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**Title of the Book:** *NINE: Vengeance of the Warrior (Book Two)*

**Author:** Shobha Nihalani

**Published by-** Penguin Books Ltd

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**Category-** Fiction, Thriller, Fantasy

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**Reviewed by**

**Varsha Singh**

Research Scholar, Poet, Translator, Reviewer, Editor and Blogger.

Shobha Nihalani's *NINE: Vengeance of the Warrior* is the second book in series of the *NINE* trilogy, after *NINE: Curse of the Kalingan* being the first. Nihalani has named the book after the legend of 'The Nine Unknown Men,' which is also the inspiration for the story.

“All future is defined by the past. And therefore, the end is only the beginning.” Hence, *Vengeance of the Warrior (Book 2)* traces back its threads to *Curse of the Kalingan (Book 1)*.

The historical background of this fantasy thriller is engrained in the famous War of Kalinga. In 261 BC: after his bloody battle with Kalinga, the Mauryan emperor Ashoka, overcome with remorse, swore never to wage another war. And to make sure no one else did. His Navratnas—the Nine—zealously guarded their powers and knowledge, handing them down through millennia and generations to ensure lasting peace.

From the corpses of the Kalingan warriors arose an angry spirit bent upon avenging the Kalinga Empire, destroying the Nine (Navratnas of Ashoka) and using their hidden knowledge to rule the world and change its destiny. Knowledge, that could change the destiny of every living being on earth.

The legend continues, when Tara, Akash and Zubin are brought forward as the chosen ones of the recent era named as the “Trinity” in order to carry forward the secrets of the society and protect it from evil hands. They do so, effectively by burying the vicious Kalingan warrior. After that, Akash, Tara and Zubin live their lives, hiding the fact that they are a part of King Ashoka's exalted *NINE* and that each of them has powers meant to be used for the benefit of mankind, when needed.

But the restless bloodthirsty Kalingan spirit rises again with greater evil powers, much angrier and more vengeful than before. This time he chooses the body of a woman, Tejaswi, to destroy the Nine. But the *NINE* prevail themselves ready with their enhanced power in order to face the

Kala Yogis and the Kalingan, with the help of their councilors. This time, Raakin, guardian of the trinity and Anita, a journalist, play essential roles being at the side of NINE; whereas, the Senior Six keep protecting them with their channelized powers.

The narrative is well-knitted, interesting and adds adventurous feeling in the reader's mind. It is difficult to put the book aside, before finishing it up, as suspense keep crawling in head, till end of this novel.

Shobha Nihalani is known for her well researched plots and events. This time too Nihalani's vast research is clearly visible in the narrative which shows brilliant detailing of each and every aspect as well as the very contexts used in her story are admirable.

### **About Shobha Nihalani**

Shobha Nihalani is an author who previously worked as a copywriter and journalist. The writer's debut novel was Karmic Blues and her other novel is The Silent Monument. Shobha Nihalani is known as a writer of thrilling fiction. Her books are spiced with murders, chases, fierce characters, and storylines that draw a lot from ancient Indian history.

Nihalani has worked as a copywriter, bookkeeper, teacher, salesperson, and journalist before becoming an author. Apart from writing novels; Nihalani also writes a humour column and blog posts. She and her family reside in Hong Kong.