

attention!!

Life with brother

Many times, when people ask me where I live and I tell them I live off campus in an apartment with my younger brother, they stare at me as if to say, "You live with your brother? Are you crazy?"

Maybe I am crazy. After all, sharing an apartment with a younger brother definitely has some drawbacks.

For example, who else has a handle on all the little things that get under your skin? Fred knows just what to do to annoy me, like jumping out from behind things and yelling "Boo!"

Of course, this is not a major problem, unless you're the kind of person who likes to read stories about murder and mayhem. Then it can get a little scary.

Then there's the topic of the car and my driving.

Whenever we go somewhere together, Fred insists upon driving. I'm a good driver, I tell him. In fact, I just got a slip in the mail telling me I can renew my driver's license simply by filling it out and mailing it in, because I'm a safe driver.

I don't understand what Fred's problem is.

The fact that I had two accidents — one right after the other — has nothing to do with it.

And there's the problem of snitching.

What other roommate is more than willing to report to your parents the number of classes you've missed in the past two weeks? (Or, actually, the number of classes you've actually managed to attend.)

But the major problem of living with my brother is that he can be my

worst enemy. He knows the ins and outs of my character and he won't fail to exploit my weaknesses in a fit of anger.

After all, he has plenty of ammunition. He knows everything I've ever done in my entire life, with the exception of the first 16 months.

But perhaps the fact that he knows me so well is also part of what makes our situation work so well.

His 9-foot reach compensates for the fact that I'm 5-feet short. He takes care of the housework because he knows that I work eight hours a night. (He's quite good at washing dishes. How many other people can say they have a live-in housekeeper?)

But living with a brother brings something else to a relationship that another roommate can never share — a blood tie. And with that blood tie

comes one of the truest friends a person could ever have.

Even your closest friends may turn against you if you've hurt them badly enough. But regardless of what happens in your lives, a brother will somehow always be there.

Granted, blood does not guarantee or even provide a built-in friendship. Fred and I had to fight, push and shove for years before we became as close as we are now. But because we tried so hard, we built our friendship into something that will surpass time.

So, am I crazy? The jury's still out on that one. But if you ask if I'm crazy for living with my brother, the answer has to be a resounding "no."

And please don't stare.
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This weeks attention!! photo was taken by Karen Kroesche, a senior journalism major, staff writer and copy editor for *The Battalion* and ex-head honcho of *At Ease*.