

Ashtray

[Poetry]

M. Michelle Graves-Harwox

Numb fingers can't feel
This clove dangling and lit.
My lungs seize down, indulging
Inhaling past the smooth oil coating.

For now, I'll breathe in the last bit
Before the filter, let the smoke
Catch on the debris of cancerous-turning tissue
As my lungs struggle to fill and empty.

My fingers will glow red again,
Heated, against the dip of her elbow.
When I go inside and drag my palms
Across the bare expanse of her shorn scalp

Pulling her in and down
To the gritty taste,
The white teeth and biting tongue
Of my mouth.