Blood on the Moon

Abstract 2565 - Extraterrestrial lifeforms often romanticized as ‘aliens’ have captured the attention of people – from kids to grandparents, from teachers to gardeners, authors and poets, artists and scientists alike. Often depicted as beings with intelligence either savage or benevolent, or as creatures with non-terrestrial appearance, the possible existence of life outside earth has fascinated one and all. Unsurprisingly, one of the driving forces for modern planetary exploration is astrobiological prospecting of alien worlds. The aim however is to establish the potential for habitability of any lifeforms – single-celled even, and to look for any biosignatures of such lifeforms. Europa, apart from being an ocean world also exhibits signs of possible endogenic chemistry i.e. material from the ocean beneath. The sources and composition of its ruddy surface pattern i.e. topographically aligned surface chemistry are debated to identify the composition of ocean and hence any potential biosignature. Here, the observing spacecraft muses over this debate of Europa’s surface chemistry. The personification theme from the previous poems is continued here. Final sonnet of the set of four poems submitted as separate entries in view of the submission rules.