

THE LINGERING SCENT OF YOU

Jasmine Wagstaff

Flick

I listen to the hiss of the flame as it kisses my cigarette
I take in the first drag in the cold early morning
It's the first thing I do every day
Before eating, before taking my meds, before getting dressed
It's the first thing you used to do every morning too love
I remember the first time the smoke filled my lungs
I felt disgusting, but you encouraged me to keep going
I brushed my teeth until my gums bled afterwards
I never told you that part

Flick

I like the taste of it now
The way the burning sensation hits my throat and lungs
I know it's no good for me
But neither were you
No wonder it tastes like you
It tastes like those late night parties that ended at sunrise the next day
It tastes like your early morning kisses on a cold March day
I like the way the smell lingers on my hands and clothes,
the way your perfume used to

Flick

I try not to take the time to think when I smoke anymore
It's a habit, a reflex and nothing else
When I walk to the bus stop
Or leave a store
Or when I'm on a break at work
Always with headphones in
Always with a distraction
If I allow my mind to wander it leads back to you without fail
Like how all rivers lead to the sea
no matter where it starts it ends with you

Flick

Sometimes when I'm lonely I close my eyes when I take the first drag
I let it sit in my airway just a bit longer
I pretend you're standing beside me on the apartment balcony again
And I exhale
And I open my eyes
And you're not there
I watch the smoke fade away and disappear
I look to the sky and imagine I'm sending it to you

Flick

I miss you

Yes you were poisonous and toxic

You were awful for me

I never smoked before I met you

I barely drank and I certainly didn't do anything else

But one New Year's Eve party lead to more and more
weekends spent together wasted

Soon the burning wasn't just in my throat and a lighter
didn't just mean a cigarette

The burning filled my lungs, my nostrils, my veins

Belts meant something new to me and I reached the limits
of the highs and lows a body can endure

We were bound to burn out soon

We knew these things never last long

Flick

It's been nearly eight years
I hope you can see me now
I've come a long way
I only use belts for jeans now and the only thing that
makes my heart race is adrenaline
It's been years
I've quit all my vices
All but one, the first
One day I'll quit this nasty habit
One day I will truly let you go
But the rush is worth the pain it costs
And I'm not ready to quit you yet
So I fidget with my lighter and I chastise myself as I reach for my pack
I light another cigarette and I allow your memory to fill me up
once more because
I'm not ready to let you go
And I exhale those memories and send them your way
Until I can at long last see you again