

Plot summary: the nine guardians

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The Nine Guardians ? Nine Guardians? takes place in the State of Chiapas, in Mexico, where from the remains of the Mexican revolution came the presidency of Lazaro Cardenas. His presidency takes place between 1934 and 1940, during the time this novel takes place. Cardenas expropriated foreign-held properties, distributed land to peasants, and instituted reforms to benefit indigenous people and Mexican workers. Cardenas found it unfair for the Indians to not be treated as equals, so he demanded rights for Indians. Land holdings were controlled by a ruling elite.

The Indians were encouraged to rise against the landowners and demand their rights. They have the law on their side and they start to realize they don't deserve to be treated as slaves. With the help of others, Cardenas breaks up large estates and forces families off of the lands. The novel is written from the point of view of the author, Rosario Castellanos. However, a seven year old girl is the narrator through most of ? The Nine Guardians?. She takes us through the book by introducing the people surrounding her life and her family's life.

The seven year old girl is the daughter of a wealthy landowner, Cesar Arguello. Since the Arguellos are wealthy, the girl is not raised by her parents, but mostly by an Indian servant, she calls Nana. Nana has nurtured and cared for the girl and her little brother, Mario, since birth. Nana is an Indian that lives with this elite, controlling, possessive, landowning family. Despite the fact that she is treated as a slave, Nana loves the Arguellos. Nana becomes a big influence on the little girl, along with her parents, and the retaliation of the landowners and the Indians against one another.

The girl and her brother will become innocent victims mostly because of her father, who will try desperately to hold on to their land for Mario's future. Some of the damage done cannot be fixed and will remain permanent. It is a tragedy of money, power, and male supremacy. The situations that occur will leave a strong impact on how she thinks and feels. From beginning to end, the seven year old girl's perspective of the Indians will change dramatically. In the beginning, the girl is ignorant to the thought of being an Indian. She doesn't want to know their history and how they stand in their society.

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She speaks of how young she is and wants no part of what is going on. She loves her Nana but doesn't think she knows what she is talking about. The thought that she could have been an Indian threatens her. She wants to be idle, absent-minded, and not aware of her surroundings. Perhaps, she wishes this for Nana also. The Indians frighten her and she is ignorant of their part in society. In this novel, when bad things happen, some of the characters are superstitious and believe they pay for their mistakes through curses given by the sorcerers, especially the Indians.

She starts to understand her Nana when she sees her wounded knees done by a curse that has followed her from her home, Chactajal. It's withches' doings that's afoot, child. They gobble everything up-the crops, peace in the family, people's health. Since Nana grew up in the Arguellos house and loved the family she lived with, she was being punished. The Indians could not understand how she could love those that give orders and have possessions, it was against their beliefs.

The girl is angry at first at the Indians and begins to understand the sacrifices and hardships her Nana must have and is going through to be apart of the Arguellos family. From this experience, she starts to see who her father is and becomes disgusted with him because he is one that gives orders and own things. She starts to put a lot of faith in her Nana and believes the things she tells her. She becomes more aware that this time in her life is not going to be a time for fun. She also begins to learn to look with lowered eyes when humility looks at bigness, like the Indians do out of respect for the Nine Guardians.

From what I understand, the Indians believe that there are nine protectors of the earth that watch over all and control everything. The girl learns things from her Nana and learns to think differently about her parents. She witnesses an Indian killed because her father trusted him. It makes her sad and fearful of the power that her father possesses. She is seeing her parents differently. As a child, your parents are the world and they can do no harm. As a child, you think your parents are all-knowing. There comes a point where a child starts to grow up and sometimes perhaps their parents are not who the child thought they were.

The girl begins to grow up a little and realizes she is now seeing her parents otherwise, almost with a new set of eyes. Her father is completely self-absorbed, except for the fact that he wants to save his land for his son's inheritance. He thinks of himself as all mighty. He doesn't think the Indians are worth schooling when the law demands it be done. Her father thinks the Indians could never learn Spanish and are not worth the pay of a master to

educate them. Cesar has a sense of self-importance and cares only that his ? commands have power and his scolding inspire fear.?

He despises the government and believes Cardenas is inciting Indians against their masters and handing them over the rights that they can? t use and don? t deserve. ? He (Cardenas) doesn? t know them; he? s never been near them and found out how they stink of filth and drink. He? s never done them a favour and been rewarded with their laziness. And they? re so hypocritical, so underhand, so deceitful! ? He sees the Indians as little children. ? Cesar was incapable of speaking to people he didn? t consider his equals.? The story moves from Comitran to Chactajal where her father? s ranch is located.

Her father needs to supervise the grinding and branding of his crops done by the Indians. At the Arguello ranch, there are many families of Indians taking care of his land, the Indians that he pays little money too, along with no respect. The family goes to Chactajal without Nana because she is afraid of the witches? curses. On their way, the girl starts to learn about death, how easy it is to die when her cousin shoots a deer to kill it. Her and her brother Mario are surprised at how easy life can be taken away. The feud that explodes against the Arguellos leaves everlasting effects on the children.

The girl has seen her Nana? s status in society, she has seen the effect of Nana? s love towards her family, she can no longer go to school because it was ordered to be shut down. she has seen a man killed from trusting her father, Their land is set to fire and the threat that they will die in the fire, her illegitimate cousin is killed in rebellion towards her father, she sees her aunt go crazy, and she believes in the power of sorcery. She misses her Nana and

her wisdom on life. She is ultimately going to learn the about male supremacy and the effects it has on society.

Her brother, Mario, is the pride of the Arguellos family. The Indians curse the boy to death because of the endless fight her father has for power and wealth. The two things that matter to Cesar the most. ? For the Indian is helpless to do better if the white man? s will is not behind him. The Indians are starting to realize they are equal to white men. They lose all respect for the landowners and fight back just as bad as the Arguellos fought to keep them as slaves. They are aware now that they own the ranch and are not obliged to work for anyone because now Cardenas has more power than all the landowners.

Perhaps, it would have all been better if Cesar Arguellos realized that male supremacy should not control all of society. Cesar Arguello humiliated his wife, did not treat her as an equal, although she put up with him. He also put his children in jeopardy for having them around in the time of trouble. He didn? t realize what he thought and did was not the way the world was supposed to work. He was one man who believed he had a want to control and posses all the power and the wealth he could manage to get a hold of. His arrogant pride led his family to separation.

Her mother, Zoraida, was responsible for her life and her childrens? lives, although she allowed herself to do as Cesar demanded. Her mother demands that Nana leaves because Nana informed Zoraida about the curse put onto Mario? s life. The only reason the Arguello family managed to stay together was because of their beloved Mario. If Mario was to die, not only does she lose her son, but possibly her husband that she cannot communicate with.

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She fires Nana and leaves her daughter scared and enlightened even more about the people she loves and respects.

The girl has lost her Nana, her brother dies because of the curse put on his life, she has lost all respect for her mother and father. She only wants to be with Nana since she is the only one that loves and cares about her. Her brother is dead and she feels guilty because she thinks she could have stopped it from happening. Perhaps, she punished her mother for not caring about her. Her mother only cared and loved Mario. Without Mario, her mother felt she was no longer worthwhile. The girl finally realizes who her parents are and realizes that her Nana, despite being an Indian, is the one who cares about her.

She looks for forgiveness from her dead brother because she realizes that it was not his fault she was a female without love and respect from her parents. She realized that if her father just accepted that the time for male supremacy was to end, then the events that took place may never have had happened. Rosario Castellanos From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia Jump to: navigation, search Rosario Castellanos| Tombstone of Rosario Castellanos| Born| May 25, 1925Mexico City, Mexico| Died| August 7, 1974 (aged 49) Tel Aviv, Israel| Occupation| Poet and author|

Rosario Castellanos (25 May 1925 – 7 August 1974) was a Mexican poet and author. Along with the other members of the Generation of 1950 (the poets who wrote following the Second World War, influenced by Cesar Vallejo and others), she was one of Mexico's most important literary voices in the last century. Throughout her life, she wrote eloquently about issues of cultural and gender oppression, and her work has influenced feminist theory and <https://assignbuster.com/plot-summary-the-nine-guardians/>

cultural studies. Though she died young, she opened the door of Mexican literature to women, and left a legacy that still resonates today.

Contents * 1 Life * 2 Work * 3 Selected bibliography * 4 English translations * 5 Additional reading * 6 Notes| Life Born in Mexico City, she was raised in Comitán near her family's ranch in the southern state of Chiapas. She was an introverted young girl, who took notice of the plight of the indigenous Maya who worked for her family. According to her own account, she felt estranged from her family after a soothsayer predicted that one of her mother's two children would die shortly, and her mother screamed out, " Not the boy! The family's fortunes changed suddenly when President Lázaro Cárdenas enacted a land reform and peasant emancipation policy that stripped the family of much of its land holdings. At fifteen, Castellanos and her parents moved to Mexico City. One year later, her parents were dead and she was left to fend for herself. Although she remained introverted, she joined a group of Mexican and Central American intellectuals, read extensively, and began to write. She studied philosophy and literature at UNAM (the National Autonomous University of Mexico), where she would later teach, and joined the National

Indigenous Institute, writing scripts for puppet shows that were staged in impoverished regions to promote literacy. Ironically, the Institute had been founded by President Cárdenas, who had taken away her family's land. She also wrote a weekly column for the newspaper *Excelsior*. In addition to her literary work, Castellanos held several government posts. In recognition for her contribution to Mexican literature, Castellanos was appointed

ambassador to Israel in 1971. On 7 August 1974 Castellanos died in Tel Aviv from an unfortunate electrical accident.

Some have speculated that the accident was in fact suicide. Mexican writer Martha Cerda, for example, wrote to journalist Lucina Kathmann, " I believe she committed suicide, though she already felt she was dead for some time. ". [1] There is no evidence to support such a claim, however. Work Throughout her career, Castellanos wrote poetry, essays, one major play, and three novels: the semi-autobiographical *Balun Canan* and *Oficio de tinieblas* (translated into English as *The Book of Lamentations*) depicting a Tzotzil indigenous uprising in Chiapas based on one that had occurred in the 19th century.

Despite being a ladino - of mestizo, not indigenous descent - Castellanos shows considerable concern and understanding for the plight of indigenous peoples. " *Cartas a Ricardo*," a collection of her letters to her husband Ricardo Guerra was published after her death as was her third novel, " *Rito de iniciación*. " Rosario Castellanos said of the collection of her letters in " *Cartas a Ricardo*" that she considered them to be her autobiography. " *Rito de iniciación*" is about a young woman who comes to Mexico City and discovers her vocation of a writer.