

***A STORY OF WATER***

**By Basudhara Royis**

For love's sake  
I bade my pupils  
under eye-lids' petals  
hold fast an ocean  
as night holds darkness,  
beauty deceit, pain truth,  
as water in formlessness  
holds the world's shapes  
but though chasmophilic  
this water, its love for liberty  
defies every other love.

Averse to containment,  
it traverses loam, sand,  
silt, gravel; fills into  
whatever offers desire's  
concavity to its caprice,  
magnanimity, turbulence;  
surrendering finally to one  
whose vast need is beyond  
surfeit; whose want does not  
incarcerate, only draws in by  
a hungry song of its longing.

**Postscript:**

You cannot exile water;  
cannot ask for parentage,  
paper, birthmark; can't read  
its fury on a monitor; put a  
stethoscope to its heart. You  
can't force, abduct, wed water.  
To know water, you must let it  
come and go; gush through your  
thighs; like prejudice enter your  
heart; drink from your bones.  
And only when water has left  
can you know its gifts in you  
like salt, like semen, like rain.

**Bio-note:**

Basudhara Royis, the Assistant Professor of English at Karim City College, Jamshedpur, Jharkhand. She has been an alumnus of Banaras Hindu University and has earned her doctoral degree in diaspora women's writing from Kolhan University, Chaibasa. Basudhara's areas of academic interest are diaspora writing, cultural studies, gender studies and postmodern criticism. Her research articles and book reviews have widely appeared in reputed academic journals across the country and as chapters in books. As a creative writer, she has featured in a number of anthologies and in magazines like *Borderless*, *Muse India*, *Shabdadguchha*, *Cerebration*, *Rupkatha*, *The Challenge*, *Triveni* and *Setu* among others. She is the author of two books, a monograph, *Migrations of Hope: A Study of the Short Fiction of Three Indian American Writers* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers, 2019) and a collection of poems, *Moon in my Teacup* (Kolkata: Writer's Workshop, 2019) and can be reached at [basudhara.roy@gmail.com](mailto:basudhara.roy@gmail.com).