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21:4

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Description

This is a story about my younger brother, Dom.

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Nonfiction

21:4

GRIFFIN MESSER

He wraps my brother's arms around his broad shoulders and takes his own around the heavy boy's back. He tenses. With a harsh exhale, he quickly hoists the growing teenager from the snare that is an aging, blue couch that is becoming difficult to escape from. The boy's stiffened legs bounce back to their comfortable angle like a spring that's been bent sideways. The man staggers as his lift reaches its peak. His feet shift and his back arches. If not for his beloved counterweight, he could not stay standing. He pivots his body, with the boy in his arms naturally following. He methodically aligns the boy's body with the chair that now sits before them. He lowers the boy's body into the chair, but his stiff legs catch the footrest and tip the chair backwards, causing more work for the man and pain for the son. One grunts in frustration; one cries in pain. As the father finally lowers his son into his wheelchair, the tension between the two is clear. One still winces from lingering pain in his deformed legs; the other works to bury his rapid frustration out of love for his son.



Far from his fragile self-control and overwhelmed with the rage of minor loss, my brother had hit my mother as she corrected him. He

wasn't so small anymore. His hits hurt now. His screams reverberated through the house. The sound pulsed as a fire alarm does when you're standing right beside its siren. He was becoming more and more violent. In a flash his spark would light. He would shriek and swing wildly like an that monkey that tore that girls face off. Mom removed herself from the room. She knew that there was nothing she could do to control him when he was like this, and she knew he would only tear her down more if she stayed - so she sought sanctuary in other recesses. My father, however, did not. The yelling came quickly. My father's vengeful reprimand was met by the deafening screams of a boy that didn't know to ask himself what he had done, or why he couldn't stop.

My mother had left with tears in her eyes. The rest of us wished we had the strength to show our own.



Euphoria. A world remade. Everything around me shines, not because it's brand new -- even though it is -- but something deeper than that. It's like paper in bright sunlight but without any of the pain from a glare. It feels like a lens flare.

There are new people and new faces all around me. Old souls in new bodies, all engrossed in this new world, all enthralled with the One that gave it to us. I feel like I could run for miles, lift the mountains, hurdle the moon.

"Griffin."

It's a voice that is unknown, but somehow it's still extremely familiar - like I've known it my entire life. Nostalgic. I turn to find an unfamiliar face, but the soul behind it -- I know that soul well. A body I'd only ever imagined. The stiff legs traded for long, strong, nimble ones. Chocolate colored feet that, for the first time in years, can hold weight. Arms that extend as far as they're meant to. The dislocated left hip is gone. The titanium rod that kept his twisted spine from breaking is gone. A new man stands before me, the only thing that remains are the eyes. The eyes are the same. And the soul.