

What holds you tight

Anxiety is pretty up there. Clutching me so tight I used to think it was a hug.

A small margin of pressure makes a categorical difference between an embrace and restraint.

People who didn't know my name, jobs that didn't value my work, fear that lived in my head; all held me too tight.

Replaying wrong words, faults and mistakes, bad choices got cozy; all held me too tight.

Money, or lack there of, keeps a grip on me like a parent holding their toddler near a busy intersection. Movement making me more paralyzed. Fearing an unsynchronized moment.

Like a bee snoozed by smoke, cigarettes hold me tight. The grip rubs the worst because it's self-inflicted.

I buy the pack, I pull one out, I tap it on the counter, I find the lighter, I put the flame to its tip, I take a deep inhale, I puff two times, I exhale through taut lips, and I do it all over again until I stomp it out.

Self sufficient self-inflicted self indulgence.

Maybe I'd feel less guilty if I could blame this nasty ritual on someone else but I have the control to stop and I don't.

I've paused a few times but always seem to pick it back up.

Recently, finally, I have seemed to kick them away for now.

Holding myself tight to the identity of a smoker. It gives me something to do with my hands and my mouth.

Idle but not ideal.

Held tight to this cycle of wanting better and doing the same. Insanity some call it.

Or maybe the saying is doing the same and expecting something different. Insanity defined.

I know what will happen but I hope it doesn't. I know I'll crave that stupid compressed roll of chopped leaves wrapped in paper but I hope I won't. I'll smoke another and hope it tastes bad but it doesn't. Holding onto the bliss before seeing my stained teeth and feeling that pinching headache. How good it feels before I actually feel it.

The idea of it. So comforting. Like a hug, holding you tight.

Baby Blaze