

## Awaken the Three: Book Two of the Highglade Series

**D. L. Jennings**

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*Awaken the Three is an epic fantasy tale of creation and destruction, of gods and mortals.*

The gods are never far away in *Awaken the Three*, D. L. Jennings's second novel in the series.

The peoples of Derenar, Gal'Dorok, and the Wastes of Khulakorum are caught in an ancient struggle for control and balance. After a hard-fought battle, wherein a young human woman became the reincarnation of a goddess and a mortal took up the godhood mantle of her slain mother, those left behind try to move forward.

Rathma, a Farstepper, is captured during an assassination attempt. Thornton, friend to the reincarnated goddess and wielder of a god-forged tool, wants to return home with his sister, Yasha, but fears how they might be received; both bear the scars of being god-touched. Kethras, brother to a goddess but not a god himself, must leave his home, where it is no longer safe for him. Their journeys take them across desert sands, above waterfalls, and deep into the mountains. As the Shaper of Ages works to keep the Breaker of the Dawn imprisoned in Otherworld, mortal warlords wrestle for control of tools connected to the sleeping earth-bound gods.

Though the events of the first book influence and weigh on the characters, this entry does not turn solely on its action. Where the story of the Breaker of the Dawn, the Shaper of Ages, and the Binder of the World paused, the story of the Ghost of the Morn, the Holder of the Dead, and the Traveler starts. It can be confusing to keep up with each god and whether they have been or are yet to be reincarnated, but the mortals know, and that knowledge base keeps the confusion just this side of tolerable. Likewise, the various kinds of mortals inhabiting the many different landscapes of the world can be overwhelming, but vibrant imagery helps to distinguish between humans, Kienari, Khyth, Athrani, and others. Callbacks to previous events, placed in relevant scenes, are intriguing.

Though the cast is wide and it would have been easy to leave some characters without as much depth as others, each of the book's characters has ample opportunity to reveal their motivations, their fears, and their loyalties. Though it takes this long novel a while to get going, its short chapters and constant movement hold interest. As characters converge upon a single location, the central plot line and its final, earth-shattering event emerges with high drama and suspense.

*Awaken the Three* is an epic fantasy tale of creation and destruction, of gods and mortals.

DONTANÁ MCPHERSON-JOSEPH (June 24, 2020)

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