

these five (5) poems debuted in *Obsidian* Literary Journal Issue 2018, 44.1
<https://obsidianlit.org/44-1-toc/>

Daughter*

my body is her sacred gravesite
She forgives me every day
every night i sin against her

we weep together
She assures me i am forgiven
long b4 i reject her

i gift her my looks. She wills
me a pinch of her Soul that i
may glimpse her Spirit realm

when i pray she summons
Ancestors who surround me and
assure my transcendence

She comes to me on loan, clings to
my wanton womb though i regard her
as mere ghost of comely pleasures

She stomps out feetfirst
confirming that she is
me/him/us/we/one

She is peace warrior
waging life with elegies that scream pain
undergirded by love

“Say something,”
Inner Voice beckons,
“Let her know you.”

i write: *dear, daughter,*
i am the almost mother
i'm glad you never had

****Daughter*** was nominated for a Pushcart Prize by *Obsidian* Literary Journal.
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Son

my mind is his eternal urn
He appears two hours after his sister
¿why does he wait so long?

i am closing the gate when
just before it latches i feel him kick
his river rushes from my thighs

He grabs his ankles
falls into a somersault
and butts into the world

He will not weep or pray with me
He couches his thoughts in tongues
other babies cannot translate

His sad piano sings
“winter will never end”
so he keeps dying.

another warrior
holding his peace and using it
to smudge my womb

Anywhere

i want to live in a city
where “disemboweled”
is not in a headline

where black boys’
dreams of becoming
old men come true

where kids know their
fathers, mothers, grand
and great-grandparents

i want to live in
a country where
.45 is not the caliber

of the
hollow-point president
,alias predator-in-chief

Another smoke-filled room*

divided by Saturday-night sweat
boxes a spill-proof rim-
shot from the drummer's cue-
sticks, slick with licks like wallpaper secrets
will ever silence the bar-
flies are open for wet, warm death-
beds, once Deuce-and-a-Quarter, now 4-by-
four-eight time tapping tic-toc-toe-
shoes place pointed pirouettes in Tutu's
Nobel Peace aura, All aglow
we come together like Christmas magic:
welcome, warm, lean, lewd, long, long
agogô bells—you zig my zag—Your straight
lines, striped with my Nappy spaces, be-
come lullabies and mantras
framed for our future in
another smoke-filled room

****Another smoke-filled room*** was nominated for an Illinois Arts Council Agency Literary Award by *Obsidian* Literary Journal.

Where midnight stretches

this is where
midnight stretches
over muscular

hills and valleys of
buttocks and abs

where half-moon
manicures & pedicures
are reflected in the eyes

where each tooth
twinkles like the
star it used to be.

this is where
lovers come
together

this room is bound by
sky & transparent walls
that rise out of sight.

this is where
i take you &
you give me sons.

where you build
our home & make
daughters laugh.

where we
become each other
and recreate