

I Got A Name

Denny Dennison

I believe in observing traditions. My most favored tradition would have to be my family nickname, Denny. Jim Croce once sang, “I got a name, and I carry it with me like my daddy did.” I relish moments when I hear that old nickname uttered aloud, and I feel waves of pride lapping against the shore of my soul. I have come to the realization that the sins of the former always befall the latter and that history does indeed repeat itself. With that thought in mind, I continually strive to bypass the inadequacies of my lineage simply by educating myself through their tales of trials and tribulations.

In my persistent search for guidance, I ran across a long forgotten 300-word article from my childhood; it was my great-grandfather’s obituary. Eighty-eight years of life had been condensed onto a single piece of paper, and for a moment his life seemed rather insignificant. However, he had left a very personal and powerful gift behind for those that followed: an autobiography. He had left all of us the option to heed his wisdom and see life the way he saw it should we ever get tired of making mistakes or of that stagnant, stale taste bad experiences leave. His personality is captured by both his prose and his tone, yet it is the passion conveyed within which hits home hardest. His “lust for life” can be ascertained by his quote, “I determined at an early age that I would not be the weak link in this proud lineage.” My greatest fear is to be that weak link in my lineage—to accidentally blind myself with ambition and plummet back to reality. For the first eight years of my life, conflicts arose and trouble brewed, but never once did I see him fret or worry or budge for anyone or anything, not even on that fateful January afternoon when he was unable to wake, and the Lord had another soul ready to take. With the conclusion of each page, each chapter of his life, my grasp on the true nature of living is enriched by the non-revolutionary idea that life simply goes on. Each of us wakes in the morning with a completely clean slate. I suggest finding some time to figure out what it is you want to get out of this life, for that inevitable day when we don’t wake is fast approaching.

