



## Shield of Winter

*Nalini Singh*

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Assassin. Soldier. Arrow. That is who Vasic is, who he will always be. His soul drenched in blood, his conscience heavy with the weight of all he's done, he exists in the shadows, far from the hope his people can almost touch—if only they do not first drown in the murderous insanity of a lethal contagion. To stop the wave of death, Vasic must complete the simplest and most difficult mission of his life.

For if the Psy race is to survive, the empaths must wake...

Having rebuilt her life after medical “treatment” that violated her mind and sought to stifle her abilities, Ivy should have run from the black-clad Arrow with eyes of winter frost. But Ivy Jane has never done what she should. Now, she'll fight for her people, and for this Arrow who stands as her living shield, yet believes he is beyond redemption. But as the world turns to screaming crimson, even Ivy's fierce will may not be enough to save Vasic from the cold darkness...

## Shield of Winter Details

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## From Reader Review Shield of Winter for online ebook

**Kristen says**

**4 1/2 to 5 Shining Stars!**

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**Izy says**

The day i read this book I was seriously like

and ever since Kaleb, Aden and Vasic made an appearance in the earlier books I was like:

**Anyway onto the serious review.**

Rating~ 4.5 Stars.

I know as with many fans of the series we were all eagerly waiting for Vasic's book to be released (ever since he said he was tired, and seemed suicidal and some of us were greatly disappointed that he wasn't going to end up with Aden). SoW is mainly about Vasic an arrow and Ivy an empath psy, but we see alot of our favorite changeling packs and Psy's world where we see the impact of what happened in the last book.

While I did love Vasic and Ivy's story it was different than other other Psy books like for e.g. Judd and Kaleb's. In those books we saw Judd and Kaleb kind of learning about emotions and understanding them but at the same time they were very much still in silence in the way they interacted with others apart from their heroines. Vasic is different in that aspect though he did not quite understand emotions like hope but he had someone who kept him from feeling lonely, his friendship with Aden which saved him from a difficult childhood and later with the morality of what they were doing for their race. To me it felt like Vasic and Ivy's relationship came about very easy and without much conflict. It could be because the end of silence or just because they both could feel without any restraints, especially with all the understanding and emotional backbone that Ivy had. Their falling in love was sweet and cute.

I really loved all the scenes that showed the previous characters since it showed what they had been up to and their meetings were all constructed very well to include the overall arc of the series and its effects.

In the end, this was a great read and I can't wait for the next book in the series (Aden's).

I FINISHED IT ! Review coming soon.

**Before the release:**

**THE BLURB IS UP !!!!** Jumping up and down yay !!. Such a long wait boo !! Its Vasic's book YAY !!

## Jojo says

Vasic!!!!

I can't wait to see who will be his "mate".

For those that wanted Vasic to be with Aden , just NOOOOOOOOO!

I understand the appeal but even if it was possible the truth is, they aren't suitable for each other. They are both too broken to heal and save the other. Aden only looks more whole than the other Arrows, because he's the leader, he has a responsibility to protect all of them. But deep down he's as broken or even more than the rest, especially because he's a F of some kind (like he said in HoO) and like Faith he probably lives with the threat of insanity. Now Vasic is so close to the edge that he needs someone that's pure emotion, pure fire to melt him ^^ . I was thinking a E-psy or a maternal Changeling or even someone who is a half psy/changeling.

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## Blacky \*Romance Addict\* says

*“Thank you for making me feel alive for the first time in a decade,” he told her as he fought and failed to release her wrist. “If I could alter time, I’d make myself into a man who could walk by your side, but I’m meant for the shadows.” Meant to live in the cold dark with the other monsters. “It’s where I intend to stay.”*

Vasic

**This was a perfect ending to a story arc that started 12 books ago, so many things have happened, their entire world changed, and now...**

**I STILL WANT MORE!!!!!!!**

**For all the lovers of this series, you will not be disappointed!!!**

**The story** was fantastic, lots of action here, plus lots of revelations and well, you know this is the last book in this story arc so almost everything will be resolved.

**The romance Beautiful!**

I can't tell you how much I loved Ivy and Vasic, they are so wonderful together

It is a VERY SLOW romance, but that made me love them even more. Just perfect!!!!!!

*“Trust me.”*

*He didn't break the violently intimate eye contact. “It's too late for me, Ivy. Focus your*

*energies on the ones you can save.”*

We get to see almost all the characters from previous book, Kaleb having a slightly bigger role, but nothing that overshadowed the main couple and their story :)

**All in all, just a fantastic book, in a fantastic series, written by such a fantastic author.**

**Nalini Singh, I love you!!!!!!**

\*buddy read with Glam, it was awesome!!!!\*

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## **Jilly says**

Okay, I love Vasic, even though his name is suspiciously close to the name of some really tasty pickles.

I am realizing that I like the psy men in this awesome world that Singh has created better than the alpha-male changelings. It's the strong silent type, I guess. Maybe that's why I married an English guy. I'm good without too many emotions running wild because we all know that I am emotionally incapable of angst. It would seriously annoy me to have some guy vomiting feelings all over me every day. No thank you. So, the psy men in this series are the ones I like best.

Vasic is about as strong and silent as you can get. He is part of an elite squad of assassins that are called the Arrows, and he can teleport along with other psychic abilities. He has been in the books for the whole series and I've been looking forward to his story.

Ivy is an Empath. She broke her conditioning (all psy's used to go through horrible brain-washing techniques to get rid of all of their emotions) at a young age and was re-conditioned (tortured) because she had feelings. Her parents moved her into a remote area to keep the fact that she still had emotions secret.

Now that the psy race was starting to crumble, they realized that the Empaths might be able to help the disease that is spreading through their people. They send the Arrow squad to each deliver and protect an Empath to be trained on how to use their abilities to help the psy's. Vasic is assigned to Ivy.

The thing is, Ivy is vivacious and full of the feels. Not what Vasic expected. And, she is friendly and trusting towards him, instead of being afraid of him. He finds himself warming up to her - very slowly.

Their story is super adorable. Ivy is sweet and loving, and Vasic can't help but respond to her. It is a nice slow progression as they grow attached to each other. I love that there is no insta-love.

Another great bonus is that there is an awesome dog in the book. Ivy's dog, Rabbit, is an adorable bonus. Rabbit also helps thaw out Vasic - who doesn't like dogs? Only serial killers, that's who! It is really cute when Rabbit meets the leader of the changeling wolf pack and becomes quite starstruck by him.

It's a lot of fun watching the Arrows, this deadly squad of hardened soldiers, become attached to their empathes that they are protecting. I guess it's got that awww-factor that you always get when you see a soldier holding a baby, or a fireman saving a kitten - that warm-fuzzy stuff. Even I love that kind of crap.

feel the warmth? Yeah, me too...

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## Ferdy says

### Spoilers

Not as good as the last book, but I was expecting that since the story, characters, and romance in *Heart of Obsidian* were spot on... It was obvious no later installments would top that.

-Vasic and Ivy were decent enough characters, they were rather cliched and predictable though. Ivy was the typical Mary Sue, her personality was pretty much the same as Sascha, Faith, and all the other psy heroines from earlier books. There was nothing real or complex about her, I didn't hate her but I didn't really care about her all that much either.

Then there was Vasic, he started off great... But then I got really tired of him acting and thinking all emo, angsty, and broken. It went on for far too long - I understood why he was so tortured and whatnot, but after a while his 'I'm-oh-so-broken-and-can't-do-emotions-and-noone-can-ever-love-me-because-I'm-tainted' mantra got really boring.

-Vasic and Ivy's romance was quite sweet but also rather run-of-the-mill and typical with the whole tortured-emo guy being saved by the love of a good woman. It would have made a nice change for once if they were both as fucked up as each other or if the heroine was the one that needed to be brought out of the darkness by a sweet, hopeful, innocent man... Sadly, all these PNR books like to stick with the same old formula.

One thing I wasn't impressed with was Ivy repeatedly chasing after Vasic, especially in the first half. I would have preferred there to have been more of a balance between the two and for Vasic to make the first move every once in a while. It would have made Ivy seem less pathetic and desperate.

-The story dragged in parts, there were so many subplots. The infection/mass murders, the E's place in the psynet and whether they could help fix the net was the main arc (along with the romance)... But then there was all the other mini arcs that I didn't care about like Ming's evil plan to get Vasic, the pro-silence psy causing trouble, Vasic's arm-gauntlet thing that was killing him, Zaid's (or whatever his name was) emoness/past — they just got in the way of the main story.

-I liked that the focus was on the psy again rather than the changelings, most of the books have been far more changeling-centric rather than psy-centric and there doesn't seem to be as much left to explore with the Snowdancers/Darkrivers (who basically just growl and are protective) unlike the psy, who still had lots to offer. Not so much now though since a lot of psy related issues/conflicts were resolved in this.

-I wish there'd been more focus on the other E's (Jaya, Isaiah, Conchetta), they would have fit into the story better than the random changelings/psy that dropped in and out. Also, why were there POV's with Hawke/Sienna and Kaleb/Sahara, they've had their books - I already know they've healed each other and are happy. I would have much preferred to read about Jaya/Abbot or Isaiah/Conchetta's relationships.

-The ending was rather anti-climactic, there was so much build up for the various craziness going on yet the resolutions at the end were utterly underwhelming... Ivy all of sudden realised what had to be done to stop

the infection in the psynet and then in a few paragraphs there was a summary of how her idea helped everyone. It just seemed like a rubbish pay off to all the madness/conflict that was going on in the rest of the book.

Vasic and Ivy didn't have much charisma together or separately but they were mostly okay characters, and they were cute together, the story itself was a bit all over the place but there some parts that were very entertaining, the world and secondary characters were really good though. All in all, I did enjoy it but it wasn't anything amazing or memorable.

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## Val...Shameless.Skanky.B\*tchy. says

**Re-read 10/26/14** - *After finishing Rock Courtship, I felt like revisiting some PNR Singh and thought I'd re-read this one to see if it grew on me more...unfortunately the review below didn't go up any and still stands...*

### 3 LACKLUSTER Stars

This was a rough one for me. I love Nalini Singh. I love Vasic. I LOVE this series.

I was excited for the greatness I have come to expect from Goddess Singh. But how did I feel?

It took FOREVER for any action (both plot-wise and sexytime-wise) to happen.

And when it did, I was expecting this:

But I felt like I was reading this:

The plot FINALLY picked up.

But by then I was tired.

Tired of reading this because it took me a week to finish when I usually blow through these in about a day.

Tired of all the jumping back and forth from plot line to plot line.

This one was for me what I had expected *Obsidian* to be. See that review [here](#)

I mentioned in that review that I expected it to be boring because the two main leads were both Psy (I prefer Changeling/Psy or Changeling/Human relationships...well mainly I just prefer Changeling period. In fact, my favorite parts of THIS book involved Hawke or Lucas.) That one (Heart of Obsidian) surprised me.

This one...I was a little underwhelmed. But it might have just been me. Or my too-high expectations.

Anyhoo, I'm still looking forward to the next one.

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## **Robin (Bridge Four) says**

### **4.5 Stars No Spoilers**

The thing I love about the Psy/Changeling series is that no matter who the relationship revolves around there is always a new facet or dimension that makes it just different enough that I always fall into the story wondering how it will resolve itself. With each new book more connections are made in this world and I love still seeing characters from previous books intertwined with the new romantic couple as the underlying story progresses.

This is a story about the very secretive and mysterious arrows. They are probably the most broken and the most silent group in the psy-net and have been through the worst trials to form them into the weapons they became. But still they were made to be protectors of the net.

*Heroes are often the quietest people in the room, the ones least willing to lay claim to the title. These men and women simply go about doing what needs to be done without any expectation of gratitude or fame. It is in their nature to protect and to shield and to fight against darkness, whatever form it may take.*

The Psy net is infected and collapsing with more dark and dead spots cropping up everywhere before Krychek and the arrows can contain them. The E-psy must be woken up to see if they can help stabilize an increasingly unstable net if they cannot find a way to heal the net then all Psy will suffer.

Vasic is part of the Arrow team working with some of the Es to try and find a way to combat the blackness that is infecting the minds of the Psy. Vasic had lost all hope for himself. Buried under the weight of the life he has lead he volunteered for a very experimental procedure that could end his life. Little did he know that life could hold anything else but death for him until meeting Ivy Jane the empath he is assigned to protect. With her help he might see a different future but is it too late?

*Vasic stared at her, wishing he had the capacity to comprehend her. Deep in the back of his mind, in the crumbled ruins of who he might've once been, he had the piercing thought that she was a rare beautiful gift. And such a gift, came the ice-cold reminder from the core of his nature, would only end up crushed and bloody and defiled should he attempt to handle it.*

The love story takes a little time to pick up any speed but that is because of how deeply indoctrinated silence was into the arrows. Ivy had a long way to come with Vasic she had been hiding her empathic state her entire life and now even though silence has fallen she is still a little afraid of the woman she needs to become to help heal the net.

*She wanted to be the promise that had been stifled inside her for a lifetime. Good or bad, weak or strong, resilient or fragile, she needed to know who Ivy Jave was beyond the cage of Silence.*

The villain of this story is different from all the others in this series as it is the Net itself, imploding in on itself and threatening to take more and more psy with it when it goes. There was carnage and some very bleak moments that will keep you on the edge of your seat.

This is a great follow up to Heart of Obsidian Ivy and Vasic are incredibly hot and steamy together. I loved getting a deeper view into the Arrow's and what the future might hold for them. I enjoyed the resolution to the problems and as always I was caught up in every minute of the story. Nalini Singh has developed another great addition to this series, like always I can't wait for the next one.

*Thank you to Penguin Books for the ARC in exchange for an honest review*

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## **Jessica's Totally Over The Top Book Obsession says**

### **5 Vasic Stars**

So going into this I had no desire to read about Vasic. I just figured I would just have to read it and get it over with. So imagine my surprise when I flipping loved this book! Vasic totally stole my heart. I don't know what it was about the stone cold soldier but I just couldn't get enough of him. He was just so damaged, but protective. I wanted to heal all his boo boos and kiss it better lol. I really loved Ivy too. Loved how strong she was and how much she fought for Vasic. I thought Vasic and Ivy together were very cute. I loved the plot too. The fall of the psynet as we have known it. I really enjoyed this book. On a side note.....has anyone else notice that Ming LeBon acts like swiper the fox from Dora the explorer. I mean in every book he hatches these plans of evil to steal someone for power and then fails so fast and easy and just gives up like

I mean in Kiss of Snow he is all "I will have Sienna Lauren and her power in my control because I am the greatest war mind in the psynet(\*insert crazy villain laugh here\*)" And what his his great plan he shows up at Sienna place and is calling out to her like " Hey Sienna you need to like come with me okay? No okay bye" Then in this book he is all "I will overdose Vasic with Jaxs so I can control his power(\*insert crazy evil laugh\*)" Then after only one try of sending a few men that fail you don't hear from him again. I mean Ming is suppose to be so badass but that second someone says no he just like Okay! His attempts are so sad they are laughable and I always end up picturing him as Swiper the fox. Sorry just thought I would share that thought :)

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## **Lila says**

*I was one of lucky few to receive the ARC and I'll give my best not to spoil it for anyone. :)*

Ending of Heart of Obsidian left us with the most powerful Psy in the world declaring the end of Silence Protocol.  
Do you remember Subject 8-91?

Subject 8-91 was the "patient zero", the first Psy to show signs of infection that started spreading through Net and turning hosts into mindless, violent murderers. In the dawn of a new world, when Psy are still scared, confused and trying to adjust, infection seems to become more vicious and contagious than ever. The only possible solution are empaths, Psy with designation nobody knows anything about.

I started reading this book and 20 pages in, I decided to get back to reread *Slave to Sensation* (you absolutely don't have to do this). Not just because E-Psy are first mentioned there, but because I wanted to focus on the effects Silence had on them. Silence Protocol was in its core an absence of emotions; antithesis of E-Psy. If Silence was proved to be damaging for all Psy, for empaths was downright annihilating. I was curious to see how are they going to step in into this fight against contagion. So, here are people who were hiding, thinking all their life there is something wrong with them; who were convinced by society they are failures and now it's expected of them to save the world. Aftermath of the fall of Silence is a scary time for Psy race- on one side most powerful man on the world declared end of Silence- who can oppose him? On the other side there is an infection taking thousands of lives every day- is a disease direct consequence of absence of Silence and this new designation? Nalini wrote this so good- Kaleb recognising he should make delicate moves and use politics instead of his vast power. It's hard for Psy to abandon the rules they were thought to live by for so long and that made the whole story very believable. Before *HoO* I thought that Nalini's main goal for aligning Kaleb with changelings, Forgotten and Arrows is to form united front against Council. Now we know Kaleb was always capable of destroying Council on his own. And here I see genius of Nalini.. all those threads she waved carefully through 12 books came together here so naturally and logically; in purpose more important than anything- the survival.

Which brings me to hero and heroine of the story.

What is next for Arrows whose sole purpose of existing was to protect Silence? Trained for combat, their skills exploited by Ming LeBon in a betrayal so damaging they know only that they don't want to be used by anyone anymore, including Kaleb. But their impressive powers put them into right position to act as a security detail for empaths. Vasic is assigned to protect Ivy, empath and heroine of this story.

The one thing we know about Vasic from before is that he is on the edge of breaking, holding to a sanity by a thread. In *SoW* we get some answers about this... In *BoM* was said that Ming "utilized Vasic on weakly basis." His unique set of skills, Tk-V and one true teleporter on the net made him invaluable weapon. All that may be, but Vasic simply wasn't meant to be a killer. He is psychologically wired to protect, his first instinct is not to kill. He was trained to be an assassin and it almost destroyed him.

Who is better suited to save Vasic from himself and prove him that he is worth loving than an empath?

I have to say that romance was simple and straight-forward and my only objection is that Vasic sometimes seemed too stubborn in his self-inflicted martyrdom and, thus, making Ivy more demanding, but once he melted he was ... omg, hot. I swear, I always think that Nalini can't possibly write more scenes as sexy as in Judd's or Kaleb's book, but she keeps proving me wrong. Holly hell, these Psy virgins...I'll just quote Vasic on this:

**"Arrows learn by repetition and practice until the basic skill is honed, at which point we begin to specialize."**

That's all I'll say on that subject.:D

I'm always anticipating with half dread/half excitement what follows after that ONE -most important- part in any series.

*Heart of Obsidian* was such a massive book in terms of story arc we followed from book #1 and, of course, because it answered all questions about Kaleb and Ghost. Well, let me tell you, *Shield of Winter* is a great, quality read I think it's not fair to call it simply a good follow up- if anything it made the whole story more focused and rounded and everything Psy/Changeling series delivered so far that much rewarding. :)

- from SHIELD OF WINTER (June release)

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## Kathylill says

I adore Nalini Singh, really I do, and I love her even more for sending me an advanced reader copy to review. I've been a huge fan of the Psy/Changeling world from the start. I mean who could pull it off to make even rat shifters sound sexy? Right from the first moment I read the first line introducing Vasic, the cold TK-V Psy with the silver eyes I wanted his story. And Nalini Singh delivers again a fascinating story with my favorite Psy taking over the center stage.

**The Psy-Changeling series is one of the few remaining paranormal romance series that keep getting better with each new book.** There are many series out there who can't keep the same level of awesomeness in the course of an ongoing series with 10 or more installments. Sherrilyn Kenyon's Dark-Hunter world and the Black Dagger Brotherhood by J.R. Ward disappointed me. I don't even want to start on the last installments in Charlaine Harris' Sookie Stakehouse series. And even my all-time favorite author Karen Marie Moning crushed my fangirling over the Fever world back to the Ice Age with Iced (Dani O'Malley, #1; Fever, #6). Nalini doesn't disappoint. She always delivers a good story even if the main characters of the individual book don't end up on my favorite shelf.

**My favorite part about Shield of Winter was not as I expected Vasic falling in love with Ivy but to see how Nalini played out the many challenges in the Psy-world after the fall of Silence.**

The twilight of 2081 will be forever remembered as the time when Silence fell in a crash of violence brutally leashed by the furious abilities of the most powerful Psy in the Net. With the fall comes a hush across the world, as the Psy race seeks to understand who they are in this new reality where emotion isn't a crime punishable by a vicious psychic brain-wipe, and the heart is no longer an organ simply used to pump blood. For though Silence was a deeply flawed construct, it existed for a reason.

1. On the one hand there is the creeping darkness in the Net that is still getting stronger, a sickness infesting in the society, on the other are the empaths whose abilities have been suppressed their whole lives and who now have to come out of hiding and face fighting a war against madness on the psychic plane they have no understanding of how to fight. Nalini Singh has done a great job in exploring this story line.

2. The same can be said about another sub-plot: The importance of government supervision and control and the qualities of a good leader. Kaleb Krychek, Nikita Duncan, Anthony Kyriakos and even Ming LeBon - they all play a role in this book trying to keep a fragmenting society from crumbling down completely. Does this make them all good persons? No! But it explains why sometimes justified revenge and personal interests have to be postponed when hundreds of thousands of innocents would suffer otherwise.

3. With Vasic being an Arrow, Shield of Winter also features an interesting discussion on assassins/soldiers. The Arrows have been known for black operations, for assassination and even mindless murder (while under the influence of a drug called Jax administrated during the time Ming LeBon was the leader). Each member of the squad has to come to terms not only with the fall of the Silence Protocol and the challenge of a new society they have to adapt to, but also with their former role as assassins. The Arrow squad will have to undergo a long process of reconciliation. Soldiers go to war and sometimes they have to kill. But soldiers also help in reconstruction and development; they are the ones who help in times natural disaster strike, rescuing innocents, sometimes by putting their lives on the line. In a new world without silence even assassins have to adapt and change without forgetting the past. Nalini takes us on an interesting journey of assassins turning to heroes that will render readers sympathetic to guilt and responsibility and what it means to serve and protect.

**As I mentioned before that the love story wasn't my favorite part of the book.** My main reason is that I constantly compared the love story of Ivy and Vasic to those of Sasha & Lucas Slave to Sensation and Brenda & Judd Caressed By Ice. Sasha an empath like Ivy, Judd an Arrow like Vasic. I had hoped for a similar romantic journey with a scarred alpha-male and a shy empath female, a slow awakening to emotions as in those two former books. But the romance in shield of winter was kind of peculiar, showing chaotic instead of organic growth. I was not really persuaded to like Vasic and Ivy. Vasic is a real softy and Ivy is a little bit too pushy for my tastes.

(view spoiler)

**But the novel recompenses by the different POVs and all the secondary characters.** We meet old friends like Zie Zan, Alice Eldridge, Devraj Santos and are being introduced to new ones like the group of empaths and Arrows. Especially Aden has a leading supporting role and I loved to see Sasha in action, calming a riot with her cardinal powers.

So all in all this might not be a glowing 5-star review but it still was a very satisfying 4,5-star read for me. I hope very much everybody else will like it just as I had.

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**Georgia ♥ Team Dex ♥ says**

### **5 Winter of the Soul Stars**

Love, hate, guilt, redemption, honor, loyalty, friendship. Everything, Psy have turn their backs to. Now they are back to haunt them and claim vengeance.

If you follow this series, you know...

*"We are Psy and we are capable of greatness. It is time to step out of the dark."*

Kaleb Krychek, declared the end of an era. Silence, Psy's sanity and punishment, has fallen. And now the world stands at crossroads as blood bathes the streets. People are dying all around the world and their only hope, the ones they attempted to eradicate. **E-Psy** and the Arrows. The killers and the victims. The hunters and the hunted unite in a common goal. Prove that Silence isn't necessary for Psy and to feel is to live.

This is Vasic and Ivy's story. A beautiful, heartbreaking, extraordinary, love story.

*"I never dared dream of you, Ivy. I never thought a man like me deserved such a gift."*

What to say about this book without making it sound trivial?

Vasic is an Arrow at the end of his limit with the clock ticking his physical or mental death. And Ivy is a broken E-Psy with the ability to heal souls. Together they fight for their people and for a future that seems distant and unreachable.

Kaleb & Sahara, Lucas & Sascha, all the Changelings, Psys, Arrows, Aden, of course and Forgotten are back as they all slowly heal wounds, create bonds and build a better place for their children. Darkness threatens to consume them but they have some aces left up in their sleeves.

*"We 're clawing our way back - we 'll never be what we once were, but that isn't the goal."*

When back in 2006, Mrs. Singh introduced us to this world, I never expected that she would bring us this far. Writing riveting, lyrical and emotional stories, in a sci-fi world, stories about sensations and feelings, about people falling in love with their souls, I am now certain that she had all these plots and twists and brilliance in her mind since then. She knew where she wanted to go with these heroes and that is why she writes excellent books. And I will keep reading them for 100 more.....

*Sidenotes:*

*Aden will break my heart, I just know it...*

*Rabbit was the star of this story! Woof!*

*Zie Zen and Sunny, love for ever.*

*I would like to meet Anthony Kyriakus. He knows everyone he needs to know.*

*Kaleb, Kaleb, Kaleb....*

*Alice deserves a changeling mate to keep her on her toes.*

*We need more info on the Forgotten. Like, NOW!*

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**Jo ★The Book Sloth★ says**

**Definite minor, possible major, spoilers -untagged-**

*Vasic is an Arrow. Trained from a very young age(just four) to withstand the most grueling physical torture, the worst mental conditions, Vasic is now a man raised in pain and Silence. And then his new assignment comes. He and his men are to protect the newly awakened Es as they train to reach their potential and hopefully save the PsyNet from the corruption that's been steadily driving the Psy race first to madness and then to death. Ivy Jane is the E assigned to him and the one person who could ever possibly help him heal. Ivy never managed to become Silent, too much of an Empath to ever truly lose all emotion. Now that the Silence has finally fallen she is ready to fight for her right to live among the rest of her race and fight for the Arrow surrounded by Ice that has managed to steal her heart.*

We first get a glimpse of how the Arrows think and work in Caressed By Ice but Judd Lauren had always

been different from the other members of the squad because he had a special bond with his family, something the rest of the squad lacks since their loyalty lies wholly with their brothers in arms. Now our hero is Vasic, another member of the team and we get to see the inner workings of the group since Vasic is still one of them and a good example of how they work.

Vasic was a heart-breaking character. Although he is supposed to be Silent still because all Arrows need the Silence to harness their deadly psychic gifts, I don't think a person can carry so much guilt if he has no emotions. Vasic is an honorable man, a man who was willing to do things that went against his nature, become an assassin, for a cause he thought was worthy. The cause for which he fought, for which all the Arrows fought, all these years proved to be false, instead of fighting for his race as he'd thought, he'd been fighting to the advantage of one man, someone he trusted with his life and his skills, someone who betrayed him. Now all the guilt over the crimes he committed is catching up with him and leaving him crippled and self-distractive. The only thing that kept him from going over the edge most of the time was the loyalty of another man, a brother in all ways but biological but in the end even he didn't manage to keep him from falling. But now he has Ivy, his strong, determined Empath to fight for him and he isn't prepared to stop fighting for her yet.

*“I won't forgive you,” his partner said into the quiet. “Don't ask it.”*

*Vasic accepted that. In volunteering for the gauntlet, he'd broken the trust formed between them when they'd been two scared boys who had no one else to turn to, a trust of brotherhood that said they'd fight together to the end. “I was weak,” he said. “I'll be strong now.”*

*Aden didn't look at him. “If you were weak, you'd have killed yourself years ago. It's your strength that doomed you—and your loyalty.” Aden clenched his jaw so tight, the bone pushed white against his skin. “Take your chance at happiness, Vasic. Be with Ivy. It's little enough recompense for the lives you've saved.”*

*“And the lives I've taken?”*

*“You gave yourself a death sentence.”*

Ivy Jane didn't know what an Empath was until Vasic appeared at her house with an offer for her but she was one of the lucky ones. Her family's loyalty lead them to protect her from the rest of her race who would have destroyed her mind over her lack of Silence so unlike the rest of the Psy she was raised in a place where fractured Silence wasn't punished but protected. Now she has a new purpose in her life. She knows what she is, she can fight for her right to existence as well as the rest of the Es in the Net because the PsyNet needs them if it is to survive. She also has a man to save from the abyss he is about to fall into and she is up the task.

The romance story between Ivy and Vasic takes some time to built although the attraction to one another is there from the beginning. The natural attraction of people to the Empaths affects Vasic from the beginning and he keeps coming closer and closer to Ivy until their relationship is unavoidable.

There are some "I don't deserves you"s and some "I'm a killer, you can do better"s but it is so nicely given by the author that I just wanted to hug the hero and tell him everything is gonna be okay instead of my usual "get over it already" attitude. The story is sweet and very believable and I thought that Ivy and Vasic were a well suited couple. All her life and vibrance complimenting his icy exterior and more somber attitude.

As usual with NS's books we also got to see a lot of the previous main characters as well. Mostly this book concentrated on Kaleb and Sahara and a little on Sascha and Lucas. We see how Kaleb and Sahara work together after their bonding and it was just as perfect as the rest of the book. Kaleb is still a ruthless man and Sahara is still the one person that can have a positive influence on him.

*Kaleb's hands on her hips, his thumbs brushing over her skin after he nudged up her knit top as he had a*

*way of doing. "Good governance," he said, "is acting for your people rather than for your own gain." Her fingers stilled on his tie. "Yes," she whispered to the man she adored, a man who'd been brutally scarred by "leaders" acting for their own selfish interest. "That is your definition." His fingers squeezed her hips. "Mine is to do nothing that would make you ashamed to be mine." Sometimes, he broke her heart. "Never will I be ashamed to be yours."*

This was one of the most beautiful moments in the book.

The general plot, outside of romance, is as good as we've come to expect from NS. The Psy race is in confusion and fear of the change brought by the fall of Silence, something that isn't helped by the madness that's been brought by the infection in the PsyNet. When people start going crazy and dying some Psy think that the fall of Silence led them to this and try to go back to what they knew. But Kaleb Krychek isn't about to allow his people to return to the twisted state that brought all this on them in the first place. Without someone else to blame the Es become a target for their fear and prejudice, the unknown always the easiest thing to reject. So the Arrows don't have just the illness in the Net to fight but they have to protect their charges every minute of every day by bigots that are ready to take them down.

Another enemy is former councilor Ming LeBon who isn't about to admit defeat and let his most valuable asset get away. He wants Vasic as he is unique in his abilities and he is determined to get him. To be honest I thought that this was way too easily "solved". Not that Ming is dead yet but I have a feeling this won't be the case for long.

I can't wait to see what will happen next. I hope the next book is on Aden because I'm way too curious of his abilities that seem to be out of the ordinary and I have a feeling we will be seeing more of the Forgotten in the next book. Maybe a Forgotten heroine? Pretty please? Just a year to go...

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## **Maya says**

Nalini Singh did it again! I love her stories and I really enjoyed this one, too. Also the fact that we got to see more of Kaleb and Sahara was a huge bonus. We got to know more about the Dark net and how it looks like, also new questions and some answered ones. The journey is a great one, full of romance and also a vision of the future that the Psy might have. We also got to meet new characters that are surprisingly lovely and add so much to this story. I loved Jane and how she kept pushing Vasic. She never gave up on him, even when he did. There were moments where I really thought that was it for him but thankfully the ending wasn't so dark. I feel bad for him and what he lost but in the end he gained so much more, hope and love being one of them. I enjoyed reading about Aden and getting a better feel for his character. I wonder how his story will look like but I'm sure it will be a great read.

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## **Annie (Under the Covers Book Blog) says**

In the Psy-Changeling world, Nalini Singh has built a race of cold, merciless killers who are often portrayed as untouchable. However, in SHIELD OF WINTER, the thirteenth book in the Psy-Changeling series, Singh explores the hidden passion of Vasic, the Arrow.

To be honest, I wasn't expecting to love this book as much as the last book. But there was something so sweet and tender about Vasic's character that absolutely melted my heart. Sometimes, when Singh isn't too careful, her warrior heroes can come across as too devoid of emotion or almost too untouchable, as in the case of Judd in *Caressed by Ice* in the beginning. While Vasic still has that detached personality, the way Singh incorporates his past really makes the reader connect with his character.

Ivy, too, is such a solid strength in the book. Not overly in your face about anything, she is a steady presence that matches Vasic well. I loved their romance and how Singh was able to create this slow-burning fiery passion by making it almost seem like young love. Both are so unaware of their feelings or simply don't know what to do that it makes the romance feel so authentic and honest. I feel like that honesty comes through in her writing.

The infection storyline was interesting to witness. I feel like Singh brought a tangible aspect to an otherwise psychic/mind-oriented dilemma. Only when the violence broke out did we see the level of danger that the infection posed, but even then the hazards are very much played up so that by the time all hell broke loose, readers were on the edge of their seats with anticipation and dread. I feel like that is a very tough thing to accomplish, yet Singh manages it with expert precision.

One of the great things about Singh's writing is that she describes things so eloquently and with so much detail. However, I think it can be a double-edged sword sometimes because it can easily become too convoluted with too many extra sensory details in a single scene. While this bothered me some in the beginning, I felt so in tune with the romance later on that I forgot about it. I thought it was worth mentioning anyway.

*SHIELD OF WINTER* turned out to be more than I expected. Painting a colorless world with her fiery passion, Singh breathes life into two characters who need it the most. I didn't expect to fall in love with Ivy and Vasic as much as I did, but that's a testament to Singh's talent. She can accomplish anything with her writing.

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## Alex is The Romance Fox says

Nalini Singh's *Psy-Changeling* amazing series just keeps growing better and better with each book.

The world-building is complex, multi-faceted and imaginative but most of all she has established a world that is real and believable, which almost fades into the background getting a reader to focus on the characters and the stories.

**“Insanity, blood-soaked death, murderous aggression, this is who the Psy were before Silence. No other race, it is said, bred more vicious, more intelligent, or more sadistic serial killers. But worse was the clawing madness that destroyed so many of them, saints and sinners alike, until it became known as the flip side to their incredible psychic gifts.”**

Throughout the series, the character development has been amazing. Real people who you can relate to and engage with. And with each book, the story-line is filled with sub-plots that entwine seamlessly with the main plot.

*Shield of Winter*, the 13th book and the 2nd one where the hero is one of the Arrows, the 1st being Judd Lauren's book, *Caressed by Ice*, in the *Psy/Changeling* series, we now have Vasic's story.

One of the main plots in the story deals with the Arrows, who are working with the empaths, a group that was seen as defective when Silence was introduced and who may be the key to stop the infection that is running rampant in the Psy world. We also learn more about how Silence was implemented and how much evil and violence has happen from that time to now.

Vasic meets Ivy, a Psy-empath living in DarkRiver, when he's asked to protect her in the experiment that Kaleb Krycheck believes is the only way to find a solution of stopping the infection.

Vasic, Senior Arrow, with telekinetic powers which enable him to teleport at any time to any place, is truly a fractured soul. Trained unwillingly since the age of four to be a killer, he has since discovered the betrayal by Ming, the Arrow leader, who had used them for ulterior motives.

We learn about his childhood, his connection to Aden, now leader of the Arrows.

He's tired of living, thinks he's a dangerous and should not be allowed to him but at the same time, he has a responsibility to protect his fellow Arrows – but nothing can wipe the guilt he carries for what he has done in his past.

Ivy Jane, a Psy empathy who had gone through a voluntary reconditioning when she was sixteen, which almost wiped out her Psy-mind, had been taken by her parents, who had hidden and protected her together with other Psy people with the same problem of their fracturing of Silence. She now needs to learn how to use her powers if she's to save the Psy population.

Vasic and Ivy together were so wonderful. It was heart-breaking watching the setbacks he suffered as he tried to reconnect with his feelings and emotions. How at times, he doubted himself....

**"The day I feel, is the day I die." – Vasic tells Ivy.**

Ivy has survived a lot in her life through strength and determination. She sees more beneath Vasic's façade.

She is determined not to give up on Vasic. She will fight for him, do anything to help him to make him happy. To be with him on his journey to overcoming the fear that he's not worthy and finding the way to forgiving himself.

I loved seeing the growth of their relationship. That against all odds, two people, flawed but strong are able to find happiness together.

Another thing I really liked was seeing how their relationship affected everyone in their lives. How their happiness meant so much to the people who loved them.

Loved the appearance of some of my loved characters....Hawke, Sascha, Lucas, Judd and many others. I so enjoy finding more about how their lives have progressed since reading their stories.

I loved Vasic and Ivy's book. I am very interest to seeing how this series goes next.

**One of my favorite quotes:>/b>**

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## **Aly is so frigging bored says**

1st read: 3rd June 2014

This book is... amazing. Ms. Signh writes her usual beautiful prose and characters and relationship.

2nd read 29th November 2014

Buddy read with Maru and Sarah

When I heard the song, I thought of Ivy and Vasic:

Alex Hepburn - Under

3rd read: 1 June 2017

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## **Calisto says**

Nice. It was nice to be back in the universe. The story was nice and the characters were nice. I know that 'nice' can seem like a 'bless your heart' type of word and I don't mean it that way. Nice here isn't bad, but it is far from OMFG THIS IS AWESOME! Although I wasn't disappointed with this story, I was bummed it wasn't better. To be honest, I was expecting a Judd (Caressed by Ice) 2.0 and that was the biggest problem because I know how invested I can be in a couple in this world and I just wasn't here. Because I wasn't enthralled, it allowed me to start picking apart what I consider weak or misguided storytelling/editing.

First, there were too many conflicts or faux conflicts. We have the infection of the Net which is leading to homicidal rages on a mass scale, Vasic's suicidal tendencies, Vasic's biofusion gauntlet which is a ticking time bomb that will most assuredly kill him, villainous Ming who has decided he wants Vasic back into his fold, the remnants Pure Psy attacking, the vulnerability of the E's and their connections to their Arrows, and it goes on. It got to a point where I just wanted to yell, "Pick a freaking plot already!". With all these things going on, there is a significant lack of focus in the story.

Now, all the plots and subplots would be fine if, IF!!!, this story was about 800 pages long. Since it isn't, we get this faux tension of a plot point only to be glossed over and resolved in a few passive paragraphs. All the build up with minimal resolution started to become akin to Chicken Little - THE SKY IS FALLING! OH NOES! Oh, wait, never mind it's just rain and now we're a little wet so let's go inside now.

(-After I wrote this, I realized that I'm a bit of a rage monster about missed opportunities so I'm putting this section under spoiler tags - )

(view spoiler)

(view spoiler)

(view spoiler)

Also, there are unnecessary cameos in this story that take up space and are nothing but a wink and nudge to readers. That's fine, I love it when Shelly Laurenston does it in her Pride series. Here? There's too much plot that was sacrificed in order to fit in cutesy scenes. I don't really care that Hawke and Sienna are now, NOW, talking about their dance in the moonlight scene from their book. I don't care that Sahara is Kaleb's moral compass. I got it in their book, I didn't need it repeated (more than once) in this one. I don't care about previous couples unless they are part of THIS plot. I want to know about THIS couple. Want to know what would have been a good side plot to follow? the other Arrow/E romance. We get hints of it, but by the end...NOTHING. What we do get is the scene with the bond 'snapping' into place. Terrific, but you know where I went? Poor Adria. She deserved a real mate instead of Riaz. (Yeah, I'm not bitter about that. NOT. AT. ALL.)

Oh, forgot about 'were is the angst'? This is a tortured Arrow, but all his angst gets soothed over by Ivy. His suicidal tendencies? Cured by wuv, tru wuv. His dark place? All the bad things he's done? All that darkness and hopelessness that was enveloping him? Eh, Ivy loves him, she'll 'walk in his darkness without judging him'. (Am I the only one who thinks that the prose is turning a bit mauve?)

I'm going to be in the minority here and that's fine. I'm not above fangirl squee and this book should have been squee-worthy, but there are simply too many missed opportunities. Should a new comer start here? Hell no. Should fans of the series read it? Of course. Is it entertaining? Yes. Is it worth the hardback price of admission? No. Not by a long shot. Wait for the price to drop.

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## Valerie says

OMG. How can I love this series so much after 13 books?! I so love it! It's just gotten better and better.

This one brings another contender for favorite of series. It joins book 3, Caressed by Ice and book 12, Heart of Obsidian as my favorites. These Psy males are ruining me for all alpha males to come!

Meet Vasic. Abandoned...um left by his birth father at age 3 to be trained as an arrow, Vasic has his protective heart tortured...um conditioned out of him. He's literally the walking dead when he meets Ivy. Vasic can't accept that he deserves anything good. He's done too much bad. But there's something between them, he can't deny and Ivy won't let him ignore.

I love Ivy. Believing she's a broken, untalented psy, she finds a place to be herself. It's pretty dangerous to be yourself in this world. She's brave. And when she FEELS the connection to her arrow, she uses her bravery to coax him out of his silence. I was so proud of her. I was so cheering for them.

These two have some serious sexy. Both of them have never even kissed another person, so they figure things out as they go. Psy with Vasic's talent tend to struggle to keep control when they engage in intimate skin privileges. So, um, Vasic is a gifted teleporter. Yeah, um, you so don't want that skill out of control during sexy times. Hehe.

I have to include my favorite line from Vasic to Ivy. "I was not done kissing you." \*Sigh\* LOVE him.

Such a great story. As the backdrop to Vasic and Ivy's story, the psy-net is facing the brink of disaster. The psy race is facing dramatic change and many are not happy about that change. As a result, new enemies pop up everywhere. Add to that the damage to the net that years of silence have caused. How does this race pull

their world back together and live up to their potential. It's a really good question and one that is yet to be answered. I'll be reading to know the answer as my obsession with this series continues and has known no equal.

Damaged sexy male combined with great story and incredible world makes this one a contender for favorite of this obsessive series!

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## **Denisa says**

3.5 I love Vasic but....

I didn't really feel anything while reading this book.

I absolutely loved Vasic, he's one of the greatest Psy out there, so I'm pretty sure it's my fault and not the other way around.

Still, it's a fun book with more action than I expected, so yay!

Worth trying out!

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