

update

by Tara VanMeter

Last time I heard from you, you had been smoking crack with a hooker in the doorway of city hall

When I heard from you again, it was about the wife, and the kids and the white picket fence... (!)

We had the best first date,
Roaming around fells point with cameras around our necks,
Lunch under the stare of naked mannequins and inert action figures
(post-prandial confessions in the car)
Sitting at the waterside, admiring the industrial scenery,
speaking about the future like only young people do...
Equus...

I didn't sleep with you. Then.

We kept in touch. You called me. You wanted to come down. You warned me you had cut your hair. I warned *you* that mine was probably shorter... hahaha... You came. It was inevitable, yet so very orchestrate-able.

You had a braying, embarrassing laugh... You got along with my friends... You wanted to fuck my friends. All of them (mostly)

You stayed for a few days, then went back home, your temporary home, across the state line, just far enough away.

I think I was ashamed

I got some emails from you

I notified you when I began seeing someone else.

You told me that you felt like it would've been you, if you had lived closer....

Proximity.

So, years later, when we found each other on facebook, and I looked at your cute little wife and adorable children, I thought:

“It could've been me... Might've been me....”

Just a thought.

Then... A simple status update later...

It could've been me.

Me. Watching you suffer,
Watching you die

Me left alone, to explain to the kids

Me, with my heart breaking

Me, having to carry on.... With the constant ache of the loss of you.

Instead, every couple of weeks or so, I get a “suggestion” from facebook to say hi to you, and write on your wall.

I see your smiling face, vibrant, alive, the way I remember you....

I want to communicate with you

Regret the missed opportunities.

“Say ‘hello’ to Rich”

I could've... a couple months ago.

But I didn't

Your dying, the process, made me uncomfortable.

I didn't know what to do.

I am only now starting to understand what mortality entails.

Wanting the ability to push aside selfishness and fear

to give when giving might make a difference

Might give some comfort.

Wishing I had been big enough to give what I have *in excess* when
you and yours needed

Wanting to communicate

Now.

When it's too late

