

The Oval

Volume 13
Issue 2 *Staff Issue*

Article 11

4-15-2020

Surgeon General's Warning

Noah Belanger

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/oval>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Belanger, Noah (2020) "Surgeon General's Warning," *The Oval*: Vol. 13 : Iss. 2 , Article 11.
Available at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/oval/vol13/iss2/11>

This Prose is brought to you for free and open access by ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Oval by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING

Noah Belanger

SURGEON GENERAL'S WARNING:

CIGARETTE SMOKE CONTAINS CARBON MONOXIDE

That's What We're Legally Required to Tell You

If You Do a Quick Search on Carbon Monoxide

You Will Learn That It Blocks Oxygen From Reaching Your Heart and Lungs—

This Can Lead to Heart Failure, Difficulty Breathing, Depression,

Tiredness, Panic Attacks, and Lowered Cognitive Ability.

For the Cost of Six Packs of Cigarettes You Can Buy a Detector

To Tell You When There Are Elevated Levels of This Gas in Your Home,

And This is Highly Suggested by Multiple Government Agencies

We Don't Have to Tell You That Nicotine is Addictive

Or That Smoking Will Increase Your Risk of Getting Cancer—

You Should Know This Already—

We Also Don't Have to Tell You That You Will Quickly Form

A Close Association Between Drinking and Smoking

And When You Have Five Beers and Three Shots of Whiskey

You Will Smoke Half a Pack Like Drinking a Glass of Water—

You Did This Last Night and Woke up Feeling

As if You Had Fallen Down on the Tracks Heading Home

And Were Run Over By the Trains That Go By There

You Will Tell Yourself You Can Quit—
You Will Make Several Efforts—
You Will Go Three Weeks Without Buying a Pack,
But Your Coworkers Also Buy Cigarettes,
And When You Work a Ten-Hour Day
Mindlessly Chopping Vegetables and Preparing Salads,
And When You Sit Down at the Bar Afterwards,
One of Them Will Offer You a Cigarette
And You Will Smoke it and Feel Guilty
But You Will Also Bum Another

We Don't Have to Tell You About the Guilt—
You Have Reset the Quit Date on Your App Three Times This Week;
You Will Never Forget the Times You Went Home
And Stood Behind the Shed in the Snow,
Smoking a Stale Cigarette You Found
In an Old Pack Under Your Bed,
Lying When Your Father Asked About the Footprints
In the Snow You Forgot You Left;
You Will Say Foolish Things Like
Everyone Has to Die of Something,
And You Will Remember Those Words
When Someone Else You Know is Diagnosed with Cancer

You Think You Know the Price But We Can Assure You
You Will Not Know Until Your Hair is Falling Out
And You Have Nothing Left in Your Stomach but Bile
That the Simple Phrase
CIGARETTE SMOKE CONTAINS CARBON MONOXIDE
Means Very Little to a Dying Man