

the need to quit

we burn like two cigarettes, prematurely lit.

parallel, we let the ember consume us. painfully slow.

you long for the spark of the lighter, and I can't help it

but to inhale your sadness and try to force myself to glow.

thick saliva of depression drips down my fingertip

and threatens to drown my fire. to end my flame.

---

I exhale. the smoke scratches the top of my mouth

as it escapes my body.

the wind will carry me, to wherever

you are.

---

I can't quit him. I can't quit it.

I know it's bad for me, yet I know it's good.

there is no logic; that is the beauty.

it's beyond addiction, and it never was an obsession.

I know it's killing me. but it's the only way

I can live.

when the world seems just that much more

unjust, unnatural, fucked

up,

the spark of the lighter blinds

my eyes, unprepared for the flash of life in pitch

darkness.

I breathe you in and know  
I am safe. I am sane. I am a being  
that burns and glows obstinately,  
and leaves my ashes on the concrete.

---

my neon yellow pack of american  
spirits looks at me with shame.  
inside stand rows of cigarettes, waiting  
for their time to come.  
I should call all of them my boyfriend.  
Every one of them.

---

I will only quit if you quit.  
I say to him.  
*You won't quit until I quit*  
I think that was  
a question?  
Either way, I don't know how to respond.

---

when I first kissed him, he tasted  
like oak, wildfire, and vanilla.  
I kiss him  
between my fingers.

I called myself but found no solace

Insomnia  
pulling me up by the hair-

My hollow gaze  
as I look at the cold  
but alive  
display  
on my phone.

I call  
myself.  
Voicemail.  
Twenty  
One  
Saved messages.

No new message.  
First saved mess-

I listen through it all,  
Twenty-one,  
not because I  
am bored.

But in the end, it's  
no  
use.  
My mind,  
Infinite loop,  
only wishes.

I wish he had left me a voice  
mail. I don't think I can handle  
forgetting  
the sound of your  
existence.

Boundless

He's there,  
but he's not.

What is bound  
to happen  
will happen.

That is not only  
okay, but also  
out of our control.

Is he ignoring me?  
No, he's paying attention  
to his life, his dreams,  
and letting his tired  
heart bleed.

Not only  
is that okay  
but also  
out of my control.

I wait  
anxiously,  
but I am not nervous.  
I am sad  
but not depressed.

The only control  
I have  
is the love  
I give.

I only  
come up for air,  
feel the sun,  
and let myself  
sink again,

like a diver  
exploring the depths of  
the endless—  
still beautiful  
—ocean,

in search of  
his partner.