

## ***Grain and Husk***

*A little girl, desolate on the  
village road,  
stands  
with lips closed, silenced.*

*For her share of sweets  
she chases her brothers;  
he stumbles and falls down.*

*Their mother conies rushing, a  
whirlwind, gives her a slap,  
jerks her forward,  
and says,*

*“You wretch, you think you  
are the same as your brother,  
he is my grain,  
will stay here in my house, and  
you, husk, will fly away,  
understand?” And  
carrying the sweet-munching son  
in her arms she goes into the house.*

*The little girl merely turns her face,  
nobody sees the hot tears,  
only the sky gets a glimpse.*

*Wind with affectionate fingers  
collects and re-collects her curls.*

*From across the road  
she stares at the door;  
no hand,  
no voice,  
no face,  
nothing stirs there.*

*A void  
scares her.*

***Manoj Kumar Dash***



## Poems

by  
P. Raja

### *Reflections on a Bullet*



### *The Dead*

*It fell with a crash  
like a bomb,  
the dead leaf from the coconut palm.*

*Startled, I jumped in fear.  
I, who sat under the palm.*

*The one time active fan  
is now a fastidious broom,  
useful while alive or dead.*

*When I fall in selince  
who am I going to startle?  
Who is going to jump in fear?  
For I know, after death,  
I can't even be a broom,*

*How shiny, small and cute  
is this mini-bomb on my palm!  
Ignorant and innocent of its mission.*

*What sage-like silence does it pose,  
this deaf and dumb thug  
destined to kill on a single scale!*

*With whom does it have an appointment,  
this blind liberator of some soul,  
this foolish slave of tyrant trigger?*

*Who can put sense into its brainless  
head  
and tell this carrier of death:  
"Your mission is murderous, but you  
too will be void".*

