

Long Distance Siblingship

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Having a brother or a sister means having a best friend and arch-nemesis living with you right at home. However, once they move out, whether they go abroad for studying or your sister gets married and she becomes someone else's sister (and you become slightly jealous), you realize what you took for granted. I mean let's be real, whom are you going to annoy 24/7?

I remember coming home from school and sitting on my sister's table, telling her all about my day. You see, a day without annoying her or making her feel like a punching my face would be a day incomplete for me. Now that she's not around, I can't break a glass and blame it on her. I don't have a shoulder to lean on after a bad day. I don't have a back up for any of my unreasonable requests to my mother.

Time difference is your number one enemy. It is a sad reminder of the thousands of miles that are separating the two of you, and so, they will miss out on more than a few important moments in life every now and then. You can't just barge into their room to ask which top you should pair with your new pants. You can text them, but chances are, they'll be sleeping when you are planning out your outfit. You will realize you actually miss all the mockery and dissing. Moreover, holidays and birthdays are the worst. The family shots will be incomplete. Dinner tables will miss them the most but the good thing is that the chair you once fought over can finally be yours.

What can be done to include them in the things you're doing is a Skype session, but that's only possible if it is not entirely an epic fail. You need patience to get through the "I can hear you, can you hear me" phase. Also, occa-



sional stalking on social media sites will give you an insight to the life they have there. So it's completely normal if you feel like going on to Facebook or Instagram and liking every single photo of them like a creep. Family group chats on messaging apps like Whatsapp and Viber are life savers too. As clichéd as it is, this is what helps the most to keep in contact. Random unnecessary photos of the day, a beautiful picture of your mom, they can all be shared in the group.

Long distance relationships with your siblings can be



hard, but it is always worth putting in the extra effort because it's that much crucial. For the reason that once they come back, it will be like they never left! You'll lose your newly gained seat in the dining table, but you'll get to annoy someone 24/7. What else do you need? Just keep the lines of communication open and family a priority and you're good to go.

Faria Khan is an ambivert who truly believes in the divine power of music. Give her a piece of your mind at fariaa.964@gmail.com

WHAT'S IT LIKE TO HAVE A UNIQUE NAME

RAFIDAH RAHMAN

If I had a dollar for every time someone mispronounced or spelled my name wrong, I'd be a billionaire by now – no kidding.

In a country full of *Anikas* and *Maishas* you'd think having a unique name would be a blessing in disguise. I guess my parents thought the same before realizing that it didn't really turn out that way. I get the occasional "Oh your name's pretty exclusive!" line, but ultimately my name causes me more distress than delight.

I've spent years staying strong and adamant that people should learn my name right. I even tried butchering my own name to make it more pronounceable but who was I kidding? People don't care that they boil my blood every time they get my name wrong, or how infuriated I get when they don't even try to rectify it. So, after a point you just get tired and try letting go. But does that work? NO!

As much as I try forgetting these discrepancies, they have a way of coming back to me. Microsoft Word for one never fails to highlight in bold red that my name was a mistake. I never even dare to order anything at Crimson Cup for that matter, because I simply don't have the energy to witness my name being misspelled one more time. Even my dad spells my name wrong after all these years; hence, my agony!

Introducing myself to someone new is



a special kind of hell for me. This relative of mine forgets my name each year he sees me. Yesterday though, he gave me his word that he'll keep it in mind not

because he should but since he has a nephew named Rafid, which apparently makes it more convenient for him to remember my name. It's been 24 hours

and I'm still not sure how to respond.

If sheer ignorance isn't enough, people here don't even shy away from suggesting or downright giving you alternate names. I was best friends with a girl named Rafia, back in middle school. Such fate really! After that, for a good whole year, none of us really heard our real names from the teachers since they unapologetically kept interchanging it. A year later, she left. I don't know if I was gloomier to see her go or relieved to finally get my name back.

Getting into university didn't really change my luck either. Even the most educated professors took a good 2 minutes to grasp my name. What I hate most is when people ask my name's meaning and originality. Yes, even after 22 years of existence I'm still not sure about the former. My dad's professor named me after Rafidah Aziz, the former trade minister of Malaysia, but forgot to dig out what it means. All this technology couldn't help me find it either, sigh! I pray this changes someday.

Nonetheless, even after all the resentment I provided my parents for this over the years, I got to confess that I've learned to love it over time. After all, I wouldn't be me without it!

Rafidah Rahman is a teeny-tiny Hulk, she's always angry and she's always hungry. A cynical dreamer and a food enthusiast, she's your everyday entertainment. Correspond with her at rafidahrahman93@gmail.com or <https://www.facebook.com/rafidah.rahman.39>