



Grain of Sand (Chokher Bali)

By Rabindranath Tagore

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Grain of Sand (Chokher Bali) By Rabindranath Tagore

A timeless tale of complex emotional relationships from an acknowledged master. Soon to be a major motion picture directed by Rituparno Ghosh, *Chokher Bali* is Nobel Prize-winning author Rabindranath Tagore's classic exposition of an extramarital affair that takes place within the confines of a joint family. It is the story of the rich, flamboyant Mahendra and his simple, demure, beautiful wife Asha—a young couple who are befriended by the pragmatic Bihari. Their cosy domestic scenario undergoes great upheaval with the introduction of the vivacious Binodini, a young, attractive widow who comes to live with them. Asha and Binodini become bosom pals. Binodini is initially drawn to Bihari but then begins to respond to the advances of Mahendra, who has become obsessively attracted to her. After several twists and turns, Binodini elopes with Mahendra, leaving the entire family in turmoil. Bihari pursues them to Allahabad and succeeds in bringing them back to Kolkata, but the question remains: can a marriage that has once been ruptured by breach of trust be mended again into a meaningful relationship? On the one hand, *A Grain of Sand: Chokher Bali* is a sensational account of two illicit relationships: Mahendra's infatuation with Binodini which blinds him to everything else, and Binodini's secret passion for Bihari of which she is never able to speak. On the other hand, it is a complex tapestry woven by the emotional interplay between five finely etched characters: the impulsive Mahendra, his adoring mother Rajlakshmi, the frail and sensitive Asha, the strong, silent Bihari, and the self-willed and irresistibly attractive Binodini. A compelling portrayal of the complexity of relationships and of human character, this landmark novel is just as powerful and thought-provoking today as it was a hundred years ago, when it was written.

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