

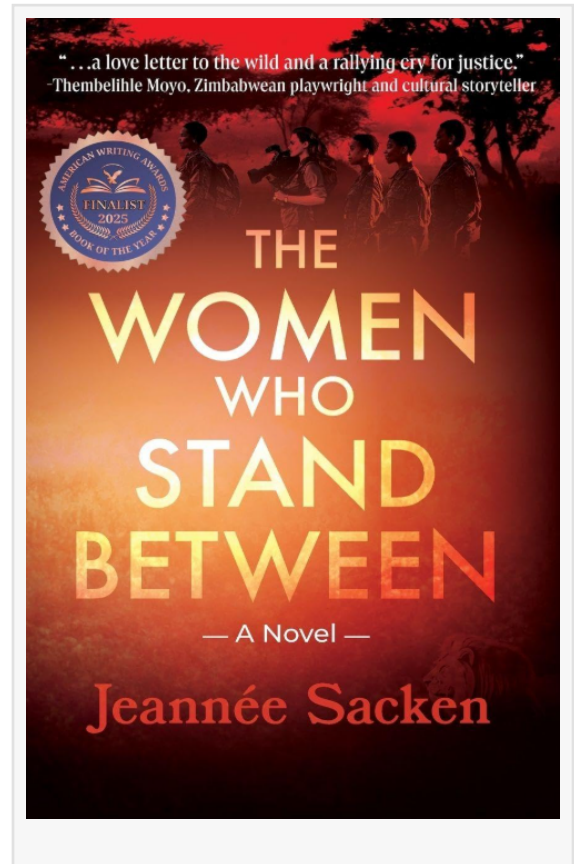
# The Hawthorne Prize Crowns Jeannee Sacken's *The Women Who Stand Between* as 2026 Winner

*American Writing Awards Celebrates Shortlisted Authors, Finalists, and Winner of One of Contemporary Fiction's Most Prestigious Independent Literary Honors*

DALLAS, TX, UNITED STATES, May 31, 2026

/EINPresswire.com/ -- The American Writing Awards proudly announces the conclusion of its 2026 Spring Award Season with the selection of Jeannee Sacken's *The Women Who Stand Between* (Ten16 Press) as the winner of the 2026 Hawthorne Prize.

Widely regarded as one of the premier honors recognizing excellence in contemporary fiction, the Hawthorne Prize celebrates outstanding storytelling, literary craftsmanship, originality, and emotional impact. Following months of evaluation by the judging panel, a distinguished field of authors from around the world advanced through the competition's three-stage process: Shortlist, Finalist, and Winner.



The 2026 Hawthorne Prize season officially began with the announcement of the Shortlist on May 17, followed by the unveiling of the Finalists on May 24, culminating with the selection of the overall winner on May 31.

2026 Hawthorne Prize Winner

The Women Who Stand Between  
Jeannee Sacken  
Publisher: Ten16 Press

The judging panel praised *The Women Who Stand Between* for its unforgettable characters, emotional depth, universal themes, and powerful exploration of courage, sacrifice, and resilience.

## 2026 Hawthorne Prize Finalists

The following works advanced to the Finalist stage of competition:

Escala's Wish — David James  
Indira's Daughters — Ron Destro  
Beneath The Rings — Joe Battaglia  
Boy of Heaven — Morris Hoffman  
The Women Who Stand Between — Jeannee Sacken  
Split — Michael Swartz  
A Certain Man — Linda Dindzans  
For Nothing is Hidden — John A. Valenti III  
Ancilla — Sera Maddox Drake  
Whippoorwill Sing — Khristeena Lute  
The Broken Weathervane — Laura DeNooyer  
A Walk Among Heroes — James McDevitt  
RIFT: The Sixth Extinction — Thomas Asher  
HAVOC: Trouble on the Trail — Cam Torrens  
All the Moonlight on Earth — Jesse Muehlbauer  
One of Us Must Die — Zelly Ruskin  
The Scott Boys — S. Scott Anderson



## 2026 Hawthorne Prize Shortlist

Prior to finalist selection, the following books earned the distinction of being named to the 2026 Hawthorne Prize Shortlist:

Escala's Wish — David James  
Indira's Daughters — Ron Destro  
Beneath The Rings — Joe Battaglia  
Boy of Heaven — Morris Hoffman  
The Women Who Stand Between — Jeannee Sacken  
Split — Michael Swartz  
A Certain Man — Linda Dindzans  
For Nothing is Hidden — John A. Valenti III  
Ancilla — Sera Maddox Drake  
Whippoorwill Sing — Khristeena Lute  
The Broken Weathervane — Laura DeNooyer

A Walk Among Heroes — James McDevitt  
RIFT: The Sixth Extinction — Thomas Asher  
HAVOC: Trouble on the Trail — Cam Torrens  
All the Moonlight on Earth — Jesse Muehlbauer  
One of Us Must Die — Zelly Ruskin  
The Scott Boys — S. Scott Anderson  
The Artificial Conspiracy — Jesse Muehlbauer  
Marianne: A Sense and Sensibility Sequel — Alice McVeigh  
Then Came The Summer Snow — Trisha T. Pritikin  
CLASS ACTION — Gail Ward Olmsted  
The Pirate's Curse: Weight of Souls — Toni Runkle & Steve Webb  
Diverging Streams — Earl L. Carlson  
Once Upon a Waning Star — R. Luce  
The Blood Sagas — Avery Brown  
No Man's Land — Donna E. Lane  
The Rabbi's Suitcase — Robert Kehlmann  
Serenade of Sirens — KD Allbaugh  
Time Capsules — Tom Sabino  
His Last Christmas Gift — Debra Borchert  
What the Mirrors Knew — Linda Annas Ferguson  
The Blazekeeper of Bowmore House — Elizabeth de Veer  
Tybee Rhapsody — Leara Rhodes  
The Dreams Factory — Bashir Bashir  
Falcata — Luke K. Wilson  
Detour to a Dream — R.M. Grabowski  
Between the Lines — Tracey Magruder  
Call the Wind Mariah — W.W. Hennemann  
After the Lake — Mara Mansour  
Until the Rising — Amber Kirkpatrick

"The 2026 Hawthorne Prize showcased an extraordinary range of voices, styles, and stories," said a spokesperson for the American Writing Awards. "From historical fiction and literary drama to speculative fiction, thrillers, and sweeping family sagas, this year's competition demonstrated the remarkable creativity and talent flourishing within today's independent and traditionally published literary communities."

The conclusion of the Hawthorne Prize marks the successful close of the American Writing Awards' Spring 2026 competition season. Organizers noted that this year's field represented one of the strongest and most competitive groups of submissions in the award's history.

Additional information about the Hawthorne Prize and future American Writing Awards competitions can be found at <https://americanwritingawards.com/>.

## About The American Writing Awards

Founded in 2021 by a grassroots group of authors, AmericanWritingAwards.com was created with a simple mission: to provide meaningful recognition and promotional opportunities for authors and publishers worldwide. Today, the American Writing Awards has grown into one of the industry's leading platforms for literary recognition, helping writers and publishers launch careers, expand readership, gain credibility, and compete on the global stage.

The American Writing Awards is committed to offering inclusive, accessible, and influential competitions that welcome authors from every publishing background—including self-published authors, independent publishers, micro presses, academic presses, small presses, and major publishing houses. All entrants compete on equal footing for the same prestigious honors.

Our competitions are designed with authors in mind. Entry fees are intentionally kept well below industry averages, books may be entered into multiple categories, unpublished manuscripts are eligible for consideration, and all submissions are accepted digitally, eliminating the expense and inconvenience of traditional mail submissions.

Entries are evaluated by a distinguished panel of judges that includes industry professionals, authors, educators, and publishing experts. Works are assessed on numerous elements of literary excellence, including storytelling, pacing, characterization, dialogue, originality, writing mechanics, emotional impact, and overall quality.

American Writing Awards believes that authors deserve opportunities to be recognized for their hard work and dedication. Award recognition not only celebrates achievement but also helps build long-term credibility and visibility in an increasingly competitive marketplace.

In addition to its flagship American Writing Awards competition, the organization also presents the Hawthorne Prize, Children's Book International, Podcast of the Year Awards, and the Sports Book of the Year Award. Beyond its award programs, AmericanWritingAwards.com offers a comprehensive suite of author promotion services, including professional book reviews and global press release distribution campaigns designed to help authors increase visibility, build credibility, reach new audiences, and expand their presence within the publishing industry.

<https://americanwritingawards.com/>

### Did You Know?

- Legacy categories allow books published more than four years ago to compete for recognition through Legacy Fiction, Legacy Nonfiction, and Legacy Children's Book categories.
- Previous Finalists are welcome to re-enter future competitions, giving exceptional books another opportunity to earn top honors.

- American Writing Awards press releases are distributed to hundreds of premium news outlets with the potential to reach millions of readers, journalists, booksellers, publishing professionals, and industry influencers worldwide.
- Book of the Year recipients, Category Winners, and Finalists receive extensive promotional support, including social media marketing campaigns celebrating their accomplishments.
- The Hawthorne Prize has become one of the most respected and sought-after honors in contemporary fiction, attracting outstanding submissions from around the world.
- AmericanWritingAwards.com continues to be recognized internationally as a leader in author recognition, promotion, publicity, and literary award services.

### Current Entry Opportunities

□ Sports Book of the Year

Deadline: November 1, 2026

□ American Writing Awards

Deadline: November 8, 2026

□ Podcast of the Year Awards

Deadline: February 14, 2027

□ Children's Book International

Deadline: March 14, 2027

□ The Hawthorne Prize

Deadline: April 25, 2027

For additional information, contest rules, categories, and submission details, visit

<https://americanwritingawards.com/>.

AmericanWritingAwards.com

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