

# Those Left Behind

...and nobody hardly EVER mentions the MOTHERS...  
those whose sons and daughters were snatched away  
and  
chained and whipped and beat  
into heavy, rusted  
rough hewed metal  
that tore flesh on tender perfumed necks  
and  
efun covered ankles and thighs...

...it seems nobody talks about those Mothers  
who screamed and called out their daughters names  
over and over each morning  
at the crack of dawn  
refusing to give into hopelessness even years after the terrible kidnappings

Who hears their hoarse and worn out voices drowning out the visions  
of the flocks of crows and gatherings of bloated vultures  
who repeatedly pecked out the soft eyeballs and once tender sperm sacks  
of the men who never made it to the bellies of those stinking, hellish ships?

...and who thinks about those fathers  
who determinedly fell on their own sharp machetes  
slitting their own throats and ripping open their own bellies  
spilling out the shame and disgrace  
and bruised honor that flowed with the quickly clotted heavy blood  
because they felt they had failed to successfully protect their sons  
and their daughters  
and wives and sisters  
and aunts and uncles  
from the clutches of the slavers  
through the smoke of their rifle fire

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*Africology: The Journal of Pan African Studies*, vol.11, no.6, April 2018

and in the confusion of African mercenaries on horseback  
swooping up screaming girls and trampling terrified, barely crawling babies  
who didn't have even half a chance under the weight of those mud crusted hoofs?

We always speak of those who were taken away  
while failing to acknowledge those who were left behind...

And who gives a thought to those  
old ones who had 'the sight'  
and  
had read the bones  
and deciphered the shells of divination  
and understood the un-doubt-able Truth of Prophecy  
that said  
the Cycle of Despair had arrived  
and would continue unabated through generations to come  
and who knew that there were those among themselves who secretly  
rejoiced in their hearts  
with the KNOWING that one day  
centuries later  
the Blood of those kidnapped Africans would fly through the clouds  
above churning waves and shark infested waters and bring the  
JOY and BLESSINGS  
and  
ANCIENT KNOWLEDGE  
back to those who had been left behind to mourn and get lost in terrible grief

Indeed it is  
WE  
who are marked with the  
Signs of the Ancients  
Indeed  
it is WE who have returned!



Dillard University BAM Conference, September 9, 2016  
Mama C performing Ancestor Ceremony  
Charlotte Hill O'Neal aka Osotunde Fasuyi  
Imbaseni Village, Arusha, Tanzania

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Charlotte Hill O'Neal aka Mama C (Osotunde Fasuyi) is an internationally known community activist, visual artist, musician and poet, with more than two decades of experience. She was born March 9<sup>th</sup> in Kansas City, Kansas in 1951 and has lived in Africa with her husband Pete O'Neal since 1970. She is the mother of two children, and director and co-founder of the United African Alliance Community Center UAACC in Arusha, Tanzania, a non-profit community-based organization that provides training for village youth, and the Leaders of Tomorrow Children's Home. She is featured in *Mama C: Urban Warrior in the Black Bush* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q-8EdvWNk0g>) and her husband Pete in *A Panther in Africa* NTSC (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SPcZ8Zm958M>). Her Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/MamaCharlotte>.



Pete O'Neal and Charlotte Hill O'Neal (Osotunde Fasuyi)