

# BY MY NAME

By Susan Jackson

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Dedicated to Ace Quantum, whom I met at the William Inge Theatre Festival

CHARACTERS:

Ace (they/ their/theirs) 20's  
Sacrifice (she/her/hers) 20's

Location: Starbucks

ACE

I've never heard anyone called that before.

SACRIFICE

After that song. He wrote it with Bernie.

ACE

Our Bernie?

SACRIFICE

No, Taupin. They were a team.

ACE

Oh yeah! They were. 70's. Were your parents on drugs? Burning man?

SACRIFICE

No. That's what they told me. How'd you get yours?

ACE

I gave it to myself. My.....other name was.....

SACRIFICE

You don't remember?

ACE

No, I just don't like saying it. Took me three months to stop saying it. I'm afraid if I say it again, it'll get stuck in my head.

SACRIFICE

Like mine. Got stuck in my parents head. No matter what I was, that was going to be my name. It's okay. You don't have to tell me. Cof's good. Not too strong. Almond milk. Silk. Now there's a goodnametohave. Silk.

ACE

If you like that kinda thing.

SACRIFICE

Oh. Better than Sacrifice.

ACE

You musta gotten a lot of shit—

SACRIFICE

From EVERYONE, including a few teachers.

ACE

Fuck that.

SACRIFICE

I used to tell people I'm Sam, but then the teacher would call out my name, and that was that. Can you believe that one guy even mispronounced it? SACE REE FICHE. Asshold. (sic) Principal. I think he thought it was exotic, or some such shit.

ACE

What is wrong with people?

SACRIFICE

Yeah. Ace is cool.

ACE

Thanks.

SACRIFICE

To the point. Top of the list, as my Dad would say. Could be a verb. "Aced" the test.

ACE

You sayin' my name is easy to misconstrue?

SACRIFICE

No! No! I meant—

ACE

This is the kinda shit I mean. Which is why I didn't think you to sit here. As soon as you looked at my name tag—

SACRIFICE

I'm sorry. Really. When I saw you on break, and the only place left was—

ACE

The only place left? Half the tables are empty!

SACRIFICE

But the tape! sometimes it's....confusing. I look at the tape, and some of it's come off, and I think, "okay, that table's okay, and then I start to measure in my head, and it's not enough, and \_\_\_"

ACE

You measure in your head.

SACRIFICE

Yeah. Along with the name came the ACDC. That's what I call it. Instead of OCDC.

ACE

Wasn't there at band—

SACRIFICE

Yeah! SEE? I knew you were a kindred spirit.

ACE

Because I know singing groups from the 70's?

SACRIFICE

And because you make the greatest coffee. Here. And you remember what I...like.

ACE

Almond milk.

SACRIFICE

And you always smile at me. And now you know my real name.

ACE

Why do you tell us it's "Beautiful" and not "Sacrifice"?

SACRIFICE

I....I'm....working on that one. I feel like I am beautiful and not a....ya know.....How did you get others to use your name?

ACE

It takes time. Repetition. Putting it on your name tag. Answering to it when people call you. Putting it on your voicemail.

SACRIFICE

Oh.

ACE

It's not too hard.

SACRIFICE

Does everyone here have a secret to their name? Is it like, a pre-requisite for working here?

ACE

You don't get things right away, do you--

SACRIFICE

I—

ACE

My name is Ace, because “they” is no longer a secret. His name is Billen, after a dragon character, and she’s Queenie because her mother didn’t want her and--

SACRIFICE

REALLY?

ACE

What else to do with all this time?

SACRIFICE

I....wow. I see.

ACE

Not sure you do.

SACRIFICE

I do.

ACE

Okay, then. (pause) Beautiful.

SACRIFICE

Yeah..... Beautiful. (pause) Yeah. (pause) Thanks.

END

