

I Will Do for You All That Was Done for Me Too
By Matthew Champagne

Please know you're not alone
when you feel that imposter syndrome.

I have felt it before, from the very start;
feeling like I'm just not that smart.

But you are that smart, truly, I swear.
Please, believe me when I say, "no part of you is in need of repair."

But you will, hopefully, learn how to incorporate feedback.
And when you're stuck, come see me for a grad school hack.

And you will experience some grad school sorrow...
Professors you idealized might be zeros tomorrow.

And when the work appears empty and you feel astray,
please know I'm here to help light your way.

It happens to all of us; burn out is a fact of life
but no grad student is built to endure only toil and strife.

Your first lesson to learn is to balance work and fun.
Those scales should be equal; one-to-one.

During the semester... one side might get heavier than the other.
But don't worry, together we can balance each other.

Know that when you cry I want to hug you and tell you how special you are...
but that'd be weird, so I won't. But know I'm thinking it from afar.

And in your department, there might only be a few who look like you.
Academia still considers including people of color to be a "breakthrough."

But you more than belong and I am happy you are here.
And our struggles might not be the same but we can share them over beer.

Remember, my door is open, my phone is on
and we're walking step in step for this multi-year marathon.

And I hope to do for you all that was done for me too.
For the honor of being your mentor, I thank you.