

# My No. 1

*by* stephen hastings-king

I remember meeting you many years later.

Once we were young.

You see me as the same despite 400 pounds of plainly not.

I talk to you with a fantasy based on my younger self between us.

But you look almost the same.

I remember the electricity in the air, getting lost in familiar places.

When I remember there is box inside of box.

When you tell me about the rape I hold your hand.

Your hand feels the way it once did in mine.

I have to look away to focus first on the sound of your voice then on the path it describes.

The party. The alcohol. The drugs. The assault. The violence.

I remember a distance that came between the saying and the said, the narrowing tonal range of your voice.

Something in me died. Then this happened. Then this happened.

I cannot remember the story.

But I remember the whining of the rental car tires against the road.

Later you wrote me a letter.

I remember what it looked like but not what it said.

