

## Sisters Drive Their Brothers Mad!

*You-know-who* wasn't in his room. Hearin' a hullabaloo outside, I ran to my room, crawled up in my window seat and spied the culprit outside by the maple tree.

**“Duane Hamilton  
Friend!!!”**

You know what that spells—T-R-O-U-B-L-E! Today's my lucky day! I'm on the outside of trouble lookin' in for a change. My baby sister, Diane, isn't the only *Miss Hawkephant*. Hawk eyes focused and elephant ears positioned, I logged all the details.

“Young man,” Momma instructed my brother, “wipe that glower off your face right now!”

There's that word again—*glower!*

“Your father and I can always count on you not to lie. But I can't understand for the life of me why you would turn around and do to Ronda what Ronald did to you.”

“Momma, you don't understand,” Duane pleaded. “You were an only child and you never had a baby brother or sister. Put yourself in my shoes. If you had a sister—especially one like Ronda—you'd realize that sometimes they can be a pain in the neck. They're not only buggy...they can pester you to no end!”

Unlike me, in front of crowds, Duane can be timid and shy. But when he's comfortable enough in front of someone, he'll take off talkin' to himself as though no one else is around. Momma had no control. Duane stood up, threw his hands in the air and pranced about in perfect rhythm, blurtin' out:

**SISTERS** – drive their brothers mad!

**SISTERS** – think brothers are bad!

**SISTERS** – rub some the wrong way!

**SISTERS** – get on nerves every day!

**SISTERS** – infuriate – frustrate!

**SISTERS** – rile, irk, aggravate!

**SISTERS** – drive you batty all day!

**SISTERS** – what more can I say?

“Nothing, Duane,” Momma tried to interject. “You can stop right there.....”



But Duane kept pluggin' away:

**SISTERS** – disturb – irritate!

**SISTERS** – annoy – agitate!

**SISTERS** – turn smiles into frowns!

**SISTERS** – wind you up – let you down!

**SISTERS** – make brother's blood boil!

**SISTERS** – most of them are spoiled!

**SISTERS** – not much I can do!

**SISTERS** – my luck – I've got two!

“Duane, I get it. Sometimes Ronda has the gift of getting on your nerves, but don't forget what Grandma Brombaugh always says, ‘*wait and think* before you act and do.’ And take into account how much trouble Ronald got into. Didn't you learn anything from that?”

“I learned to *never, ever* under any circumstances use a *big muskrat trap* like Ronald did with me.”

*Mystery solved.*

Curvin’ both hands in a circle, Duane added, “When set, that trap is over six inches in diameter! I was in pain for days.”

Evidently what *Miss Hawkephant* spied earlier was Ronald playin’ the same trick on Duane. Only big brother used one of Daddy’s humongous muskrat traps. Trappin’ muskrats, raccoons and mink since he was only five years old, Daddy built up quite a business and even loaned money to his dad durin’ the depression. In the “*Chicken Fiasco*” Ronald took Daddy’s traps without permission—kind of like I did when I got into his tackle box. No wonder he got in so much trouble. Now where was I? Oh, yeah, I was eavesdroppin’.

“Momma, I need to be punished. But please, pretty please, keep in mind I decided *not* to use a *huge* trap. I didn’t think a teeny, tiny one would hurt...much! Besides, it could have been worse. I thought of adding a mouse!”

Momma wasn’t laughing.

“I really am sorry,” he pleaded, soundin’ like he really meant it for once. “What can I do to make it up to you and Ronda?”

