

# Josephine Ain

## Selected Poems



# Josephine Ain Chuey

December 12, 1916 [Sherman, Texas] –

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Ain was born Josephine Cohen in Sherman, Texas. She and her family moved to Los Angeles in 1926; her poems first appeared in the LA Times in 1935. In 1938, Ain married the architect Gregory Ain in Los Angeles but they were divorced by 1940. She married Michael L. Mark, an actor and director, in 1944; in 1949, she married the painter Robert Chuey, with whom she remained (he died in a car accident in 1977). Ain was a finalist in the Yale Younger Poet series in 1952, the year that W.H. Auden judged the contest. She socialized with Timothy Leary and Alan Watts and experimented with LSD in the 1960s.

# Aspects

## I. WATER

How lakes resemble standing up  
And pines a labyrinth of prone

Finally the fear  
Falls like a star  
To be wished upon.

Thru water, water is a  
Stubborn dream,  
An infant walking by a fountain,  
Milk of a landscape of stone.

By the bridge one sees possibilities  
And one is not disturbed.  
Forever the lakes of trees rot in the clouds  
And fester with birds  
And one has not pity left  
But the compassion of nearness.

From city to city there are only rivers.

## II. MUSIC

Fate that is mine the music shades,  
An exquisite husky elm.  
I rise from being in the sound  
Of sainted apparitions.  
Enchanted clouds vanish invisible suns,  
Corona without light  
But meaning well.

And I surround the fragrant porch  
With angels from a classic wood.  
Transparent statues shine

In far indulgence.

The genuflections of the wind  
Remembering the infinite  
Of all beginning.

Repeat again, repeat the agony  
Of true excuses.

A tree heavy in evening  
An evening not available

Excess of sacred sense  
Spain where we do not dwell.

### III. NIGHT

Shadow where the song  
Is like itself  
Into which a lake may sink  
And be remembered.

Shadow where all my privileges wait  
A discreet distance like a lewd image,  
Shall I refuse to sleep  
Amongst kinsmen?

Shall I refuse to walk  
After the sensuous shepherd?  
Morning is a vision without shelter  
Morning of an inexorable charm.

I have exacted what the night exacts  
A lit dream, exalted silence.  
Mine is the vow without sanctions  
And without myself.

With what flowers the mystery colors  
My stupidity.

I am not even humble.  
For I am sleep.

#### IV. MAN

There is finally the rain  
In its sheltering time  
All things cease in want.

Only a man is different  
Who is what he is not.

If you would save him, you must not despair.  
He is in earnest with all his selves.

Accompanied by a sky  
Correct with destiny.

And we pretend to understand  
Why the angel should be afraid  
And why the messenger should stammer.

Country-clad itinerant  
Have you a road of your own?  
You pass by cities  
As one obsessed  
By a journey.

You are manifestly lonely  
On the road always a road  
No matter what.

What if one day the excursion end?  
Will the domain of your freedom  
Extend even to death?

#### V. THE SOUL

Who imagines that he lives

Imagines he becomes.

An image in a startled glass  
Raising its doubled fist.

Tell me, oh frenzy,  
What windows break?  
Existence, you may not assault.

Anger is a tendency to bloom.

The antique vigor of a kiss.  
The ancient house of a new birth.

Sometimes a longing is strong  
To want perfection .

Where space its lucid shaft  
Idiosyncrasy of light  
Makes permanent the dark,  
Where love seraphic asks  
Am I not my own self?  
Or am I not even yet?

Meaning to love forever  
I must first become immortal.

Around the angels fountains gleamed  
A lucid light of law.  
For order was their harmony,  
A grace of being so.

Rest in the raptures of the soul  
Was like a journey of the whole.  
Nowhere to go.

Leave me severe in morning pure.  
The sensual adore God.

Lyric Mother, let love go.  
After the dream of heaven  
Only may heaven be.

The matter of fact blue  
Of imponderable skies

This ever letting go  
Of beauty and of God.



























































































































































































