

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 comes 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 silence
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”.*

