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The Dissection of Twins

by Amber Zipfel

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The Parents of Twins

My father fell against the hard beige wall and held his breath, or so he told me. My mother laughed nervously, hoping the sonogram was playing tricks on her. My parents were completely stunned by what they saw on the small screen. There was not one, but two babies joining them. The parents of twins experience a whole different life, a normalcy that others may never understand. Two can change a lot.

By the time my mother was half-way through the pregnancy, her stomach swelled up twice the size of a woman carrying just one child. Her bulging belly meant discrete stares and barely fitting inside a restaurant's booth. The responsibility of two babies meant having an absurd variety of food cravings, from cheese puffs to sour pickles. These are the minor changes and dealings during a pregnancy. Once the twins are brought into this world, things really start to change. My parents were handed over two brand new lives at the same moment, each wrapped up in a swaddle. They had become the parents of two in a matter of a few minutes. They definitely had their hands full.

While the birth of twins is a very unique experience in itself, these parents possess similar moments as the other after such arrival. Seemingly repeating late nights and getting barely any sleep, the parents switch from infant to infant. They hold their two babies, hoping the cries will eventually die out soon by the arrival of slumber. Two babies, especially of the same gender, mean that the parents will buy two of everything. Two sets of matching blue pajamas, two yellow sunglasses, two brunette barbie dolls, two toy cars, two sparkly shoes. If the twins are lucky, the parents will buy the same items but in opposing colors. If the twins are unlucky, they will be stuck with one distinct color for the rest of their childhood. The parents are left buying the same of everything, because everything needs to be fair for the twins.

When the two babies become a little older, they start to form their own thoughts and make minor decisions. The expansion of their mind will cause the parents to create the A and B day system, which allows the twins to pick items to eat and activities to do based on whose day it is. If the parents suggest a movie, baby A picks which one they are going to watch. If the twins are eating cereal for breakfast, Baby B chooses their specific color bowl and spoon. As you can see, they are making very tough, life-changing decisions.

When the twins grow longer limbs and get stripped of baby teeth, the parents will place them into the same sports teams, dance classes, or swimming lessons. The activities in which one twin wants to attend means the other must be involved too. They are a package deal: buy one, and you have to get the other one, but not for free. When the siblings are placed in these sports sessions or art classes, everything becomes a competition. Which of them can make the most free-throws in basketball, backflips in the swimming pool, or reach the other tree that stands a few yards away? The parents watch their twins explore their shared interests, bet on the stronger one, or even fight over who will get the lead role in the Nutcracker. The parents will try to dispute fights and hold the crying twin, hoping that they will grow out of their forced similarities.

Once the twins become older and reside in public school, the parents notice a change in their relationship. The parents will either lock them in one class or split their usual dynamic duo. Different classes mean the two children will form separate opinions, gain their own friend groups, discover their true passions, settle into their developing minds, and even buy opposite school lunches. The twins will become their own people. The children may not feel much like twins, rather just friends passing by their closed bedroom doors at home.

Even though the twins evolve into new, unique individuals, the parents still handle them as two similar entities. The blessing of twins will lead to disparities, specifically experiencing

two of the same, major life events at the same time. For example, the parents will stress twice as much over their teen twins receiving their driver's licenses. They will watch the twins earn public-school diplomas, while cheering over the chairs filled up by their classmates. The parents will pay for both college tuitions during the same four years, and hopefully watch their twins earn their degrees in that time period. My twin sister and I were the only children my parents decided to have, a one and done type of scenario. This choice caused my parents to experience two of everything, but only for one moment in time.

Before the parents can even click their red slippers three times, the twins will have already walked down different paths in life. While the siblings are connected by their shared birthday and similar life experiences as children, they are no longer conjoined by the hip. They are still twins, but not experiencing life as twins anymore.

My parents no longer feel as they once did when spotting two babies in the sonogram over twenty years ago. There is no more falling against walls and the rubbing of eyes to double check what they were seeing. There is no more shock and nervousness, because my parents have successfully raised two children at one time. Seconds turned into minutes, minutes into hours, and hours into years. Throughout the past two decades, my mother and father learned how to be the parents of twins. It took practice and countless moments of doubt, but parents of twins evolve into a different breed. They are bionic, comprised of skin of steel and tough mental strength. They are the parents of twins. Twins. Parents.

Me and My Twin Sister

I was brought into this world on March 22, 2000, at 7:10pm. My parents said I was a small, blood-covered ball of flesh and black hair. They remember that I cried, I yelped, all because the doctor forcefully made sure my tiny lungs were taking in air in the cold operation room. They were overjoyed that I safely made it into this world.

After I was exposed by the doctor's hands and rushed into a warm blanket, there was no sign of rest from the medical team. My parents were unable to take a sigh of relief just yet. There was no indication that the medial gloves were going to be ripped off, the lights dimmed, because there was another small bundle waiting to arrive. The doctor continued to work with his skilled hands. My dad stayed by my mother's side, while I laid in the warm incubator a few feet away. A few moments passed and more effort was focused on my mom's exposed body. After two minutes went by, another loud cry echoed off the white walls. Another baby arrived and she too would be coming home with my parents. She was my twin sister, baby B.

My parents already decided the name Amber for one of their girls. However, they did not have a name, an identity for her sister. Two days went by of proclaiming names, but none seemed fit for their second daughter. On the third day, my dad had a revelation. A name that he still believes had come from up above: Autumn. They decided on which name belonged to which baby, and I was bestowed with Amber. My twin sister is Autumn, a girl with strawberry blonde hair and brown eyes.

As we grew up, Autumn and I were always by each other's side. We were each other's best friends. When we attended an event and knew no one around us, I felt the comforts of Autumn by my side. Basically, we were never alone, always together. On top of this trend, my mom placed matching clothes on us at a very young age. Red sparkly shoes like Dorothy's

famous footwear, black and white poke-a-dot dresses, large pink puffer jackets. We were a matching set of little girls; except we did not look like twins at all. That is right, we are not the identical twins that could have switched into each other's classes and have no one notice. We were our own entity, different in every way, but still labeled as a package deal.

Eventually, Autumn and I were thrown into school. We were placed in the same preschool class, where our time was filled up by scooter rides, messy art crafts, and sleepy nap times. When we entered the public-school realm, there was suddenly an imaginary line drawn between us. Besides the occasional placement in high school, we attended our own, separate classes. We lived different lives right up until it was time to come home. Different friends, different clothes, different after-school activities, different personalities, different boys. Different is all we have known since.

I sported light blonde hair as a child, now dying it at least twice a year to keep its original color. She has always possessed brown hair with some red tints mixed in. My sister had itchy patches of eczema when she was younger and slowly but surely grew out of this irritation. I have had moist, soft skin for my entire life. I am the only individual in my immediate family who does not wear glasses. Autumn was forced into eyewear at the beginning of high school. I was tortured with thick, banded braces for three and a half years. I had seven teeth pulled out of my mouth and went through an oral surgery. My sister only had braces for a year and her teeth were naturally straight. I am considered the athletic one by others, known as the sister who runs for her university. Autumn was in theater for all of high school and now works at Virginia Tech as a videographer. Honestly, this list could potentially mount another page. Autumn and I are the complete opposites but somehow came from the same family and grew up in the same manner. I sometimes forget we are twins, rather sisters, but I never forget we were born to be best friends.

However, our lives have moved into opposite directions. I am writing this essay in the comforts of my apartment in Fredericksburg, Virginia, while my twin sister is residing four and a half hours away. I do not know what she is doing every day, because she no longer pushes my bedroom door open at night and dishes out the havocs in high school. I do not know who she surrounds herself with on a regular basis, because she no longer brings friends over to our family house. I do not know if she has trouble falling asleep each night or waking up to absurd dreams, because she does not seek me out to find a sanctuary. All I know is that I miss her very much, because we do not talk very often. Our lives are separated, but we share a label that involves a forever companionship. We are bounded to each other. Twins.

The Birthday Routine

Autumn and I share the same birthday, but of course, because we are twins. For most of our lives, we have hosted different birthday parties with our own friends. We have wanted to identify as our own person, rather than a twin, so separate celebrations came with this ideal. Even though our birthday plans do not involve the other, we have always tried to come together and carry out our routine each year: we countdown to the times we were brought into this world.

At around 7:05pm, we have the important people in our lives surround us, either our parents or a small group of friends. The few minutes before my actual time of birth seems to always stretch further than it really is. However, we wait. I wait until the clock strikes 7:10pm. When this minute arrives, I have turned one year older. The crowd hollers and yells in excitement for that one whole minute. I usually smile and proclaim to my sister, “Ha! I am a year older while you are a year younger!” I soak in the feeling of superiority and happiness, really taking it all in. However, this statement is true up until the clock changes to 7:12pm, and Autumn transitions to the same age as me again.

We cheer for my sister, who is technically my younger sibling. The birthday song starts to buzz into my ears, and soon I blow out my candles. The next song is for my sister, who has patiently waited for her turn. She blows out her own candles, as she makes her wish and places us into darkness.

The celebration of one’s birthday is a continuous, never-ending cycle. For me and Autumn, this cycle will continue on for the rest of our lives. No matter what, I am going to call my sister every year, showboating my two minutes of being a year older than her. Well, I will do this until I can no longer sing those two words, “happy birthday.” I will live out those two minutes, and then celebrate my sister at 7:12pm. Happy birthday to me and Autumn, to the twins.

Stereotypes Placed on Twins

There are a lot of stereotypes and fascinations regarding twins. These born duos are sent into this world and are forced to endure such feelings from other people and society. There seems to be a common representation of twins in the entertainment business, who dive headfirst into twin stereotypes. There are shows that include twins who are polar opposites, do not get along, may switch places, get separated at birth, or even have one being deaf. As a twin myself, I find that producers hold certain standards and exaggerated notions of twins and their relationships, which are ones that I do not find true. The following statements include my personal dissection of twins portrayed to our society, through television shows and movies.

Twins is a 1988 American comedy film that follows the story of two opposite twins, who are played by Danny DeVito and Arnold Schwarzenegger. This popular movie highly indicates the vast differences between the twins, from one being street-smart and the other an intelligent, naïve person. While the film thrives off of its showcase of just how different these two men are, there is also the commonly used element of being separated at birth. Honestly, most films and television shows use these two common themes. For example, *It Takes Two* and *Parent Trap* involve sets of twins that are separated from each other for most of their lives. While the separation of twins does not commonly happen in our day and age, I find that most movies and television shows downplay the impact this situation has on such siblings. Instead, the entertainment business pushes to make these situations seem magical and exciting. While the feelings of happiness and excitement may be expected in this type of circumstance, I believe the large effect of being separated from each other should be accurately portrayed, such as showing the raw emotions of finding their twin. Instead, this type of scenario leads the twins to be used as novelties.

The Disney show *Liv and Maddie* is an example where the entertainment business somewhat skews a relationship of twins and highly exaggerates their own differences. When the television series first appeared on Disney Channel, I was extremely ecstatic that they were portraying the life of twin sisters because I have one myself. The characters include a famous movie star and the other as a regular high school student. I thought it would be relatable, and even give me something to be proud of. However, Disney made yet another mistake when adding twins into the mix: they use one girl to play both twins. Yes, that one, young girl may be very talented and accurately showcase the differences between the two. However, I cannot seem to pinpoint why the entertainment business decides to represent twins like this, and why they do not cast actual twins for the roles. I find that the casting process results in more twins being played by only one actor and not a true set of twins. For instance, the Disney productions of *Twitches* and *Suite Life of Zack and Cody* included real-life sets of twins. Disney did right by something. On the other hand, there are countless more examples of where only one actor plays twins, such as Lisa Kudrow in *Friends*, Leonardo DiCaprio in *The Man in the Iron Mask*, Adam Sandler in *Jack and Jill*, Linsey Lohan in *Parent Trap*, and so many other screenplays.

In conclusion, I really care for an accurate portrayal of twins in the entertainment business. While twins can be very different from one another, I feel that most are displayed as complete opposites to a far greater extent than a majority of regular twins. Also, I beg the entertainment industry to just let the twins stay happy and not be mad at each other for one episode. On another note, I would appreciate if future twin roles would actually be played by a real set of twins, rather than just one actor. This casting decision would allow its viewers to grasp a better and more realistic understanding of the dynamic between twins.

The Questions That Never Seem to End

Almost every time someone finds out a person is a twin; a range of responses come out of their mouths. There is the jealous type, who exclaims the following statements: “Wow, you are so lucky you are a twin!” and “I have always wanted to be a twin.” The twin nods, taking in the person’s desires to share the womb with another.

The person eventually evolves into the questioning subject, probing the twin with their inquiries, such as, “what is it like to be a twin?” The twin pauses, thinking how they could possibly know what life is like as a single entity. They have only ever known how twins work and nothing else.

Sometimes, when twins are together and an individual becomes excited from the newfound knowledge of their relations, the questions become skewed. However, not aggressive or biased, rather in a dumb manner. I have received loads of stupid inquiries myself, that honestly make my head swivel to my twin sister, raise my eyebrows, and slightly chuckle in amusement. Twins usually hear questions such as, “Oh, you are fifteen, so how old are you?” or “what grade are you in then?” People never seem to run out of questions, so twins can never seem to run away from their enduring interrogations.

Even if the twins consist of different genders, they are given the question: “are you identical or fraternal twins?” Twins have heard them all, several times over. Twins who meet other sets of twins can relate to experiencing proposed questions, especially the dumb ones. They usually laugh and sadly recall the moments of such awkward encounters. Bonding occurs.

Eventually the questions cease, the interview ends. As intriguing or just plain dumb the questions are, the person loses interest discussing the subject of twins. Despite their wish to have

a twin, to be a twin, nothing will change. They are unable to reverse the clock and change back into an embryo.

All they can do is live their wish out by interrogating twins.

The Parents of Twins

I have known my parents for my entire life, since the moment I was born. I am not alone. My sister, Autumn, was also dealt the same exact time span of knowing them. Well, there is a two-minute time difference between us, but we have basically experienced the same two people during the same moments. My parents, Andy and Annie, have worked hard. They have raised me and my sister from the ground up, from flying airplanes into my mouth as a baby to yelling encouragements while I run loops around the blue track. They are some special individuals in my life, and I had the pleasure to sit down with them, record their voices, and hear their take on questions regarding their twin daughters. During the midafternoon on a Saturday, I spoke two questions and my two parents gave their responses. Here they are.

What is the first memory that pops into your head regarding me and Autumn?

“Oh, it was just being in the house with the two of you every day.”

“Can you describe a little bit more?”

“Oh my gosh, how I would pen you into that room and we would play. We would play tools sometimes and then we would play in the other room. You would go places with your baby in the strollers. I mean even though it was hectic, I wanna say those are some of my fondest memories and I didn’t know it at the time, but I know it now.”

“Aw. What about you dad?”

“Well, it is funny that your mom mentioned that front room because when we were a friend’s house, we were talking about twins and she [Rachel] said something about how you had the giant

room penned off. I said that no kids ever had as big as a play pen as them. They probably didn't even realize they were, you know, in a cage, ha-ha, or penned in really. It was an entire room. It was great. So, when you said the first memory, the absolutely first memory- “

“Well, the first memory that pops into your head, like what comes into your head when you think of me and Autumn?”

“Oh, uh, there are some many, but when you first asked, I just remembered you first being born. I remember hearing you cry, and you being whisked over to the bin and then because I was paying attention to your mom at that point, I didn't know. I was like ‘Oh, wow the baby's out.’ So, I kind of missed seeing you and saw Autumn first.”

“You missed seeing me?!?”

“I didn't see them take you out because I was behind something and they whisked you over. So, the first one I saw was Autumn, but they were whisking her to a bin. I didn't see them whisk you. I remember, uh, well there are so many different memories, you know sitting in the hospital and your mom was feeding both of you and it was like she had two footballs.”

“ha-ha-ha!”

“You know, one in each hand. You would both look up at each other. Your eyes would look up when you were feeding, and it was almost like you were looking at each other- “

“To see if you were still there, because you were in the womb for so long.”

“Ya, you were aware that you were together, I am sure, in some level. So, you were almost like looking up to see where the other one was. I mean it is so hard to pinpoint a memory.”

“I mean, you already got it so.”

“Ya, I mean I got thousands of memories.”

Do you wish Autumn, and I were born at separate times? If so, why? If not, why?

“You go first.”

“No, I think we went through a unique situation to have had twins and it just feels like there are so many different parts of my life that might be ordinary and there are other parts that might be extraordinary. I always felt like having twins, going through that, was extraordinary. And that doesn't mean that there haven't been moments where, and I am going to say this, your mom and I both have discuss this, where we have said, okay, we're a couple, so we are an entity, and they came into the world together, so they see themselves as an entity. Being twins, I think there was more of a gap maybe, between how often we might have given one on one, or you might have given us kind of one on one. But still, in the bigger picture, I think having twins felt more extraordinary versus ordinary.”

“Ya, I agree. I think it was very extraordinary and I was glad that my body was able to carry the both of you. It was a unique opportunity. The only challenge is that anyone who has twins is that you have less and less time with one twin. So, that is why I always wanted to have Fridays with each one of you, but if I am the only caregiver, I have to babysit the other. I felt that the strength

of me and the both of you together, the three that we were was very strong. I felt that the tie between me and you, and me and Autumn was less.”

“It felt like you were more of a party of three, but never really a party of one on one. I don’t know but this reminded me, but did you always take one out of school so that you could have time with the other?”

“Yes, I did, but it wasn’t enough, and I felt that the basis of our relationship is really built on three people instead of one on one.”

“Okay, but you didn’t answer the question. Mom, do you wish that Autumn and I were born at separate times?”

“Hmm, no. No.”

“Okay, besides all of that, you still would not change it?”

“No, I would not change it.”

When I formulated these questions, I held no standards or ideas of what they would come up as answers. They see me and my sister in a different light, because they were the ones to bandage up our boo boos and drive us to doctor appointments. They were the ones who conversed with our schoolteachers and helped us with our homework. They were the ones who saw their two daughters rise as adults, slowly but surely into promising individuals. They have seen us when we have not seen ourselves, me and Autumn. Their babies. Their daughters. Their twins.

Me and My Twin Sister

I stationed myself on the kitchen table for a late-night homework session. The gluten free cake was slowly baking in the oven, the chocolate frosting awaiting to do its job, and my friends were surrounding the room. Suddenly, a FaceTime notification appeared on my computer. It was Autumn. I was awaiting her call. I hurried downstairs to the study-room. I plopped down on the hard sit and quickly pressed play on the recording app. My sister usually cannot talk for long. Our lives have gone into two busy, opposing directions. The recording started. I began the interview.

What is the first memory that pops into your head regarding being twins with me?

“Geez, that is really hard. Honestly, probably the white light at night that dad would do for us. You were sleeping in the bed right next to me and we always kind of lived like that when we were younger. I kind of just... anything that has to do us being jointed at the hip like that, it has always been stuck in my mind. Whether we were dressing the same or we were brushing our teeth at the same sink or dad cleaning our ears at the same time.”

“Like cutting our nails?”

“Yes, we did everything the same.”

If you could change being a twin and rather be a single unit entering the world, would you? Yes, if so, why? No, why?

“See, okay, I think this question I have gotten asked by multiple people. This is not just you, my twin asking me this.”

“Oh, ya! This is a normal question.”

“I could never, never, ever, ever give this question an answer, because I will never know what the world is like without you. And I don’t think I would want to really, because you are kind of what I have ever known. I have always been like, Amber and Autumn, Autumn and Amber. Um, so I am not saying we are a single unit, because that would be a lot. I mean, when we were younger, we were kind of treated as a unit, um, but I always think that some part of us has been connected so there has always been a unit between us. There has always been some sort of, you know, thing that has connected us. Whether we’re together at home or we’re two hours away at college. So, honestly, no, like obviously I would not really not want to be a twin, but I also don’t know what it is like to not be a twin. I don’t think I really want to know. It’s kind of just feels like I have a sibling, and I would not want to be an only child because they have issues.”

“ha-ha, yes they do.”

Shortly after I spoke those last few words, Autumn and I ended the call. The recording stopped and I raced back upstairs, hoping the late-night cake was ready to be devoured by me and my friends. It is the next day, and as I listen to this interview again, I remember what I promised her. I told Autumn that I would answer these two questions myself, because I am a part of this unit. I sit in front of my white desk and try to formulate my own responses.

What is the first memory that pops into your head regarding being twins with Autumn?

“The first thing that pops into my head is how we were always each other’s best friend, despite having our own best friends as well. When we would go to a new, somewhat daunting event, we would always have each other and could stay together. It was just you and me, playing downstairs in the basement. Either playing games like battleship or conjuring up imaginary lives for our barbie dolls. You were my best friend before we even entered the world. You were my best friend that would watch movies with me and listen to music. You were my best friend and still are today, despite the distance. I guess this is what can come out of being a package deal or a set of twins.”

If you could change being a twin and rather be a single unit entering the world, would you? Yes, if so, why? No, why?

“Even though I asked this question to you, I don’t think I could ever answer this as a yes. It is definitely a no, because I would not want our bond to not exist. I believe there is a reason why we were born as twins, and I have loved all the good and bad moments that come with this. I guess I can see that we are one of the lucky twins that are polar opposites, both in our appearance and personalities, because this makes me see you more as a sibling rather than a twin. Yes, we share the same birthday, and yes, we are the same age, but I have seen us more as siblings and friends, rather than a pair of twins. So, no, I would not change a thing. I would not want to come into this world as one, because that would mean we would not be the people we are today.”

The Birthday Routine

We uncontrollably change in age, one year after the other. We are stuck in a time loop, slowly edging closer to a daring, older age, and eventually death. Luckily, we are not in the situation that Benjamin Button was born into, rather we live the first years young. If we are blessed with a little luck, we will possess a buddy to survive this yearly anniversary. I am one of those blessed individuals, a girl who shares their special day with their sibling, their twin sister. Since I could open up my eyes, Autumn has been by my side, attached to the hip.

When we were too little to create our own celebration, my parents prepared the day for their twin daughters. During our third birthday, they pulled some strings and used their legit connections to land an appearance from Elmo. The little hearts within us and the other booger-picking children pounded a little bit faster than usual, whose hearts normally run like a racehorse. The parents would all use these types of birthday celebrations as their own party, sipping on a Bud Light or two. The children would scream, the parents would talk over the havoc lot, but Autumn and I would be over the moon. Those were the good days, our shared birthday party filled with colorful animal plates, cheesy birthday hats, and overwhelming Elmo appearances.

As the leaves grew, their colors evolved and eventually fell to the soil. We were budding in our own ways. The years passed and soon Autumn and I were able to make our own decisions, specifically towards our annual celebration. We dictated that we desired to have separate parties and have our own friends there and to have a different theme and a different kind of cake and different activities. Sometimes a few of our friends would get roped into attending both of our separate parties.

We wanted everything the other twin had, except at opposing end of the spectrum. For one celebration, my sister grabbed a group of her friends and invited them to a mystery themed party. There were single clues secretly placed in odd spots around the house, and my parents were the only ones who held the answers in their heads. On the other hand, I hosted a slumber party involving essential spa activities, such as painting nails and doing each other's make-up. Honestly, one can infer that we are extremely different just by taking note of our party themes. We contrast as people, even as normal friends having things in common. Sharing the same birthday is the only thing that has brought us together.

It has been a little over twenty-one years since Autumn and I were pulled down into this world. We celebrated some of our birthdays together as young children, but as the years grew on us, we grew apart. March 22, 2021 rolled around unwillingly, and we enjoyed our special day without the other. In truth, I missed having Autumn by my side, especially since it was one of the biggest birthdays one can experience besides their actual birth. We did our own things and hung out with our own people and ate our very own cake and danced with our own friends and downed our own alcoholic drinks. When my small group of friends and I located our seats at the outside bar, my annual call slipped out of my mind. I bought my first drink and took some large gulps. I took hundreds of pictures with my group, too many overloading stimuli. Too many things happening at one time and it slipped my drunken mind. When I looked at my wristwatch and realized that it was almost 8:30pm, I realized that I blew it. I called her, and thankfully she answered. I wished her a happy birthday and my mouth poured out that I was sorry for the non-existing call at 7:11pm. I eventually began to consume more alcohol, not intentionally drinking the sadness down the drain.

The distance between has us caught in the midst of living totally different lives. While this is sometimes a good thing, other times I find myself looking at the words “call declined” on my phone. And on this occasion, I found myself dropping the ball, forgetting that my special person deserved a call at that exact moment. Instead, I was focusing on what is in front of me. I forgot to call. Happy twenty-first birthday to us.

Judgements Placed on Twins

One of the previous essays brought up the topic of twin stereotypes in the entertainment industry. The piece dives into several movies and television shows, such as *Parent Trap* and *Liv and Maddie*, that position their main characters as twins. This sibling relationship is seen through television sets and the big screen, but these are not the only locations that hold twin stereotypes. Have you ever come across a picture of twins or their shared account on a social media platform? Well, they exist and there are more than you think. While twins deal with the stereotypes, standards, opinions of other individuals, this does not only happen in person or the entertainment business. Besides the somewhat idiotic questions that spill out of people who came into this world alone, they look and judge on twins' social medias. The following statements include my personal dissection and specific examples of twins being stereotyped and judged by our society through social media.

Twins are seen as a mystical and somewhat entertaining duo, especially identical sets. If you have not been living under a large, cold rock, you may have seen several famous twins on the wide range of social media platforms. They are mainly identical twins, who ride the wave of people being fascinated by their matching similarities. For example, the Dolan Twins, who are young brothers that have grown big in popularity from their YouTube following. As you can see, this duo has the word "twins" in their public name and video channel handle. This brings more attention to the fact that they are twins, more than their contagious personality and fit bodies. Rather, their popularity is mainly because of two reasons, being a twin and working hard. There are several more identical twins who are well known in the world, such as the Merrell, Dobre, and Stoke twins. These twins, and as well as many other identical sets, have raided the interests of many individuals on all platforms across the web. They portray their lives together, from

brushing their teeth in the morning to playing pranks on each other. These famous social media twins showcase that they are always side by side. In my view, it is quite interesting to see that these identical sets of twins can build a whole brand with each other. I believe, or almost know, they would not be famous without the fact that they are identical twins. One twin would not be famous without the other. From the track record, Autumn and I would not be the lucky ones to get famous, mainly because we are the polar opposites in terms of looks, mannerisms, and personalities.

While these twins have made a living and whole career out of their genome sequence, they are still forced through the comparative hands of their fans. By being on social media, these siblings are placing their mind and bodies on a silver platter. All for their fans to judge and compare. One of the twins deals with severe acne and is made fun of, while the other is getting heart emojis on their Instagram post. Even though Autumn and I are not famous, I know that these popular twins are not the only ones being compared. It happens on a regular basis for ordinary twins, such as me and my fraternal sister. While most of the stereotypes are not displayed on our social media accounts, they are either vocalized to us directly or behind our backs. This has happened throughout our entire lives, but we were especially affected during our high school years.

There is one story that comes to mind. My sister joined the drama department during her high school years, where she would perform amazing roles to the audience. She was starting to form her own friend group and her image as a single entity. One day, Autumn was sitting in her theater class, which was built upon the colors of black and red. Her fellow classmate was on their phone and had Instagram pulled up on the screen. Suddenly, he turned to my sister and asked in the bluntest way possible, “does it bother you that Amber has more Instagram followers than

you?” She was stunned, but at the same time, she was almost used to the comparing comments between us twins. She did not let him know that his blunt words bothered her in that moment of time. Rather, Autumn relayed the event to me later that day. My blood was boiling, my skin was festering from the judgmental comments Autumn had received earlier. I felt terrible that she was dealt with such a question, but I could do nothing. The people in my high school kept to their judging ways, while my sister was at the brunt of their sharp words. Sadly, the cycle continues. The twins of the world seem to always be compared by the other and judged by society.

The Questions That Never Seem to End

The questions never seem to end, for I am brought to the realization by the blunt force of absence. We started out as a single unit, two buds flowering in our mother's womb. You and I were born minutes apart from each other. You and I were stationed in the same home for many years, our rooms just down the hall. We learned together, stuck in the same public schools for thirteen long years. Oh, how have they already passed, when they seemed to dread on in the moment?

Autumn, it has been a while since I have seen you. We are two different people now, living our own separate lives almost 200 miles away. I do not know if you are always happy. I do not know when you need a hug. I do not know who you are and what you go through when we are apart. You do not know how I am as well. We are absent in each other's lives, except for the short calls every so often.

The questions never seem to end. Where are we going to go? Your dream is live in the bustling city of New York. I am different and desire to live in a small town somewhere warmer than Virginia. Will we be miles, states, or countries away? As of right now, I have no doubt there will be distance between us. Will we see each other every Christmas? You and I may have to decorate the glistening tree without the other. Will we ever be the same since the distance between us first formed? I know we have changed since going to college, expanding the miles between me and you. We are altered by life's moments, but in different directions. Will you still call me when you are sad? There may be people in your everyday life that you unconsciously call before me.

This is all okay, or at least I try to think in that mindset. This was the plan all along, right? We would grow in the womb together, grow up in the same childhood house, and separate

when the time came. When we were no longer children, but rather adults in the real world.

However, I want the real world where you are in it.

Autumn, my twin sister, you are a blessing. We are a blessing to our parents. We are a blessing to each other. Autumn and Amber. Amber and Autumn. Twins who will always be twins, despite the time and distance between us. Twin sisters. Twins.