
FROM: Ruth Quayle iamruthquayle@gmail.com

TO: Ruby Starling starling_girl@mail.com

Dear Ruby Starling,

I know no one starts off email messages with “dear,” but this is more important than most email messages. It may even be The Most Important Email Message Of Our Time! ALL CAPS IMPORTANT!

Please please *please* just read it and don’t slam your laptop shut and shout, “There’s a crazy Ruth stalking me online!”

I’m not stalking you. And the pics are proof that I’m not crazy. Although it might be hard to tell I’m not crazy from that first one. Don’t be afraid! That stain on my shirt is just ketchup. (My BFF, Jedgar Johnston, and I were making our first-ever animated horror short, *Zippy the Zombie Squirrel*. You can find it on YouTube. It is both hysterically funny and totes terrifying!)

Anyway, here’s the thing. Do you ever use FaceTrace? It’s sort of like Google image search, but way fancier. You put a picture of your face into it and SHAZAM!, it swoops through the entire Internet and gives you ALL the other photos of yourself. It isn’t perfect or anything. Once it gave me a picture of a baby monkey, but it was a very very very cute one, so I chose not to be insulted. Anyway, Ruby Starling, THAT is how I found all these pics!

Look at them!

(Are you looking?)

At first, I couldn't figure it out. I mean, I haven't been to all those places! I haven't worn all those clothes! And I have never ever had lavender hair!

Then I realized it: All of the pics *aren't* me. Some of them are *you*.

Then — as you can imagine — I thought, well, who *are* YOU? And *why* do you have my face? Is it something *ominous* and terrible and bizarre? Did you steal my identity? WHAT?

My heart was beating super hard.

I looked at the pics for a long, long time.

And then, just like that, it was obvious. I figured it out!!!! It wasn't like in movies when the heroine solves the case and then there is a big swell of music, even though I sort of felt like there should be. My eyes were overflowing with tears. Because . . . well . . .

Ruby Starling, WE ARE IDENTICAL TWINS!

It's not something terrible, after all.

It's something amazing!

I'm trying to imagine what you are doing right now: throwing up or showing someone else in disbelief or smacking your forehead or laughing or crying or fainting or squealing with glee or calling the police or even screaming. I didn't know how to react myself! At all! There isn't even anyone at home for me to *tell* right now, except Caleb, my

slobbering golden retriever, and he's not as excited about this as he should be. So I decided to do the only thing I could do, which was to write to you RIGHT AWAY. After all, who is going to know how I feel right this second more than you? Because you must feel *exactly* the same way that I do.

Which is confused! And also, ecstatic!

I have *so* many questions for you, Ruby Starling. They are getting jumbled up inside my fingers even as I try to type them out. Such as, did you KNOW that they *split us up*? Did you know we were adopted out to different families? Did you have ANY IDEA that I existed? And, if so, why didn't I know about *you*? And if you *didn't* know about me, did you always feel like some part of you was missing? And if you *did* know about me, how did you find out? Did YOUR adoptive parents know? And if you knew, why didn't you WRITE? Or call? And ohmygosh, why didn't *anyone* tell me? It seems like this is the kind of thing that shouldn't be a secret! It shouldn't be ALLOWED to be a secret!

Seriously, this is the craziest thing I can even imagine!

On second thought, I suppose that you could be impersonating me for nefarious reasons. What if you ARE? I'm not actually OK with that, so if *that* is what is going on here, I have to ask you to CEASE AND DESIST!

Or . . .

Wait, is this a joke?

Jedgar? JEDGAR ALLEN JOHNSTON?

Is this something *you* made up? Did you plant the photos and the email address and all the other stuff? Are you filming this? Is it a *project*?

If so, that is a tiny bit brilliant (and I totes would never have thought of it!) but also infuriating, and Jedgar, *if* this is you, I'm never speaking to you again, at least not for a while.

But if this is for real? (And I soooooo hope that it is . . .)

Then WRITE BACK RIGHT AWAY, RUBY STARLING.

Yours super sincerely,

Ruth Quayle

