

An Ode to Whiskey and Cigars

Little hands working behind the bar
as Daddy reaches into the little box that's carved into the wall.
His hand goes inside the drawer
and he pulls out a long brown stick
embedded with cancer causing material.

"Daddy, I heard those do bad things to your lungs",
she shouts.
Daddy shrugs it off .
He reaches over the bar near the fast hands to grab the ash tray.
"That looks good",
he says as he makes his way over by the stairs.

Little hands scurry as they finish mixing up
whiskey with bitters and soda water,
finishing with an orange garnish.
They feel proud glancing down at the drink.
Daddy will like it.

Little feet hurry as they follow Daddy up the stairs;
they don't want him waiting.
Little feet watch each step as they go up,
carefully examining for danger that could compromise the mission:
Don't spill the Old Fashioned.

Little hands open the sliding glass door
to see Daddy lighting up the cancer stick.
Second hand smoke begins to fill the air,
and then into the little lungs.
She's used to it, though.

Smoke continues to travel,
seeping into the Second hand sweater that's way too big for her.
She found it in Daddy's closet one day,
and wore so dry,
that the tiny holes in the sleeve became fully functioning thumb holes.

She passes him the old fashioned.

He doesn't use a coaster again.
Condensation drips down the side of the whiskey glass,
leaving behind a perfect ring,
tiny enough to fit her hand.

Time passes,
the cancer stick becomes smaller
and the glass more empty.

Little hands working to clean up
as Daddy continues to snore.
She puts the cigar out in the fire pit,
and the glass back into the cabinet.
She knows where everything goes.
Little Hands are tired,
but not as tired as Daddy.