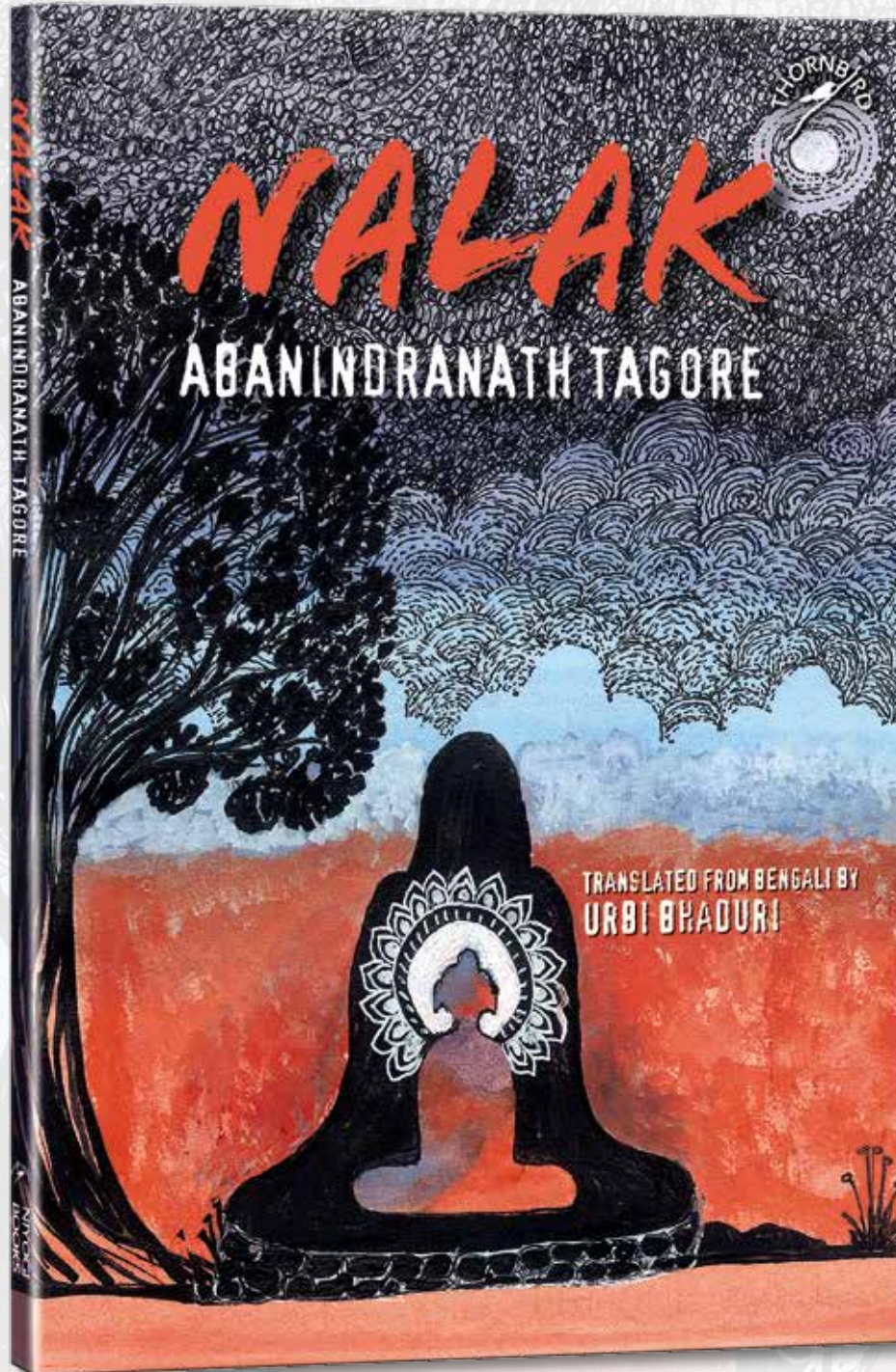


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NALAK

by

Abanindranath Tagore

Translated from Bengali

by Urbi Bhaduri

TRANSLATION

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Book Print Paper

Black and white

Paperback

The story of the Buddha is well-known, yet the original Bengali story of *Nalak* by Abanindranath Tagore remains unforgettable because of the sheer lyricism of the storytelling and the way in which the journeys of the Buddha and the young village boy Nalak are traced parallelly throughout. They are like Rumi's lovers, seeking each other but in each other all along. The author, literally painting pictures with words, takes us through the story of Nalak's coming-of-age—his quest to find the Buddha, the joys and sacrifices along this path. As in unfulfilled love, Buddha and Nalak never actually cross paths, missing each other by a hairbreadth. But the relationship is still complete. And the bittersweet end describes Nalak's homecoming, back to his mother.

Nalak is often treated as a book for children but it far transcends that label. It is deeply moving and profoundly philosophical. *Nalak* in its English translation has no chapters and the narrative flows like a meditation with subtle pauses. The lyrical quality of the text and the intrinsic visual appeal in Abanindranath Tagore's descriptions, though hard to portray in translation, have been brilliantly captured and nothing has been lost in translation.



Abanindranath Tagore (7 August 1871 – 5 December 1951) was the principal artist and creator of the “Indian Society of Oriental Art”. He was also the first major exponent of Swadeshi values in Indian art, thereby founding the influential Bengal school of art, which led to the development of modern Indian painting. He was also a noted writer, particularly for children. Popularly known as ‘Aban Thakur’, his books *Rajkahini*, *Budo Angla*, *Nalak*, and *Khiner Putul* are landmarks in Bengali language children's literature.

Urbi Bhaduri has been exploring her strengths in different capacities—as a writer, editor and translator freelancing with publishing houses, newspapers and other organisations, and as a facilitator in the developmental sector, holding experiential workshops on poetry, memoir, self-discovery, deep listening, gender and entrepreneurship with young people who inhabit the urban margins, mostly in the streets and slums of Kolkata.

The book takes the readers through the sweeping saga of Buddha's manifestation in the world, his trials and travails leading to final moksha, through magical storytelling.

The translation remains true to the original Bengali classic Nalak by Abanindranath Tagore.

The visual appeal of the original has been retained in the writing and nothing has been lost in translation. The lovely illustrations in line drawing add great value.

Nalak is often treated as a book for children but it far transcends that label. Deeply moving and profoundly philosophical, it offers itself to the imagination of all age groups.