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POETRY | SPRING 2019

## A Brother Like You

By Brandon Grill

Your co-workers found you lying on the  
Ground, “the tweak passed out,” they told us. You said  
You were tired after drinking all night. I asked  
Why you drank before work, and instead of answering  
You recited some lines from your favorite movies.  
Three minutes went by, and you went through the  
Independence Day script, doing every voice.  
Your Will Smith impersonation was unreal, and when  
I asked how much you practiced it you told me  
You’ve only seen the movie twice. You  
Rocked back and forth in your seat,  
and kept trying to hug me. It made putting on  
Your seatbelt very difficult, but the joyousness  
Of your giggle makes it worth it. Few others  
Let you hug them, I presumed. You asked me  
If the nurses would be pretty and if they would  
Comb your hair. My partner whispers in  
My ear that I shouldn’t let you push me  
Around, but I don’t get the sense that you’re  
Trying to take advantage of me. “Sometimes,  
I just want to stop thinking over and over and  
Over so I drink. My social worker won’t comb  
My hair,” you tell me. I ask you about your  
Living conditions, and you tell me you hate  
Being at home. I ask you what medications  
You take, and you tell me you don’t take them  
Unless someone combs your hair. You put your  
Arm around my shoulders as we walk into  
The emergency room, and tell me you wish  
You had a brother like me growing up.  
“Nobody in the home laughs at my voices  
Like you do.”

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**Brandon Grill is working towards his MS in Narrative Medicine at Columbia University. He works as an EMT at Lenox Hill Hospital and sits on the executive board of the Central Park Medical Unit, a nonprofit volunteer ambulance service. His passion for improving communication between patients and clinicians has drawn him towards Narrative Medicine, and he hopes to attend medical school in the near future.**

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