

Poetry Series

OWEN I.A. ROCHE
- poems -

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OWEN I.A. ROCHE(b.7/31/1910 d.3/23/1973)

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO AT BOULDER GRADUATED 1933 B.A. JOURNALISM,
EDITOR OF 'DODO', WON POETRY PRIZE, AND BOXED.

RAN GUNS DURING SPANISH CIVIL WAR

OWEN ROCHE HAD ONE DAUGHTER IN 1936. HER NAME WAS SHEILA CLARE
ROCHE-HARMON. SHE TOO WAS A FINE POET. HAS A PIECE PUBLISHED IN
BERKELEY POETS COOPERATIVE #10 SHE WAS THE MOTHER OF 8
CHILDREN.(THREE SETS OF TWINS!)

OWEN I.A. ROCHE ALSO WORKED FOR BRITISH MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
COUNTER ESPIONAGE DURING WWII
IN SOUTH AMERICA AND MEXICO UNDER FRANK JELLINEK.

HE WAS A REPORTER FOR VARIOUS NEWS ORGANIZATIONS INCLUDING:
HEARST NEWS, PAN AMERICAN NEWS, NOVEDADES IN MEXICO AND UNITED
NATIONS WORLD IN BRASIL

FOUNDED DRYSDALE, ROCHE, GIBSON, ASSOCIATES, INC. IN 1952
KNOWN AS 'DRGA' ONE OF THE TOP INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC RELATION FIRMS
OF ITS TIME.

WORKED FOR BRAZILLIAN TRADE BUREAU

WROTE SPEECHES FOR POLITICIANS AND BUSINESSMEN

TRANSLATOR

LINGUIST-SPOKE SPANISH, PORTUGUESE, GERMAN, FRENCH FLUENTLY

POET

Go now greenly into brown

and shed the dead outerness
serenely, as maid gown,
as life body, as cicada skin.

To end is to begin:
Plant to seed, seed to plant,
to the original infinity
of virginity enceinte -

Yet how fragile and thin
is the Universe, held
in feather balance; repelled
and equally drawn by tides
of nothing, which abides,
having been, and being, will be.

Go now greenly.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

Because You Are

Because you are

tender to the world,
you feel too deeply.
The youngest scar
thinly at first.

Underneath, deep,
the nerves are raw,
they twist and leap.

And if I could,
I would not say,
build tissue.

I would not say,
flee, child, the world
is neutral and therefore cruel.

I would not say
build you scars thicker,
preen your callouses,
discipline your heart beat.

There is living.
There is grieving.
There is giving
and receiving.
And there is death.

There is a candle lit,
and a candle extinguished.
But between and among
there is you.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

Caípe

oh come to me

my l' il honey lips
we'll sip the wine
and in between the sips

in gentle love
among the lilac trees
we'll sip a sweeter
honey than the bees.

Oh honey lips
your honey drips
just in the rhythm
that my heart skips

in gentle love
among the lilac trees
making a sweeter
honey than the bees.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

John Forth Amory

Man's home by birth

is earth; twin Venus

is bare of air,

a silver sliver,

cloud-hidden, proud

in tantalizing fantasy.

Some day, across
the labyrinth of space,
the race of man will toss
algal seeds to leaven
the heaven of Venus,
sow air to breathe,
unsheathe the planet,
cover granite with moss.

Then Venus will bear grass,
fish, man, ass.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

Love Of Owen Roche

I shall write you a song, little

you have thorns but you're my kind of flower

we'll go live in an ivory tower

and I'll make up a whole song for you

we could sing it in the mornings

and the early afternoon

but from then on through the evening

we would play another tune

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

My Grandfather The Tailor

My grandfather the tailor was a stocky Ukrainian.

By day he worked in the sweat shops,

By evening cold chicken and tea.

A lump of sugar for him and one for me.

And then he'd say, ' I'm going to the corner.

I'm going down.'

' This is for the old man, ' my grandma would tell me,

Looking into the icebox floor.

A bottle of seltzer water, some more cold chicken.

'Who is the old man? '

Him. The one who just went one she hid

The money from, pinned deep under three fruit o' the loom

Dresses.

My grandma and I would sit on her bed. I'd twirl her old

Umbrella and listen to the steam come up the wall.

' Grandma, why do you spit at the Gypsies and curse

At the Spanish guitar? '

The window by the fire escape is open. The sounds

Come up from the bar.

My grandfather has gone to the corner.

He hasn't gone far.

Poem by Sheila Clare Roche-Harmon

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

Other Than Body

Other than body of woman,
the grace of wine
and words that leap between minds,

is stasis only, unhuman;
in disciplined line
the days would stretch to gray death.

Heroes and ants, you may grovel
before the grubs
that feed to breed the new slaves,

who obediently will shovel
a hole for me
among your similar graves.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

Owen 1970

You and all are wanderers

in the night where dragons prowl
and the unbelievable beasts
of underminde rage and growl
and hearts lurch in their beats
in fear of nothingness.

you have come out of emptiness,
you have come from yet-to-be
and the unimaginable naught;
finite in infinity,
you grope blindly for light
within a vacuum,

knowing not, in innocence,
unaware of cause or term
or the indeterminate end
of the indifferent or firm
who leap wildly to seize
the hand that is not there.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

Owen Irving Albert Roche

I don't laugh at man

(or cry)

to see his simian antics;

I just observe him

and describe,

as do all true pendants.

Good!

I see him light the fuse

to blow the world to pieces!

How copious my notes!

How a propos my thesis!

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

Pelham Bay

By Sheila Roche-Harmon

when i was five

i killed alot of japanese beetles
to save our roses
and the winter cherries nodding
on the backyard gate.

when it was summer in pelham bay
we jumped over melting tar
and counted the miles from
lightning to thunder.

we ate crab apples at night
in a field
where milkweed grew in
clover and sumac
and golden rod.

the praying mantis
in my dream
the summer air
through the screen
in pelham bay

in a cove
we swam with horseflies
and searched out mussels
with our toes.

when i was five
it was summer
the hollyhocks grew
in
driveways
a lot
of roses
in my dreams
the japanese.

Sheila Clare Harmon
1822 Milvia St.

Berkeley, Calif.94709

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

This Death Some Will Lament

This death

some will lament
remembering brief flames,
but to you,
the loved one,
the unloving,
it will be
as a pebble
lost on a wide beach,
seen and forgotten
among others and others.

Dreaming,
I see the time
when dreams end
for you
as they have for me;
may the dreamlessness
be peace,
wherein you find
that lost thing,
your soul.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE

You Are Gone, Long Gone; And You Have Forgotten.

You are gone, long gone;
and you have forgotten.

I am alone remembering,
alone in that which was.

The night is dark and deep;
and sleep will not come.

I remember the words,
the words that are symbols.

I remember all things
that were true for us:

The arms and the lips and the body,
the outwardness, the flesh of love.

The dreams that were ours,
the dreams that are love's soul.

And the still thought comes:
One plus one is two.

But one less one
is less than nothing.

OWEN I.A. ROCHE