

"Smoking Class Citizen"
by Ryan Leng

Last night I dreamt I had a smoke
so harsh it made me reel.
I could have sworn, when I awoke,
the cigarette was real.

I used to smoke a pack a day
with cherries all aglow;
but with the bucks I paid and paid,
I quit ten years ago.

And even though I'd woken to
my true reality,
a pang of guilt arose anew
from lapsed morality.

To be a smoker is akin
to self-imposed exile.
To a smoking class citizen,
even friends are hostile.

But now have friends forgotten my
inertia-stale routine—
a habit thus begotten by
my lack of dopamine.

My dreams still second-guess my brain,
as if they can't believe
that I continue to abstain
and give my lungs reprieve.

Think, then, before you take that drag:
It stinks until the end,
as foul as a mildewy dishrag
bathed deep inside a fen.