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# A Diwali Welcome for Laddoo

A stray little dog finds a warm home filled with light.



# A Shivering Friend

On the morning before Diwali, Meera and her papa walked to the market to buy marigolds. Near the sweet shop, a thin brown dog sat shivering beside a broken cart. He had one floppy ear and big, hopeful eyes.






# Room for One More

Meera knelt down and held out a piece of her biscuit. The dog sniffed it, wagged his tail just a little, and ate it in one gulp. "Papa," Meera whispered, "he has no home. Can he come with us?" Papa looked at the dog, and the dog looked at Papa. Then Papa smiled. "Every family has room for one more," he said.

# Bath Time Giggles

At home, Mama filled a bucket with warm water. The dog was nervous at first, but Meera sang to him softly while Dadi scrubbed his fur. When he shook himself dry, water sprayed everywhere, and everyone laughed. "He is as sweet as a laddoo," said Dadi. And so that became his name: Laddoo.





# A Very Good Helper

That evening, the family got ready for Diwali. Meera drew a bright rangoli at the door with pink, yellow and green powder. Laddoo sat beside her and watched carefully, keeping his paws away from the colors like a very good helper. Mama gave him a little marigold garland to wear around his neck.

# Booms in the Dark

When the sky grew dark, they lit rows of tiny diyas on the balcony. The flames danced and glowed like little golden stars. But then, far away, the firecrackers began to boom. Laddoo trembled and hid under the bed, his floppy ear pressed flat.





# You're Home

Meera crawled under the bed beside him. "Don't be scared, Laddoo," she said, stroking his head. "You're safe now. You're home." Papa brought a soft blanket, and Mama closed the windows to make the noise quieter. Slowly, Laddoo stopped shaking and rested his chin on Meera's hand.

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# Thump, Thump, Thump

Soon the whole family sat together on the floor, sharing sweets in the warm glow of the diyas. Dadi gave Laddoo a special treat of his own. He thumped his tail happily against the floor, thump, thump, thump.






# One More Light

Meera hugged him tight. This was the brightest Diwali ever, because this year, there was one more light in their home, and he had a floppy ear and a waggy tail.

THE END

*A stray little dog finds a warm home filled with light.*

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