

KILLING TIME



*And to kill time while awaiting death,
I smoke elegant cigarettes, thumbing my nose at the gods.*

– Jules Laforgue, “La Cigarette”

The cigarette is thoughtfulness: reflection and contemplation before action. We smoke to contemplate action, until the smoking and the cigarette become the action. And then that is what we do: we smoke.

*I wrap his soul in mine and cradle it
within a blue and fluctuating thread . . .*

– Charles Baudelaire, “The Pipe”

The cigarette is a prop, the flicking tail of a tree squirrel, Chaplin’s cane, always ready to twirl.

Or a cool stance: cigarette hanging off the lip in the side of the mouth, sleeveless T-shirt. Sweaty.

*Love, lust, loose morals,
a loose white blouse fallen off the shoulder –*

Bad girl, bad boy, they break the rules,
they probably fuck, too. Rebellion, allure of the
forbidden.

Only soldiers, convicts, or sorcerers would take up the habit as an adult.

*Kids smoke to feel grown up.
Adults smoke to feel like kids.*

*A cigarette is the perfect type of a perfect pleasure. It is exquisite, and
it leaves one unsatisfied. What more can one want?*

– Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*

A woman is only a woman, but a good cigar is a smoke.

Your loyal alchemist, in the depths of his fuming *athanor*, has by subtle means discovered what is quite possibly the fastest way to addict oneself to tobacco.

Quite a public service.

You need a cigarette holder, a razor blade, and some very strong cigarettes, such as Players Navy Cut. Cut off about half an inch of a cigarette with the razor blade,