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I Was Named After My Father

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I Was Named After My Father

Hector Alejandro Arzate

My name is Hector Alejandro Arzate.

I was named after my father, but I don't know why. My name was important the day that I was born. But unlike most other boys named after their dad, I was not the first born son. I am the fourth child, and every day I have wondered why I was given this name. In search of answers, I have allowed my imagination run. Perhaps my brother, Luis, was not named Alejandro because my father did not think it would suit him. Or maybe my sister, Alejandra, was close but not close enough. Maybe it was no longer important to him when Juan was born. I imagine that my father stopped thinking about passing his name onto his sons until my mom found out she was pregnant with me. Maybe it was then that he felt the need to take advantage of this new opportunity.

In the end, I do not think it was as important to him as it was to me. I wanted to know what his reasoning was, but he never told me. Not even when he left. From him, there was no inheritance of warmth or wisdom, no memories of being a son or having a father. I only felt hate for him, every day, whenever someone called my name. Of all things, why would he leave me with his name? I do not think he will ever answer me. I will make sense and meaning of my name, and importantly, of who I want to be in this world — on my own. My name means love and grace; today as a son and some day as a father.

My name is Hector Alejandro Arzate.

I was named after my father.

I was named to be a different man.

I was named to never forget the blessings I have.

REFLECTION

Reading and writing has always been my favorite form of expression, but I think it's easy to forget how important it can be to some of us when we grow used to writing intensive research and academic papers. While it is certainly important to grow composition and analytical skills (among other things), it can be debilitating to step back from expressing yourself and feeling like you're constantly working instead.

That has not been an issue I've had to struggle with over the semester. Participating in freewriting exercises through my ES 107: Chican@/Latin@ Lives class has truly been a cathartic experience, to say the least. On top of that, I've also been able to look back at some of those creative thoughts and further develop both their meaning and my writing. It's been an opportunity to reflect on some of my thoughts and transfer them from my mind, heart and soul onto paper.