

Meenakshi Mohan

Maya

His lonely figure looms
under the vacuous porch.
The haunting melody of his flute
ripples through the ruined walls.

Was it here?
Where his glory once ruled the domain!
Today, it is barren, like a desert.
The apparition of yesteryears haunts.
No silver moon illuminates its dark corridors anymore.

He sits in his tattered jacket on a broken bench
in a gloomy corner of the porch,
plays the tune on his flute to stay in séance
with golden memories of yore.

The heavenly bird, blue-throated *Neelkanth*,
appears and perches on the brown, withered railings.
And neighbourhood children of seven or eight
lured by the melodious tune stop near the porch steps.

The cathartic euphony of the flute flows on far and beyond,
crossing the dusty crevices of the lonely structure.
Heaven and earth, alpha and omega –
all are culminating in the mystery of *Maya*.

**Neelkanth*: A sparrow-sized bird with a blue throat associated with Lord Shiva. In India, it is known as the bird of heaven

**Maya*: Cosmic illusion about life-death and rebirth