

Kayla's Lungs, Part 2

Written by

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by Vesperae

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January 5, late

I'm starting to get more than a little freaked out.

Why am I suddenly obsessing about something that I've essentially never given any thought to before?

Why this sudden intense fixation on smoking? Is there something wrong with me?

Is there something wrong with somehow liking and enjoying that I have this intense fixation?

I'm feeling unsettled and strangely excited...

Kayla had plans out of town tonight. Her Ex, who she's still friends with, got tickets to see The Raconteurs. I'm really looking forward to our next get together, because I'm really looking forward to her telling me all about the show while she dramatically waves her fuming cancer stick around and repeatedly sucks thick long killer drags of Virginia Slims 120s smoke and saturates her defenseless lungs with them.

Am I sick to want to watch someone destroy themselves slowly from the inside out with cigarettes? Does that make me some kind of accomplice?

I spent the evening surfing anti-smoking commercials from all over the world on YouTube. A few I'd seen. Many I hadn't. And regardless of the time when each was produced, or the region of the world that it came from, it seemed that just about all of them were freakishly

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condescending in one way or another.

One PSA really stood out to me because of the way that it just grabbed the obvious and managed to turn it into browbeating and shaming. Over footage of a lung shaped sponge soaked in sticky dark brown tar this very grim Australian narrator droned: *"Lungs are like sponges, designed to soak up air. But some people use their lungs to soak up cigarette smoke."*

Anyone who has ever seen a cigarette butt and looked at the tar staining the filter intuitively knows that if you inhale cigarette smoke into your respiratory tract, anything the smoke comes in contact with will eventually become stained with tar just like the filter of a smoked cigarette. To smoke is to deliberately soil your body.

What sort of people use their lungs to soak up cigarette smoke? Bad people. Very bad people. People who have gone over to the Dark Side of the Force. People who make a show of giving themselves lung cancer. People who make a show of giving themselves emphysema. People who make a show of giving themselves a heart attack. People who make a show of killing themselves. And these people knew what they were doing the first time they took a drag and coughed violently when they tried to inhale it. But they kept trying and getting sick until they abused their bodies into submission and could manage the trick of being able to use their lungs to soak up cigarette smoke whenever they felt like putting on a show for themselves, or for anyone who might be watching them. All suicides are narcissistic, but smoking is a special kind of deadly head trip that the smoker can savor again and again and again...

Smoking has been thoroughly demonized, so to smoke is to demonize yourself. Very dramatic. Very anti-authoritarian. Very self-centered.

It's all about you Baby. You and your toxic haze. You and your weak little brown rotting lungs, and the liberation of Badness that they represent when you make them that way.

January 6, late morning

Got up at a decent hour today and dragged my lazy butt out for a run. The air was very cool,

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although not hazardous for runners like it can be when it's freezing, but until I started to get my heart rate up, it was cold enough to send a deep chill throughout my chest. Such a curious sensation. I had this sense of both fragility and strength within my lungs, and I knew that they would adapt to the cold. They would do what I wanted them to do.

As I ran, I thought about the latest installment of the Kayla smoking soap opera playing itself out within my subconscious from the night before.

I dreamt that Kayla was seated in an examination room wearing only a hospital gown facing a panel shaped device in front of her chest with numerous leads attached to her head, torso, and limbs attached to wires feeding data into a bank of ports directly below the panel shaped device. A well dressed attractive female technician in a white lab coat watched several monitors in an adjoining room, and both the technician and Kayla were facing each other through a large window. The technician adjusted a few settings and brought up a composite video image from two different sources, and once the registration was right, began recording.

Through the open intercom system, the technician smiled and said, *"O.K. Kayla, you're welcome to light up whenever you're ready."*

On the central largest monitor in the technician's array, HD video of Kayla bringing a Virginia Slims 120 to her lips and lighting it was superimposed with HD scanning tomography video of the interior of her chest cavity, allowing for an assessment of not only how healthy her lungs are, but of how deeply she penetrates them when she smokes. The juxtaposition of the two images has proven invaluable for getting the total picture of what a smoker looks like inside and out when she drags, inhales, and exhales cigarette smoke.

The clinic was located within Virginia Slims corporate headquarters, and Kayla had volunteered to be a test subject from the "Newly Initiated" demographic.

After watching the data for Kayla's first six drags, the technician couldn't help but smile, which Kayla saw and encouraged her to take even longer drags, to inhale them even deeper, and to hold them even longer.

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After all of the leads had been removed and she'd changed back into her low riders, boots, and tank top, Kayla grabbed her purse and biker jacket and joined the technician in another room with a large video monitor and comfortable chairs, each with an ashtray on a small table next to it. The technician had just lit up a Virginia Slims 120 of her own. Printouts of various physiologic and metabolic readings of what was happening inside Kayla's body while she smoked sat in an open folder on the technician's lap, and she gestured for Kayla to sit next to her.

"Wow. For someone who's only been smoking for a few months, your smoke inhalation and retention scores are impressive! You're doing real damage with every drag Kayla, and you're well on your way to killing yourself! It's such an exciting time in a young woman's life, when she decides to start down the dark path of cigarette smoking. And I can tell that you just love it!"

Kayla laughed and blushed and nodded yes enthusiastically.

"You've got to see your video file; just beautiful!"

The technician dimmed the lights and clicked a button on a small remote control that she had in her pocket. Kayla pulled her Virginia Slims 120s and lighter out of her purse and lit up, just as she was watching herself light up larger than life on the screen in front of her. As Kayla watched herself smoke, she mirrored it live, and couldn't take her eyes off of the sight of actually watching the smoke rush deep into her lungs. She was so excited and proud to both see and feel Virginia Slims smoke spreading throughout her entire bronchial tree. What an accomplishment!

When the video was over, the lights came up to poisonous drifting clouds of smoke, and a very contented look on Kayla's face.

"As for damage – again, you're off to an impressive start. You have the persistent ciliary paralysis and precancerous airway leukoplakia of someone who has smoked twice as long, probably because you consistently inhale bigger drags of cigarette smoke deeper into your lungs than most women your age. We'll check you again next year, and I'm betting that if you keep this up, we'll be starting to see some exciting scary permanent changes to your lungs!"

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The technician walked Kayla to the reception area, and reached behind the desk to retrieve a large tote bag emblazoned with the Virginia Slims logo. Inside it was 10 cartons of Virginia Slims 120s and a very elegant refillable butane lighter, which she handed to Kayla. The technician reached out and stroked Kayla's hair in a very maternal way, and then placed her hands on either side of Kayla's chest in an arm's length hug that allowed her to feel Kayla's newly damaged lungs expand and contract inside her ribcage.

"Kayla, from all of us at Virginia Slims, thank you so much for giving your body to us."

"You're welcome...and thank you for all of this exciting dangerous pleasure! See you next year!"

The technician smiled, waved, and reached into her lab coat pocket to retrieve her pack of Virginia Slims 120s and lighter, and thought to herself *"I can't wait to see what happens to this girl"* as she lit up and headed back to the video room to watch Kayla enthusiastically destroy her lungs again in exquisite clinical detail.

As I ran, I found that the more I thought about visualizing the damage that Kayla was doing to her lungs with every wanton depraved drag, the more I wanted to push myself, and I was completely out of breath and physically spent when I finished what turned into a sprint home. My lungs were burning, and it took quite awhile for me to recover.

January 7, really late / really early

I gave Kayla a call in the afternoon to see what she was up to, and to see if she wanted to hang out tonight. When she picked up her phone I was greeted by a little cough followed by a quick apology and another invitation to come over later so that she could tell me all about The Raconteurs show.

Kayla met me at her door putting her leather jacket on when I arrived, and she took me by the arm and said that she desperately needed to pick something up. We climbed into her car, which reeked of stale cold cigarette smoke, and headed off to a supermarket nearby, where she

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walked right up to the customer service desk and asked for a carton of Virginia Slims 120s. The middle aged woman behind the counter asked to see her ID, verified that she was old enough – just barely – and grabbed a gold and white parcel of 200 glamour length cancer sticks which Kayla paid for and walked out with not bagged. She pressed the exposed carton up against her breasts in a flirty little hug, and enjoyed the attention that suddenly seemed to find her from all different directions.

"A *CARTON* of *cigarettes*?!!!" I thought to myself.

Kayla invests in her death by the carton.

Once we got back in her car and she'd started it to get the radio and the heat going, she quickly opened the carton flap with a long dark red fingernail and extracted the first pack. With a few deft flicks of her wrist she peeled and plucked the cellophane cap and foil, and in close up profile the Virginia Slims 120 that she extracted and placed between her lips looked impossibly long. She pulled her lighter from her purse, and as she sparked the flame, I could see the Surgeon General's Warning on the carton side sitting between us.

Kayla lit up that impossibly long cigarette and took a massive cheek hollowing first drag which she sharply inhaled, held tight deep in the darkness beneath her heaving breasts, and then slowly exhaled in a long carcinogenic plume that bounced off the windshield and quickly filled the passenger compartment. Lost in her dirty indulgence, she seemed blissfully unaware of how thick and noxious the air was getting inside her car as she pulled out of the parking lot. And as she continued to hungrily devour her extra long coffin nail, I got this mental image of her lips being just like the tailpipe of her car. I became light headed and my eyes started to tear up, but I found it nearly impossible to keep from watching Kayla longingly drag and French inhale wave after wave of intensely concentrated air pollution. Intensely concentrated air pollution that she was once again also spewing and putting into my lungs. I was just barely able to suppress the urge to choke, and as the air became fouler and fouler, I could feel my lungs tightening and recoiling from the filth that they were being forced to breathe.

I looked down at the gold and white opened carton, and at the freshly opened pack of Virginia Slims 120s sticking out of her purse with the top cocked back and several long white cigarettes protruding beyond it, and thought that she's going to repeat this same ritual of self-destruction 199 more times, and soon. And then they'll be another carton after that. And another. And another...

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Because Kayla invests in her death by the carton.

We pulled up to a red light, and she dangled her half smoked Virginia Slims 120 between her burgundy lips and took a long drag as she turned up the radio and did a playful little shimmy to the cheesy dance song that was playing. She exhaled two thick long jets of Virginia Slims toxins through her nostrils that flowed downward over her falling breasts, and just as the light changed, with the smoke from her cigarette veiling her face, our eyes met for a split second unlike they ever had before. Kayla looked away as she took a long drag on the cancer stick dangling from her beautiful lips and pressed her boot down on the accelerator. She plucked the instrument of her eventual demise from her open mouth and let the soothing deadly vapor sex rush deep into her sick places. She let what little smoke her tainted lungs didn't absorb out slowly, and found a parking space to pull over.

"What are we doing?" I asked.

Kayla put the car's transmission into park and just turned and smiled at me. She only had a few drags left of her impossibly long cigarette, which she'd managed to smoke incredibly quickly. I was also disturbed to realize that the further down she smoked, the thicker and more virulent the smoke she was forcing me to breathe became. She took a moment and looked right into my eyes with a combination of tenderness and malice through the caustic haze, took a nasty long drag, cycled it through her nasty tar collection organs, and exhaled hard through her nasty painted tailpipe a dense cloud of filth straight into my face. It was so overwhelming that my lungs couldn't take any more and I started coughing violently.

Which just made Kayla laugh...and laugh...and laugh...

Eventually, when my coughing spasms subsided, and when she finally quit laughing, Kayla finally said: *"I know that look. I see how you watch me. You want to try smoking a cigarette, don't you?"*

I was horrified, and I must have made a funny face because she started laughing again...and then she started coughing...and coughing...and coughing...

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As I listened to Kayla's lungs struggle to rid themselves of all of the excess mucous they're forced to make under the constant onslaught of irritating toxic chemicals that she subjects them to, I heard the sharp crackles of several tar-laden mucous bubbles bursting in her airways.

And all I could think about in the intensity of that smothered terrifying moment was that very grim Australian narrator droning on in that PSA:

"Some people use their lungs to soak up cigarette smoke..."

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