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## My Name, My Meaning

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## *My Name, My Meaning*

*Danielle Rodriguez*

**Danielle**, a name so simple but meaningful. A name so beautiful yet filled with pain and full of struggles. Named after my father, Daniel, my name means “God is my judge.” However, I am constantly judged based solely off my name. Not Mexican enough, a “Pocha” because of my “American” name. “Can you even speak Spanish?” or “Oh I didn’t know you were Mexican,” or my favorite “Oh my God you can speak Spanish?” they would ask, their faces in a state of shock. I could tell what they had thought of me, that I was nothing more than a Pocha (a white washed Mexican girl). This caused me to work harder to prove to them that I am Mexican enough regardless of my “American” name. *Hablando más español para enseñarles que yo si soy una mexicana.* Years go by, and I am exhausted of trying to work hard to show them *que yo si soy una Mexicana.* I reached a point where I realized, their judgements do not matter. They will always judge me based off my name, to them I am not Mexican enough, or I am trying too hard to be Mexican; but my name belongs to me, and it has been with me since birth. It has been with me through my highs and lows, so who are they to judge me solely based off my name?

**Esperanza**, meaning **Hope**, I am named after my paternal great-grandmother, a woman who was known for being strong and independent, just like her name. *Esperanza* separates me from those who have my same name. It makes me unique, giving me an identity as I am no longer just another “Danielle Rodriguez” in the roster. No, I am someone completely separate, someone who does not fit in with all the others who hold my name.

**Rodriguez**, my last name so strong and powerful just like mi familia. Our last name ties us together, uniting us as a family no matter how distant, different, or dysfunctional we all may be. It is passed down from generation to generation, making sure that it stays alive in one form or another. It ties my name and who I am as a person together to complete one another.

This is me, this is who I am.

**Danielle Esperanza Rodriguez**