

## Addiction

—Don King

In the inky black of night  
All I can see is the soft glow of the cigarette drooping  
Lazily from my dry, cracked lips.  
The chill of the air steals  
Scant heat left in my body.  
I stand at the driver's side of my armored Suburban.  
But, all I can think of is this cigarette.  
So simple, yet elegant (and deadly)  
Are these neat little soldiers of death.  
Irony: I am slowly killing myself  
While death is such a common occurrence.  
Iraq, is, in a word,  
A name spoken to die—  
Life or innocence lost—  
Mine died years ago  
In this place.  
Yet, I find myself drawn back  
By my own free will.  
Entranced, just like this cigarette.  
It is so beautiful, the long tendrils of pearly smoke  
Rolling off its end (So white and pure).  
I see the unfettered, new snow falling  
Back home.  
Inhale: The cherry flares up.  
Exhale: Smoke pours from my mouth.  
It is no longer—

The Journal of Military Experience

White and dancing and beautiful.  
Instead, it falls, grey and formless,  
Spoiled by my human lungs.  
Or is it the other way around?  
Funny how these things come to you in a simple cigarette.  
A cancer stick.  
A coffin nail.  
So many killed and dying because of it.  
Just like Iraq.