



# THE ECO-CRITICAL ELEMENTS IN JYOTIRINDRANATH NANDI'S SHORT STORIES

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**Abstract:** Jyotirindra Nandi stands out in Bengali literature for his distinctive introspective style in the post-World War II era. Eschewing ideological optimism and escapism, his fiction probes human consciousness with Freudian psychoanalytic depth. Against a backdrop of global conflict, partition, and social upheaval, Nandi focuses on middle-class lives exposed to existential decline. These concerns coalesce in *Samudra* (1961), a short story inspired by Nandi's voyage to Puri. In *Samudra*, the narrator is a conventional middle-class husband whose orderly marital life is upended by the sea's majesty. The ocean's vast beauty shatters his habitual worldview and reveals latent erotic and destructive impulses: confronting the water's power evokes Freudian tensions of love and aggression, symbolized by his predatory gaze at the sleeping wife Hena. Birenbabu's eccentric uncle, an obsessed sea-wanderer, introduces mythic resonance. Believing the ocean to be a living Rudra-like deity, he carries legendary ideas of sacrifice (as in the *Ramayana*'s justice episode) and infects the narrator with a quasi-religious mania. By contrast, the narrator's wife Hena initially embodies pragmatic middle-class morality, dismissing the sea's roar as mere noise. As the narrative progresses, however, Hena paradoxically gains agency: she experiences a wild delight in the waves, which in turn provokes her husband's jealousy and a Freudian sense of rivalry. Nandi's prose employs rich metaphor and sensory imagery (for example, evoking "a huge blue cup" of sun above the sea) to heighten the story's symbolic texture. Ultimately, *Samudra* reads as an eco-critical parable: the sea's churning duality instills both fear and awe, illustrating that treating nature as inert can invite catastrophe. The narrative's arc—from a nocturnal ocean vision to a train journey home—marks the narrator's psychological transformation. At the end, the protagonist finds relief in earthy sounds (crickets and rustling palms), symbolizing middle-class resilience and a tempered reconciliation with the natural world.

**Key Words:** Nature, Emptiness, Thrill, Middle-class, Subconscious, Infinite, Myth, Vastness, Psychology, Symbolism, Beauty, Transformation, Violent, Ecocriticism.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Jyotirindra Nandi occupies a unique niche in Bengali literature. Living through the tumultuous period following World War II, he sought to perceive the world and life in their entirety, guided by a distinct individual perspective. Nandi, an inherently introverted and solitary writer, avoided both didactic optimism and escapist despair in his short stories. Instead, his narratives are rich with multi-layered meanings that gradually engage the reader's intellect and emotions, invoking thought, suffering, doubt, and wonder, and ultimately immersing the reader deeply in the experience.

Nandi was born in 1912, two years before the outbreak of World War I. This era heralded profound changes in Bengali literature. The upheavals of two world wars, wartime crises, and the trauma of Partition all influenced the writers of his generation. During the interwar period, authors such as Buddhadeb Basu, Premendra Mitra, and Achintyakumar Sengupta depicted contemporary life with stark realism, while Jagadish Gupta and Manik Bandyopadhyay infused Bengali fiction with new depth and meaning. In this changing literary landscape, Nandi's fiction emerged as distinctly unique.

His work often examines complex relationships between men and women through a Freudian or psychoanalytic lens, offering a pessimistic view of conventional morality. Unlike many of his predecessors or contemporaries, Nandi was not directly influenced by any established literary figure. Instead, the themes in his writing — especially the pervasive sense of existential malaise — arose naturally from the “disease” of his times. As the poet Jibanananda Das wrote:

‘পৃথিবীর গভীর গভীরতর অসুখ এখন,  
মানুষ তবুও খণ্ণি পৃথিবীরই কাছে।  
কেবলি জাহাজ এসে আমাদের বন্দরের রোদে  
দেখেছি ফসল নিয়ে উপনীত হয়;  
সেই শস্য অগণন মানুষের সব;’ ('সুচেতনা',জীবনানন্দ দাশের শ্রেষ্ঠ কবিতা,১৯৫৪,নাভানা প্রকাশনা)

“The world is now in deep trouble; yet man remains indebted to the earth. I have seen ships come into our sunny harbour, laden with harvest; yet that harvest is the corpses of countless people.”('Suchetana',Jibanananda Daser Shrestho Kobita,1954,Navana Publishers)

‘অদ্ভুত আঁধার এক এসেছে এ পৃথিবীতে আজ,  
যারা অন্ধ সবচেয়ে বেশি আজ চোখে দেখে তারা;  
যাদের হাদয়ে কোনো প্রেম নেই –প্রীতি নেই–করুণার আলোড়ন নেই  
পৃথিবী অচল আজ তাদের সুপরামর্শ ছাড়া।’('অদ্ভুত আঁধার এক', মনবিহঙ্গ কাব্যগ্রন্থ,১৯৭৯,বেঙ্গল পাবলিশার্স)

“A strange darkness has fallen upon this world today; those who are blind now perceive the most. Those who have no love in their hearts—no affection, no stirrings of compassion—have rendered the world motionless by their counsel alone.” ('Adbhut Andhar Ek',Monbihongom Kabyagrantha,1979,Bengal Publishers)

Nandi's fiction, like that of Narayan Gangopadhyay, Narendranath Mitra, and Santosh Kumar Ghosh, bears the indelible marks of its era. He depicts individuals who cannot easily be named in the historical record: middle- and lower-class people surviving amid the steady decay of daily life. In his stories he crafts an unforgettable montage of their degraded consciousness and values, their tangled loves and aversions, their sexual longings, boredom, emptiness, loneliness, wonder, and bewilderment. The men and women in his stories carry the scars of the post-war period in both body and soul, sharing a profound sense of isolation and melancholy. Often, Nandi removes his characters from the familiar hustle and bustle and places them in a secluded wilderness where unspoken truths emerge. Although he was never popular with the contemporary readership—and indeed did not seem to seek popularity—Nandi maintained a singular artistic vision with remarkable fluency and strength.

Nandi cultivated his literary sensibilities from an early age. Alongside writing and reciting poetry, he developed extraordinary sensory perception and an intimate understanding of nature through folk tales, novels, and painting. He was an avid reader of Ramesh Chandra Dutt, Rabindranath Tagore, Prabhat Kumar mukhopadhyay , and Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyay, and by his youth he possessed a mature literary sensibility. In those years he even published a handwritten magazine featuring his own stories and poems, participated in theater, and suffered imprisonment for involvement in socio-political activities.

He loved natural solitude and was personally averse to publicity. Rather than seeking fame or fortune, he chose to live in extreme poverty, sustained only by the joy of literary creation. As Sunil Gangopadhyay observes of this writer—who sought no awards or popular acclaim—

‘সাহিত্য ঘটিত এবং জীবনযাপনের যে সব ব্যাপার সাহিত্যের সঙ্গেই জড়িয়ে যায় সেই সম্পর্কেই কথা  
বলতে ভালবাসতেন।’(সুনীল গঙ্গোপাধ্যায়,যা দেখি যা শুনি, নাথ পাবলিশার্স',পৃষ্ঠা -১৩৭)

“He loved to talk about literature and all the things in life that were connected with literature.” (Sunil Gangopadhyay, Ja Dekhi Ja Shuni, Nath Publishers, Page-137)

After moving from East Bengal to Kolkata in search of livelihood, Nandi lived in a succession of humble dwellings—from a tiny room and a slum in Beleghata to modest flats in Tiljala—yet remained devoted to his craft. Through it all, a guiding truth underpinned his life: nature, solitude, literature, and introspection.

Nandi believed that writing fiction required broad “experience,” usually gained through travel. In practice, however, his journeys were mostly limited to places like Puri, Digha, Kashi, Gaya, Madhupur, Shimultala, and Ghatshila. For him, experience, imagination, and intuition became the true sources of creativity. He built his diverse literary world by blending real scenes, events, and people with a vivid imagination steeped in his country’s traditions and the realities of his era. Unlike the elder novelist BibhutibhushanBandyopadhyay, Nandi lacked a childlike fascination with the countryside. Instead, he emphasized the shapes, flavors, and scents of urban nature, and even showed nature awakening primitive instincts in otherwise innocent characters.

Nandi’s short stories repeatedly explore the unity of man and nature, the conflicts between cruelty and tenderness, and the primal instincts driving everyday life. In deceptively simple prose—reflective of a man deeply immersed in nature—he paints extraordinary portraits of the human mind’s ugly, complex, and often perverse desires through a largely psychoanalytic lens. Themes such as nature’s unity with humanity (as in “Baner Raja”, “Gach”, “Girgiti”, “Samudra”), solitude in nature, and the existential doubts of middle-class life (as in “Tarinir Bari Bodol”, “Butki Chutki”, “Rakshasi”, “Amor Kovita”) are consistently rendered in psychological terms. In his later fiction, heightened sensory imagery, sexual awareness, introspection, symbolic thought, and a stream-of-consciousness style become especially prominent.

Nandi’s narrative strength does not lie in dense action or sudden drama; rather, he creates an eerie thrill by advancing the story through a mind immersed in mystery. During the turbulent, decaying years between the two world wars—when emptiness, lust, deceit, and opportunistic selfishness spread like poison—Nandi refrained from indulging the cacophony of outdated ideologies. Instead, he carefully embedded the hidden realities of contemporary life within his short stories, crafting them in polished, incisive prose. Stories such as “Girgiti”, “Patanga”, “Mukh”, “Wang O Khela Ghore Amra”, “Bikeler Khela”, “Himir Cycle Shekha”, and “Ishtikutum” exemplify his artful capture of modern life and its complexities.

## II. ANALYSIS OF SAMUDRA

The story “Samudra” (The Sea) was inspired by Nandi’s visit to Puri and first appeared in the collection ‘Pasher Flater Meyeta’ (1961). Sunil Gangopadhyay recalls Nandi’s excitement about this tale’s creation. He remembers Nandi eagerly asking,

তাঁর মুখে তাঁর কেনো ভবিষ্যৎ গল্লের বর্ণনা শোনা ছিল একটা অত্যাশ্চর্য অভিজ্ঞতা। অনেকটা এই রকম...  
তারপর বুঝলে, দু’বন্ধু গেল পুরীতে... একটা বাসা ভাড়া করে রইলো,... পাশের বাড়িবনের সাঁ সাঁ ঝড়ের  
বর্ণনায় তাঁর অদ্ভুত উত্তেজনা দেখা গেল,... আর একদিন তিনি খুব চিন্তিত মুখে এসে আমাকে জিজ্ঞেস  
করেছিলেন, আমার একটা গল্লের বই বেরুবে, কী নাম দেওয়া যায় বলো তো? ‘সমুদ্র’ না ‘পাশের ফ্ল্যাটের  
মেয়েটা’? এ রকম অল্টারনেটিভ আমি আগে কখনো শুনিনি।’ (সুনীল গঙ্গোপাধ্যায়, যা দেখি যা শুনি, নাথ  
পাবলিশার্স, পৃষ্ঠা -১৩৯-১৪০)

“It was an amazing experience to hear him describe any of his future stories. It was a lot like this... Then you his strange excitement was evident in the narration,... and one day he came to me with a very worried face and asked me, ‘I have a book of stories coming out. What should I name it? ‘The Sea’ or ‘The Girl in the Flat Next Door’? I have never heard such an alternative before.’” (Sunil Gangopadhyay, Ja Dekhi Ja Shuni, Nath Publishers, pp-139-140)

This anecdote highlights how vividly Nandi envisioned the sea’s power even before writing the story. Legend has it that on the first night he left the hotel and sat by the sea, so intense was the thrill that the marine environment awakened in his senses. In ‘Samudra’, his boyhood friend Sagarmay Ghosh – later editor of ‘Desh’ magazine – recounts this thrilling sea experience.

In ‘Samudra’, the narrator’s ordinary life is profoundly upended by the ocean’s presence. The protagonist’s narrow tastes and middle-class routine are temporarily transformed upon encountering the sea’s majestic beauty. Waves of emotion surge through his subconscious, shattering his conventional ideas about the sea and about his marriage. Everyday gains and losses, the familiar comforts of his life suddenly seem insignificant and dull. As the narrator exclaims,

‘দেহ-সমুদ্র দেহ-সমুদ্র! কত মৃত উচ্ছাস বিবর্ণ ইচ্ছার হাতে নিজেকে ছেড়ে দিয়ে মানুষ তপ্তি পায়, আমি তপ্ত ছিলাম।...সমুদ্র আমার অতীতকে এমন করে তুচ্ছ করে দেবে কে জানতো।’

(Body—sea, body—sea! How much people are satisfied by abandoning themselves to foolish excitement and faded desires, I was satisfied... Who knew that the sea would make my past so insignificant?)

This line shows that the sea's grandeur has rendered his former life trivial by comparison.

In this narrative, the sea itself is not a passive backdrop but a living, almost magical presence. Standing before the vast ocean, the narrator suddenly perceives the smallness of his habitual married life in Jhamapukur. He even views his wife Henna with undisguised eyes: her coiled sleeping body appears to him as delicate as a 'rabbit' or a 'dog'. In touching the sea's grandeur with his consciousness, he feels himself “বড়-অনেক বড়” (big, very big) while Henna feels “ছোট – অনেক ছোট” (small, very small.) The endless waves become unruly, sensational questions pounding the narrator's mind. Confronted by this imbalance between his ordinary marriage and the infinite sea, he feels the only solution is to surrender himself completely to the sea—to its Rudra (terrible) aspect of nature. (This echoes the Ramayana: Rama did not surrender to the sea but instead battled it to save Sita, a choice that later brought tragedy to his marriage. In the narrator's mind, a similar mythic justice is at work.)

The narrative of Samudra is permeated from start to finish by the sea's presence. The narrator's first sleepless night on the shore—an experience of fear-tinged wonder—is familiar to any ocean lover. This feeling recalls Matthew Arnold's “Dover Beach” with its “melancholy, long withdrawing roar.” As the narrator tastes the sea's myriad sensations, he hears its deep, solemn sound and begins to sense the ancient link between creation and destruction. Such a motif — nature's connection to birth and demise — recurs in many myths (even in Santali folklore). The narrator's overwhelming experience thus becomes the awakening of a long-held subconscious realization of the sea's elemental power.

Nandi fills Samudra with vivid, poetic imagery. For example, the narrator observes:

“যেন স্পন্দমান কম্পমান অঙ্ককার ফেটে ফেটে রাশি রাশি ফুলের স্তবক হয়ে আমাদের কাছে ছুটে আসতে চাইছে। একটা প্রকাণ্ড নীল পেয়ালা উপুর হয়ে আছে মাথার ওপর, সমুদ্রের ওপর, সেই পেয়ালা থেকে ঝরে ঝরে পড়ছে চাঁপা রঙের রৌদ্র।”

(As if the pulsating, trembling darkness bursts and rushes towards us in the form of a multitude of flower petals. A huge blue cup is floating above our heads, above the sea, and the sun is dripping from that cup in a brilliant color.)

At first the ocean appeared as “সীসা রঙের জল” (lead-colored water) but then “দিগন্ত ধেঁষা সমুদ্র গাঢ় নীল রঙ ধরেছে, মাঝের জলে সবুজ ছোপ” (the sea near the horizon has taken on a dark blue color, with green spots) the narrator notes. “আর একটু কাছের জল গৈরিক। উত্তাল অশান্ত ক্ষিপ্ত প্রখর। রূপার মুকুট পরে নাচতে নাচতে ছুটে আসছে। একটা বড় টেউ বালির ওপর এতটা দুধ ছড়িয়ে দিয়ে নীচে নেমে গেল।” (The water a little closer is untamed. Turbulent, turbulent, furious, fierce. Silver crowns of waves are dancing and rushing. A big wave has spilled so much foam on the sand and then receded.) Another line repeats the first image: “যেন স্পন্দমান কম্পমান অঙ্ককার ফেটে ফেটে রাশি রাশি ফুলের স্তবক হয়ে আমাদের কাছে ছুটে আসতে চাইছে।” (As if the pulsating, trembling darkness bursts and becomes a series of flowers, trying to rush towards us.) These rich similes and metaphors capture the sea's tangible and ethereal aspects. In such passages, Nandi's romantic imagination tempers the raw intensity of the scene, creating a compelling tension between beauty and dread that provides structural balance to the story.

Birenbabu's maternal uncle then emerges as a crucial figure. The uncle is a gaunt, wild-eyed man utterly obsessed with the sea. He has come to Puri on a day's holiday and has spent years near the ocean, sleeping little and craving its presence. A local legend even says he once threw his wife and a pet dog into the sea, so great is his madness. Despite his disheveled appearance —“ চোখে কালি, গালের গর্ত কপালের ঝুঁচকানো চামড়া... ভাঙ্গাচুরা ময়লা দাঁতগুলি” (black in the eyes, hollow cheeks, wrinkled skin on the forehead, broken dirty teeth) — the uncle, like a mad monk or poet of the sea, has absorbed the ocean's wisdom. His very presence stirs something in the narrator: as Nandi writes, “প্রথম প্রথম ইচ্ছে করে জোর

করে রাত জাগতে হয় – তারপর আপনা থেকে চোখের পাতা খুলে থাকে – তখন সমুদ্রের ডাক ছাড়া আর কিছু ভালো লাগে না।” (At first, you have to force yourself to wake up at night — then you open your eyelids of your own accord — then you feel nothing but the call of the sea.) Under this spell, the narrator admits, “একটা কিছু আমার মধ্যে সংক্রামিত করে দিতে পেরেছিল লোকটা।” (The man managed to infect me with something).

The uncle's teachings only deepen the narrator's obsession. Every curious question — “দূরের সমুদ্র টানছে আপনাকে, না বালির ওপর আছাড় খেয়ে খেয়ে পড়ছে ক্ষ্যাপা টেউ-সেগুলো?” (Is the distant sea pulling you, or are those angry waves crashing on the sand and devouring it?) — intensifies his awe. His nerves reach a fevered pitch, and the uncle is revered almost like a seer. Each of the uncle's words embeds itself in the narrator's mind like a mantra. For instance, the uncle ominously warns:

“আপনার রক্তের মধ্যে ওই শব্দটা চলে যাবে – মগজের ভিতর ছবিটা আটকা পড়বে – আজ না, ক'দিন তাকিয়ে থাকুন – তখন আর কোনো কাজকর্ম ভালো লাগবে না, চোখের ঘুম উধাও হবে, ক্ষুধা করে যাবে –”

(This word will go into your blood — the image will get stuck in your brain — not today, keep looking at it for a few days — then no more work will be any good, your sleep will disappear, your appetite will vanish.)

These dire predictions come true. The narrator feels he has learned the truth of the uncle's axiom: “সমুদ্র ও সমুদ্রের ধারের রুগ্ন জীর্ণ মানুষটাই সত্য” (The sea and the sick and worn-out people by the sea are the truth.). Both uncle and narrator become consumed by this oceanic vision. The uncle, frenzied with joy, plays at collecting oysters by the shore as if celebrating the sea, feeling like a fly on a flower. His fear and awe of the sea reflect a core belief: the sea is “পাথরের দেবতা না, মাটির ঠাকুর না। সমুদ্র হল সাংঘাতিক জীবন্ত একজন কেউ।” (not a god of stone, not a god of earth, but a deadly living being.). He treats the sea as a greedy, living creature—offering it food (fish, eggs, bread) as if feeding a monster. When the narrator sees white foam like jasmine, the uncle sneers, “একটু ভালো করে নজর দিয়ে দেখুন, ফুল কি সাদা শক্ত ধারালো দাঁত ওগুলো।” (Look a little closer and see, what white flowers are those with hard, sharp teeth?). This monstrous vision of the sea echoes myths worldwide (for example, Sedna, the Arctic sea goddess, whose hunger is monstrous). Through the uncle's eyes, the sea's vastness appears demonic. Though the uncle's manner may unsettle the narrator, he realizes that without the uncle, the sea “অপরিচিত ঠেকছিল” (stood strange) as if seen “যেন আর পাঁচজনের চোখ দিয়ে” (through the eyes of five other people). He even fears that without the uncle the sea's beauty would become “boring” to him. In defiance of the villagers' whispers, the uncle declares, “কারো তো অনিষ্ট করিনি – নিজের খেয়াল নিয়ে নিজে চলি।” (I have not harmed anyone — I go my own way). In the end, while Birenbabu's uncle is a memorable character, the true driving force of the story remains the sea itself.

The narrator's wife, Henna, initially appears to play a minor role, but she proves significant and unpredictable. Unlike the narrator and the uncle, Henna does not lose her natural balance or become obsessed by the sea at first sight. She spends no sleepless nights pondering the ocean's meaning. Instead, she tries to fit the sea into her familiar world. She finds its roar loud and pointless — no different from the noise of a passing airplane or a strong wind. Rather than admiring the sea's vast beauty, she focuses on immediate comforts: she fills up on fish at lunch and closes the hotel window to block out the sound. Although she is frightened by the sea's touch at first, she paradoxically delights in collecting oysters on the beach. Henna is puzzled by her husband's infatuation and frankly tells him that the continuous roar bores her. She much prefers tourist-like shopping or visiting nearby temples and ashrams (alone or with the woman in the next room) to gazing at the ocean.

Over time, however, a silent transformation takes place in Henna. Little by little, the sea begins to draw her in as well. Eventually, she even becomes wild with delight as she plays in the waves, to the narrator's astonishment: “জলের স্পর্শে ওর ঝুঁঁ রোমাঞ্চ জাগছে, অসহ পুলকে হেনা হাসছে।” (She seems thrilled by the touch of the water; Henna laughs at the unbearable pool). The sea grants Henna unprecedented, almost frenzied pleasure, and this in turn fuels the narrator's jealousy — a moment touching on the peaks of Freudian desire that adds a new layer to the story. Previously, Henna's narrow view and teasing had only annoyed him,

but her newfound abandon confounds him. When the narrator, gripped by a mysterious impulse, nearly throws Henna into the sea's jaws, the story reaches its climax.

Although Henna had accepted her husband's earlier odd behavior without mockery, she cannot allow him to harm her. In that climactic instant, she trembles and grows pale — tears welling in her eyes — as she confronts him: “ওর পরামর্শ শুনে তুমি এমন কাজ করতে চাইছ?” (You want to do such a thing after listening to his advice?), she protests with fierce pride. She pushes his hand away and approaches the sea, taking control of her own fate. In this decisive moment, Henna transcends her previous passivity and asserts herself.

It is true that Henna, like Neelima in “Nadi O Nari” or Maya in “Girgiti,” might not look fierce at first. Yet she is far from naive or ignorant. She understands everything that is happening, but she waits calmly and uses her intelligence. Throughout the crisis, this independent woman never abandons her instinct for self-preservation; even when things turn violent, she remains alert and responsive.

These developments highlight the sea's inherent power. From the very beginning, a dream-like scene hints at nature's cruelty: “জেগে থেকে রাত্রির ভয়ঙ্কর শব্দ শুনেছি, অঙ্ককারের গর্জন।...ভয়ে বুক কাঁপছিল... নতুন সৃষ্টির শব্দ শুনতে, নতুন ধ্বংসের গর্জন শুনতে কার না ভাল লাগে।” (I woke up and heard the terrible sounds of the night, the roar of darkness.... My chest was trembling with fear... Who doesn't like to hear the sounds of new creation, the roar of new destruction.). For the reader, the omnipresent sea thus becomes a symbol of nature's immense, indifferent force. It instills in the narrator, the uncle, and even Henna a complex mix of fear and awe (a kind of ecophobia). Its moods make the familiar strange — as the locals warn, “সমুদ্র আজ মেজাজ খারাপ করে আছে দেখে স্মান করবে দূরে থাক, মানুষ যেন জলের কাছে ঘেঁষতেই সাহস পাচ্ছে না।...সমুদ্রকে অপরিচিত ঠেকছিল’ (The sea is in a bad mood today, so stay away from bathing; it seems that people do not dare to approach the water... The sea seemed unfamiliar.” This duality underscores nature's mutability and humanity's limited power. Implicitly, Nandi warns that treating nature as a mere resource can lead to disaster. Henna's pragmatic, resistant stance embodies nature's own resilience: despite being a woman exploited by patriarchal neglect, she is endowed with a strength and patience akin to the enduring qualities of the natural world. In this way, Samudra anticipates an eco-critical perspective by dramatizing the tension between the environment and human life.

### III. CONCLUSION

Jyotirindra Nandi's Samudra stands as a testament to his unique literary vision. The story is rich in psychological depth and symbolism, portraying the sea as a dynamic, almost divine force that challenges human consciousness and marital conventions. In this story, the sea is depicted not as a passive backdrop but as a living, formidable force that upends the narrator's ordinary life and tests his middle-class values. Through vivid, poetic imagery and psychological insight, Nandi illustrates how nature can both enchant and overwhelm the human mind. Henna's grounded strength and final assertion mirror nature's resilience in the face of human folly. Ultimately, Samudra delivers a powerful message about humanity's relationship with the natural world: when people ignore or misuse nature as if it were inert, profound consequences may follow. By capturing the sea's beauty and terror, Nandi anticipates an ecological awareness long before the term “eco-criticism” was coined. His polished, introspective prose weaves together sensual, psychological, and environmental themes into a compelling narrative. Samudra thus remains a remarkable piece of modern Bengali fiction, reminding us to respect the immense power and mystery of the natural world.

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