From Deep in the Forest [1]

May 4, 2020 Featured Poetry [2]
Nature [3]
Translations [4]

Three Poems by Tue Sy

Translated by Nguyen Ba Chung and Martha Collins



From Deep in the Forest

The deep forest still dreams of city streets
A love distant as cigarette smoke in summer
In an empty space a pensive song rises
Suddenly bursts of hatred chase me away
Standing, you blame the Truong Son range's torrents
Clouds cover dikes with whiteness in the sky

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T?? r??ng sâu

R?ng sâu n? v?n m? màng ph? th?,
Tình yêu xa nh? khói thu?c tr?a hè.
Trong quãng v?ng khúc nh?c s?u t? l?,
Ch?t c?m thù d?n d?p ?u?i anh ?i.
Em ??ng ?ó h?n tr??ng s?n m?a l?,
M?t ph??ng tr?i mây tr?ng nhu?m quanh ?ê.



Promise

After ten years I returned to the old street
Because the Truong Son range has no summer noons
Roads scorched by sun
Roads red with dust
And love in weary eyes that once gleamed

??c h?n

M??i n?m sau anh ph?i v? th?m ph? c?
Vì Tr??ng s?n không có nh?ng tr?a hè
Nh?ng con ???ng n?ng cháy

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Nh?ng con ???ng b?i ??
Và tình yêu trong ánh m?t rã r?i.



Rooster Crow at Noon

A scraggly rooster calls my soul from the past
To come to this place, abyss of a broken life
The scent of bitter fruit, autumn's red dust
Oh, sweetness, where is your pretty hair?

Each small sound, lonely, mournfully sad
Clamors fervently in the heart's wounds
From there I write my note of forever farewell
Oh, sad sunlight, eyes of gratitude, love

A remote siren sounds in the lost noon
Your rosy lips make me wish for a star
The noon is very long but my palm is small
As it reaches out over your high forehead

Tiê?ng gà gáy tr?a

Gà x? xác g?i h?n ta t? quá kh?

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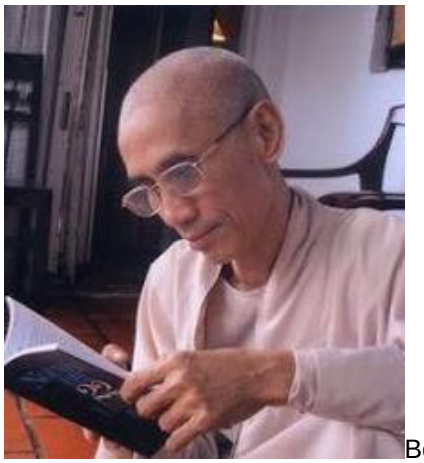
V? n?i ?ây cùng kh?n gi?a ?iêu linh
H??ng trái ??ng hè thu bu?n b?i ??
?i ng?t ngào ?âu mài tóc em xinh

T?ng ti?ng nh? l? loi bu?n th?ng thi?t
Nghe r?n ràng trong v?t l? con tim
T? n?i ?ó ta ghi l?i v?nh bi?t
N?ng bu?n ?i là ?ôi m?t ân tình.

Còi xa v?ng gi?a tr?a nào l?c lõng
Môi em h?ng ta ??c m?t vì sao
Tr?a dài l?m nh?ng lòng tay bé b?ng
?? v??n dài trên v?ng trán em cao.

Art Information

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Born Pham Van Thuong on Feb 15, 1943, in Pakse, Laos, Tue Sy became a monk at a very early age. He was editor in chief of the journal *Tu Tuong* of Van Hanh University, and in addition to books of poetry, he has published books on Zen, the philosophy of Sunyata, and Du Fu. A well-known dissident in Vietnam, he was imprisoned for fourteen years and remains one of the foremost scholars of Buddhism in the country. English translations of his poems by Nguyen Ba Chung and Martha Collins have appeared in *Gulf Coast*, *Two Lines*, *Consequence*, and elsewhere.

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Nguyen Ba Chung is a writer, poet, and translator. He is the co-translator of, among others: *Thoi Xa Vang (A Time Far Past)*; *Mountain River: Vietnamese Poetry from The Wars 1948-1993* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1998); *Distant Road: Selected Poems of Nguyen Duy* (Curbstone Press, 1999); *Six Vietnamese Poets* (Curbstone Books, 2001); and *Zen Poems from Early Vietnam*. He served for many years as Research Associate at the William Joiner Institute at the University of Massachusetts–Boston.



Martha Collins is the author of ten collections of poetry, most recently *Because What Else Could I Do* (Pittsburgh, 2019), *Night Unto Night* (Milkweed, 2018), and *Admit One: An American Scrapbook* (Pittsburgh, 2016). She has also co-translated four volumes of Vietnamese poetry, including *Black Stars: Poems by Ngo Tu Lap* (Milkweed, 2013, with the author). She founded the creative writing program at the University of Massachusetts–Boston and served as Pauline Delaney Professor of Creative Writing at Oberlin College for ten years.

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