

The Tiny Victim

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The girl cries, “Mother, Mother-

Tell me where’s my father.”

Replies her sobbing mother,

“In the sky, in the sea, in the river.

“He promised to come on Diwali

And gift me candles holy,

And multi-coloured crackers many

Will burn and burst violently.”

She stares at her daughter

But says nothing to her.

The news came last night to her-

The news of his death in the war.

“Tomorrow is Diwali, right?

Your father must come tonight.”

A coffined corpse that’s wrapped in white-

She thinks and the girl waits for the night.

They stay awake whole night,

Is someone knocking at the gate?

The tiny toddler rushes to sight

Her much beloved father but...

“Oh, what a nice box!” – She utters

A large wooden box full of crackers!”

Her mother can’t hold back her tears.

“But where’s my father?” – None answers.