



Water: A Novel

By Bapsi Sidhwa

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The renowned author Bapsi Sidhwa and the equally renowned filmmaker Deepa Mehta share a unique artistic relationship: Mehta adapted Sidhwa's novel *Cracking India* for her brilliant film *Earth*, and here, Sidhwa adapts Mehta's controversial film *Water* to the printed page.

Set in 1938, against the backdrop of Gandhi's rise to power, *Water* follows the life of eight-year-old Chuyia, abandoned at a widow's ashram after the death of her elderly husband. There, she must live in penitence until her death. Unwilling to accept her fate, she becomes a catalyst for change in the widows's lives. When her friend Kalyani, a beautiful widow-prostitute, falls in love with a young, upper-class Gandhian idealist, the forbidden affair boldly defies Hindu tradition and threatens to undermine the ashram's delicate balance of power. This riveting look at the lives of widows in colonial India is ultimately a haunting and lyrical story of love, faith, and redemption.

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Review

"Sidhwa's humor and compassion glow in Water." -- *Houston Chronicle*, June 9, 2006

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