

POSE

He went for the classic
arm over shoulders,
pulled in, best buddies look,
whereas my arms hung stiff
until I draped one over him,
gingerly, a little allergically,
not from lack of affection,
but an instinct for physical recoil,
like my visible flinch
when someone hugs me from behind.

He gets his demonstrativeness
from his mother.
From me he gets...
nothing tangible, I think—
maybe perseverance,
though I'm only capable of that on a good day,
the kind on which
I can see in this photo
how much I have closed our distance,
gained that ground.