what makes this book a true favourite for me: Essun and Nassun are such vividly imagined, flawed, wonderful creations and I adore how their actions and reactions mirror each other while they are still separate and complete characters in their own right. I love how this, at its core, is a story of family, blood and found, about how violence breeds violence, how mistakes can be repeated, how decisions shape our lives.

One thing I realized upon finishing this book is how much I appreciate how N. K. Jemisin frames her stories; I love how the framing makes sense and its originality, and here I especially adore it. The framing device used fits perfectly to the world she has created here and to the way her story unfolds.

So yes, brilliant way to end a brilliant trilogy. I cannot recommend the series enough. I am in love, still. (And heartbroken.)

First sentences: "Time grows short, my love. Let's end with the beginning of the world, shall we? Yes. We shall."

Melanie says

ARC provided by Hachette in exchange for an honest review.

- 1.) The Fifth Season ★★★★★
- 2.) The Obelisk Gate ★★★★★

"Some worlds are built on a fault line of pain, held up by nightmares. Don't lament when those worlds fall. Rage that they were built doomed in the first place."

You guys, I'm speechless. I'm not sure if I've ever read as perfect of a conclusion as *The Stone Sky*. *The Stone Sky* easily makes my best of 2017 list, and is also without a doubt one of the most powerful masterpieces I've ever read in my entire life. I will cherish this book series until the end of my days, while

also trying to convince every single living soul to give this series a shot. Please give The Fifth Season a shot. It is worth more than every ounce of hype and praise it has received. I recommend this series to any and everyone I know. Not just SFF lovers, hell, not even just book lovers; I recommend this to every human being. And I dare you to finish this series, turn that last page, and not feel the urge to change this ugly world we live in today.

This series is a SFF dystopian, where earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and other terrible things impacting the earth are constantly happening, but orogenes are able to manipulate the earth to ease them. Even though orogenes are continually saving the world they are constantly oppressed slaves. This world has convinced everyone that orogenes are dangerous and need to be controlled at all costs. Everyone in the Stillness is trying to survive the world's unforgiving environment. This planet is beyond unstable, because of Fifth Seasons. Two years have passed since The Fifth Season and in this concluding book our main characters are looking for a way to stop the Seasons once and for all.

“They’re afraid because we exist, she says, There’s nothing we did to provoke their fear, other than exist. There’s nothing we can do to earn their approval, except stop existing—so we can either die like they want, or laugh at their cowardice and go on with our lives.”

The greatest thing about this series is that it seamlessly mirrors the world we live in today. This book will make you think about your internalized racism and the prejudices that you hold without even realizing it. I mean, look at what is going on in the United States right now. Look at how we are allowing actual Nazis free hate speech. Look who we elected, because people’s hearts were filled with so much hate. Look how we are trying to protect confederate statues, while allowing our government to bulldoze native sites for pipelines. Hate is a powerful force, and white supremacy is real. Charlottesville is happening all over our world, and we don’t need orogeny to stop it, either.

“But for a society built on exploitation, there is no greater threat than having no one left to oppress.”

I wrote in my review for The Obelisk Gate that the heart of this novel is oppression, but the soul of this novel is motherhood, and I stand by this assessment even more so. Again, I’m not a mother, but the underlying theme of parenthood and the indescribable love between a mother and child is something so pure and beautiful. I can’t even begin to describe the feelings and emotions this book was able to evoke from me.

The constant messages and reminders of the importance of found families is also something that I appreciate with every bone in my body. I don’t want to keep using the word beautiful, but these messages that N.K. Jemisin has created are nothing short of the word beautiful. Blood is just that, blood, but choosing to spend your days with people who unconditionally love and support you is the true meaning of family.

Just thinking of the people who have followed Essun throughout her journey makes me weep from equal parts of joy and sadness. I loved seeing people love the broken parts of Essun, seeing her friends love the strong woman she always was all along, seeing her family choose to follow her to the end of the Earth.

“...if you love someone, you don’t get to choose how they love you back.”

And seeing the choices that Nassun made all by herself from both places of hurt and love just broke my heart. The choices we all make from being hurt or being loved is a discussion I could write pages and pages on. The feelings and emotions in this book are so very complex and the narrative only makes you feel everything intensified. Right now, as I’m writing this review, I’m equal parts heartbreak and hope.

“It’s just that love and hate aren’t mutually exclusive”

And the representation in this book is the best I’ve ever read in all my years. First off, this book is unapologetically and beautifully black. Next, N.K. Jemisin writes about systematic oppression expertly. Then, she also seamlessly writes in LGBT+ representation effortlessly. This book has the best written trans side character I’ve ever read about. I’ve said it before, and I’ll scream it from the rooftops again: every author should strive to write representation like N.K. Jemisin.

The writing is also exquisite. The prose is a tier above the rest. The narrative is unique and heartfelt. The world building is nothing short of perfection. The themes are relevant, important, and inspiring. The acknowledgments broke my heart. This series is truly a masterpiece.

This is one of the best stories I’ve ever read in my entire life. No amount of words I can write here is going to do it justice, so I can only ask, or beg, you to pick it up and see for yourself. Thank you, N.K. Jemisin, for this masterpiece. I will never stop moving forward, and I will never stop fighting for a better world.

“We could’ve all been safe and comfortable together, surviving together, but they didn’t want that. Now nobody gets to be safe. Maybe that’s what it will take for them to finally realize things have to change.”

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Buddy Read with Mary & Petrik ♥

Robin (Bridge Four) says

Sale Alert 30Dec17 Kindle Daily Deal for \$4.99 . This was one of the best series I read in 2017 and it is on sale today here

If you didn’t give this series a go because it is listed as Sci-Fi, don’t let that deter you. This is probably one of the best completed ~~Sci-Fi~~ fantasy series I’ve read in a while.

As the third book in a very strong and genuinely unique series I had a lot of expectations going into the final book. There were so many things I wanted to know and the story had been so strong that I was worried it

couldn't finish out just as strongly. **I have no idea now why I was so worried because N.K. Jemisin delivered up to the very last page.**

"I think," Hoa says slowly, "that if you love someone, you don't get to choose how they love you back."

I'm going to give N.K. Jemisin some huge props for the way she tells this story. It is told from the perspective of three different people but it is told by a single individual. It sounds so much more complicated than it is and in the context of the story it makes perfect sense.

There were certain things that I really wanted from this story.

① - I wanted to know so much more about the Stone Eaters. Who they are? How they came/come into being? Why they are fighting a war? What does the second faction want? I got answers to all of these questions and more. It was amazing to learn the history of the Stone Eaters and Hoa specifically. His story had so many true surprises and the world building around his story was really phenomenal.

I'm tired, and overwhelmed, and perhaps a little angry. This day has upended my sense of self. I've spent my whole life knowing I was a tool, yes; not a person, but at least a symbol of power and brilliance and pride. Now I know I'm really just a symbol of paranoia and greed and hate. It's a lot to deal with.

② - **I wanted a satisfying ending.** Let's not confuse that with a perfect ending or a happily ever after ending. This is the end of the world we are talking about so I went in knowing that not everyone will make it to the other side of the book alive. I also know that there will be some painful moments that will possibly crush all of my feelings. I can handle all of those things if a story is told well and it isn't just thrown in for shock value. I have read quite a few books lately that leave the end with an unfinished feeling to them and it really isn't my favorite thing.

For me, the ending was very satisfying. When all of the stuff happens near the end I understood all of the sides and the emotions and why the characters made the choices they made even if it was painful to watch them make those horrible choices. I loved how Essun wanted so desperately to be able to be the mother Nassun needed. I loved that Nassun found someone to love like a father since her father couldn't find a way to love all of her. I loved how Hoa was there for Essun through her entire journey with the patience and strength of a Mountain. Hoa's understanding of humans and the choices they make is definitely born of someone who has lived millennia.

(She is such a good child, at her core. Don't be angry with her. She can only make choices within the limited set of her experiences, and it isn't her fault that so many of those experiences have been terrible. Marvel, instead, at how easily she loves, how thoroughly. Love enough to change the world! She learned how to love like this from somewhere.)

③ - I wanted Essun and Nassun to meet. They did and they are different people than they were the 2 years before. It was very emotional. That is all I can really say about that without spoiling something big.

④ - I wanted to know what happened to Alabaster. I had a few ideas that were totally confirmed in this. I feel good knowing more about why Antimony ate him and why Hoa is going to eat Essun.

“This isn’t what you think of it,” Hoa says, and for an instant you worry that he can read your mind. More likely it’s just the fact that he’s as old as the literal hills, and he can read your face. “You see what was lost in us, but we gained, too. This is not the ugly thing it seems.” It seems like he’s going to eat your arm. You’re okay with it, but you want to understand. “What is it, then? Why ...” You shake your head, unsure of even what question to ask. Maybe why doesn’t matter. Maybe you can’t understand. Maybe this isn’t meant for you.

⑤ - I wanted to know more about Father Earth. We get this too and more than I really expected. The origin story of the seasons and how the moon was lost explained so much. Once upon a time the saying was evil death and not evil earth. Oh but the new saying is fitting for so many reasons and I understood completely why Alabaster would want to be given to Antimony and never buried in the earth.

So where they should have seen a living being, they saw only another thing to exploit. Where they should have asked, or left alone, they raped. For some crimes, there is no fitting justice—only reparation.

There are really so many great things about this story. It was innovative and had some extremely cool ideas and cultures in it. It is a bit unique. The heroine is a woman in her forties with children and I really appreciate that as someone not in their twenties anymore. Just because you get older doesn’t mean that all the interesting stuff happens to other people. I keep forgetting to mention that most of the characters are brown and black. I’m not one to pay super close attention to all of the character descriptions but it is really strange to read a book where there are not any blond/blue eyed characters and that most of the descriptions of hair are ash blown and bottlebrush. The narrator is a character in the book and speaks in the voice of two other characters in the book if you read *The Book Thief* then you will have an idea of how that works.

This was a truly wonderfully written series from beginning to end and I’m so glad that I didn’t know it was classified as Sci-Fi when I started or else it would have probably passed me by. I much prefer to think of this as dystopianesk fantasy since fantasy is my comfort zone.

Audio Note: Robin Miles has done a fantastic job performing the entire series. It is one of my favorite audio presentations this year so far.

Elise (TheBookishActress) says

“I think,” Hoa says slowly, “that if you love someone, you don’t get to choose how they love you back.”

About the same quality as *The Obelisk Gate*, honestly, but with that STUNNING ending tacked on.

I’ve talked about so much with regards to this series. Oh my god. You can always check out my reviews of *The Fifth Season* and *The Obelisk Gate*, but I’ll give a brief summary of my thoughts. It won two Hugo

awards. The characters could kill me and I'd be okay with it. The worldbuilding is incredibly complex but not so convoluted as to be boring. The first book, which is still the best one, is a twisty mess and I adored it. There are reveals everywhere, about the world and the characters and the plot and so much more. The buildup and payoff dynamics are excellent. The thematic core around oppression is fucking awesome and done with an all-black and majority-queer cast.

But let's talk about this book, specifically.

→*complaints and errors*←

✓I was really disappointed by the **lack of focus on side characters**. The side characters of books one and two were, in many ways, what made the series for me, and I am so fucking mad about how little we got out of them in this book. I mean, I love Hoa and Nassun, but I love all of them and you should let me live.

✓I still **don't love Essun** as much as I did in book one. She's really dislikable in several areas that I'm not good at forgiving, and it just taints a lot of her for me, and I feel sort of awful about it.

✓I think I also... **didn't understand the backstory chapters** very well, when I understood them at all. This is the first book of this series that I've read entirely on audiobook, and though I absolutely *adore* Robin Miles and want you all to see what a fantastic job she does narrating these books, I don't think this particular book is necessarily the best choice for an audiobook.

→*interlude: I share my opinions*←

In this book, we again get povs from three characters; Essun, Nassun, and a new narrator - Hoa.

►*Essun* - This character is so mentally strong, so drily sarcastic, and so gorgeously developed. I have also finally noticed that she is very unlikable. I shockingly still empathize with her but I'm also mad at her and I would fight her if not for the fact that she definitely can and would kill me. And her second person still works for me.

►*Nassun* - Essun's daughter is becoming more and more of an antihero over time. I love villain arcs, and her villain arc specifically is so great; I love how she's forced to learn to be manipulative, to play the emotions of her father and so many others. She's also still such a fucking... teenager, and I find it really endearing and deeply sympathetic and yeah. I really like her. She's my favorite. Give her a girlfriend and also eternal happiness.

►*Hoa* - Let's reveal some actual past to this world, finally. Via the biggest angel of an immortal deity I've ever had the pleasure of reading about. Thematic motif: all the characters in this series are just Closet Soft Boys. [Alabaster would fight me for saying this but I don't care.]

→*and now back to the good*←

This series has just been... a really good experience for me. In general. And I love these characters, so much, and I don't think I could ever really hate a book containing them. So, we have a new narrator who we've all been desperately awaiting for a book now, and the characters - especially Nassun - have changed a lot since book two. Which is so awesome. You can really feel the development in them and the conflict within them.

But you know what really *made* this book for me? **The conflict around motherhood.**

I mean, since the beginning, this series has been adamant about how loving someone is not enough for them to know you love them, and drilled into our heads that Essun has not always been the best mother. But I wasn't expecting... payoff. I was not expecting the degree to which a mother can mistreat her daughter, despite loving her, despite thinking she is doing the right thing, to become the focus.

I *love* that it has become the focus.

I can't believe what a good job this story has done at balancing Nassun and Essun in this conflict, at seeing both their motivations and realizing that neither one is completely wrong or completely right, not really.

And then... the ending. It's just stunning. I love the writing of it - we finally see a powerplay we've been building up to for three books. I love the character bit of it - it is utterly gutwrenching. And I love the hope in it, and the sense that even though the world is fucked up, there is always, always hope. If you look hard enough.

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Samantha says

Now THAT is how you do a finale...

Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says

I don't know what the hell just happened!

I'm going to have to re-read the whole trilogy again next year. I'm leaving this as being my mood because I enjoyed the first two books!! Damn it!

Mel ♥?

Philip says

5ish stars.

This is an incredible series and a huge accomplishment for its author, N.K. Jemisin. It has every element of high quality fiction and, particularly, everything great about SFF. It's decidedly new age, but in a way that I don't doubt will stand the test of time. It's innovative in the way that Ursula K. Le Guin's work was innovative in the '60s and '70s (and continues to be influential today) and, maybe I'm foolish for saying this too soon, but I think it has the same potential to reach classic status.

Admittedly, the first book in the series, *The Fifth Season*, is my favorite and I actually only rated that 4.5, but the series as a whole is greater than the sum of its individual parts. In this book specifically I found the first half to be slow, but once each of the separate storylines coalesced and the big picture came into view, the payoff was worth the journey. The ending wasn't mind-blowingly pulse-pounding but it was fitting and real and it felt *right*. It made me feel good.

I respect Jemisin's talent immensely. Her prose is fantastic. She's not afraid to make her characters prickly, even unlikable at times and I love them all the more for it. Even the side characters who only make brief appearances are ones who I liked and would love to learn more about. The real greatness of this series is the world Jemisin has created- not only the "magic system," the blend of fantasy and sci-fi, or the diverse factions of characters, but how the nature of the world is primed to provide such deep commentary on so many grand, topical ideas. The way Jemisin addresses those ideas- duty, exploitation, love, humanity, morality, acceptance, xenophobia, motherhood, justice, mercy- is powerful and soulful and she doesn't take any easy ways out. She allows things to play out how they really do play out in human existence, not necessarily the ways we want them or expect them to in the literature we read.

Congratulations to Jemisin for this achievement and congrats to me for getting to experience it!

Posted in Mr. Philip's Library

Bibi says

Spoilers

You know there's something wrong when a major character dies yet it leaves you unmoved.

Having cruised through the preceding serials, I was underwhelmed by this conclusion.

Not helping was the Info-dumping, likewise the glaring plot hole of the Onyx and Garnet Obelisk (read book one again to sess the inconsistency).

Additionally, the author's attempts at bringing some social issues to the fore was heavy handed, which is a shame really since the reader already caught on to these nuances right from the start of the series.

Overall, I didn't dislike how the story ended, I just didn't love it as much as the first two.

Gary says

In my review for *The Obelisk Gate*, I wrote that it felt more like the first half of a novel, so I am not surprised that *The Stone Sky* feels like the second half of that novel. I think I might have preferred if Jemisin had simply released these last two books as a single volume, so I didn't feel so much like I had to wait a year

to read the rest of a book. Some of *The Stone Sky* feels padded, and in particular the chapters that deal with the origin of the stone eaters could have been saved for a companion novella. Ultimately though, Essun's journey as a broken woman in a broken world is one of the most compelling in all of fantasy literature, and the conclusion to that journey – where she makes her final stand to repair both the woman and the world – is magnificent.

Bradley says

There's really no easy way to put this, so I'll come right out and say it.

This is one of the very best stories I've ever read.

All together now, all three books in this trilogy, together, make up one hell of a great story.

I am amazed. I cried. I was blown away by the sheer immensity of what was going on, of the implications and the revelations and the final action.

Sure, we knew that one of two things must happen by the end of the second book, but I hadn't quite realized just how invested I'd have gotten by that point. I didn't know how it would happen or what kinds of complications might arise or just how much enemies had turned into allies or who was good or bad... because that was never the point of these books.

We are all people. Every single one of us... whether stone eater, rogga, or still. The fact that the point is far from belabored, rather gorgeous in exploration and execution, makes it more than icing on this cake. I'm simply shaken to my core.

This is one of the best stories I've ever read.

It's more than sheer imagination, storytelling skill, world-building, or fantastically complicated characters or world-shattering events. It's ART.

I am 100% squealing fanboy here.

I actually whooped aloud as I was reading and startled my daughter. :)

THIS is why I read. This is the sheer fascination I always try to hold onto. :)

THANK YOU!

Thomas Wagner says

Now *this* is how you end a trilogy.

N.K. Jemisin's *Broken Earth* trilogy has been about so many things. But I suppose the only way to talk about how brilliantly it climaxes, without robbing you of the pleasure of experiencing it yourself, is to say simply

that Jemisin not only delivers but overdelivers on reader expectations. And she does it in a way that might make you appreciate how rarely series fiction manages to satisfy so well when it comes time for the final curtain. While I don't believe that stories necessarily have to tie up all loose ends or answer every unanswered question to be satisfying, *The Stone Sky* manages to stick a very tricky and almost perfect landing, resolving the trilogy's key conflicts, clarifying most of its mysteries, and outperforming on a level of sheer emotional and visceral punch whatever you might have been anticipating from its finale.

This is the work of a writer in complete command of her craft. It's the story of a mother and a daughter
(*continued*)
