

3 Poems by Asha Viswas

Beyond My Reach

Each photo frame with which
the walls of our old house are punctuated
flickers embers of recollection .

Old memories live in this house
and they are much more than a smudge
in the recesses of the brain.

Here is grandfather cuddling
his four year old son, his last cuddle perhaps

This cute little son was my father.

In another frame I bask in
the red saree my mother wears.
She too, like my father, is a native
of a lost province. Her open arms
now beyond my reach, beyond my touch

A misty rain fills the eyes.

Why is “yesterday” an unreachable distance.

So Many Dimensions

First , she was geography to him ,
an undiscovered, unexplored land
hitherto completely unknown .

Soon the geography was turned
into history , a mere name
with a lost address.

He even turned her into biography
while she wanted to live her own
Autobiography.

Now the space within widens
Bringing her the awareness
of a more ancient she .

And when she digs deeper into
the buried layers of self

There is no longer any pathos of pronouns.

Some dreams are coming into blooms.

The Shipwreck at Night

The reflection of your face
in the night river is closer
to the one you encounter
in the hinterlands of the unknown .

Here too the shifting perspectives
and dark surfaces that transmute
the texture of your day.

Your own face suddenly grows cold
and dark like that of a drowned man.

Your eyes, nose and lips
almost the whole face
that looks back at you from the dark river

Writhes in unearthly grimaces .

The river reveals its true identity
only at night , the mystery of life
is revealed at the moment of death .