POETIC TRANSLATIONS FROM THE SIAMESE

Selected Verses of Sri Praj and Sunthon Bhru

by

M. R. Seni Pramoj

Sri Praj

Boom, boom! Not Heaven’s wrath, I moan;
Crash, crash! Not cyclone, I fret;
Pour, pour, Not rainfall, I sigh, my heart;
Fire? No fire burns yet; I burn with love.

Bear me witness, ye Earth,
Spite not God’s image in man.
If wrong I did, let this sword fall true and sharper,
If wronged I am, let it strike back the striker.

* This is the great poet’s last and most famous verse, written when he was about to be beheaded. Tied to a block, with both hands lashed behind him, he used his toe to inscribe it in the sand.
Though divided by sky and sea,
Love brings thy lover to thee forever.
But distant is one whom thou would hate,
As if the sky were cleft asunder, though Heaven be one.