

## Twin

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In baby pictures, I don't recognize myself. There are two identical babies, lying in identical bassinets in identical onesies, that can't be distinguished. As we get older, it gets easier, until finally, by the time we reach the first day of kindergarten, I am clearly me, and she is clearly her.

We were told the same stories, slept in the same room, and cracked our heads on the same fan when we slept in the top bunk of the same bunk beds. We even shared a best friend, the only person who has never called me Molly instead of Amy. But despite living lives that were so identical, somehow, at some point, our bodies no longer reflected our shared DNA so perfectly.

Molly has always been there; she is a physical representation of the road not taken. We started life in the same second, born nearly instantaneously in an emergency C-section. Since then, she has made many small decisions that I, in a different universe, made too. Somehow, the sum of these decisions has made us distinguishable. There are few things so obvious as my diabetes, or her extra inch in height, but innumerable small differences that I can't even name.

Sometimes I think about the ways that we have shaped each other. There are the cuts that came and went when we pushed each other off of the playground, and the long-healed blisters from when she told me I couldn't pogo stick a thousand times, so of course I had to prove her wrong. Then there were the endless games of tag, when I had to run just a bit faster than her, and the laughter that would squeak out of tight lungs when I couldn't. I think of all the accomplishments that we only defined in relation to each other. Did these moments, in the end, add up to anything?

One summer we decided we would live as lemurs. All three of us, my older sister and the twins, were all committed to this goal. For months we swung from the low branches in the backyard when my mother's back was turned, communicating in the language of lemurs, which was, of course, Pig Latin. The details have grown hazy, but by the end of that summer I was aware for the first time that arms have muscles, for mine were constantly sore from climbing. My sister has forgotten when we were emurs-lay. How many memories have I lost, too? How many things that were once the center of my life have vanished from it completely, either leaving a physical mark, or not? Is it even possible for us to know what shaped us, to know what led to me being an identical twin that was no longer identical to my twin?