

Visitation

by [Kathleen O'Toole](#) in the [July 15, 2020](#) issue

Some days, when my brother's death
weighs heavily, I imagine his midnight
visit to my mother, appearing right
in the hallway door beside her bed
all smiles, arms outstretched as in: *I'm fine*.
She notices he's wearing the brown jacket
she'd dry-clean each winter so he could pack
lightly on his trip home. Each time

I implore him to visit *me*, it's this icon
I behold. His arms wide—beatific gesture
of love, and him wearing that coat: *Yes, see
how you loved me!* As if he'd come
to comfort us, to offer a small measure
of peace, knowing how deep our grief.