Dessa Shapiro

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Period 7 english

Say My Name

In Russian, my name means ¨Long Journey,¨ in Latin it means ¨wanderer¨ to me, it is just Dessa, plain and simple; five letters, two syllables. Although I do believe it is a fitting meaning for my personality, always wandering within my head. Sometimes It seems almost foreign to me, in instances of silence and when distanced from contact. In the moments left alone with nothing but my thoughts, I do not identify myself as Dessa, I am me.

When others first hear my name they usually say something like ¨what a unique name, is it short for anything?¨ In truth, I would prefer it was, so I was able to give a different response. 20% of my name came from my great grandmother on my father's side, Dorthey. She went by CoCo, and in honor of her memory, my parents elected the letter D to be the leader of my name. I have never met my great grandmother, for our lives did not end up overlapping. I have heard she was a kind and loved woman, and my father and grandfather have found stories to tell. My great grandmother's parents were immigrants from Russia and Poland. I do not know where exactly they lived but have heard my parents tell stories that they had lived in Odessa in the past, adding another narrative to this name of mine. My great-great-grandparents luckily had come to America before the Holocaust was able to affect their lives. My father's side of my family is Jewish, although I can not say I identify myself as Jewish. I have never taken part in religion and do not have the same beliefs. But I can recognize that it is part of my history, carried in my blood, and the name that goes along with it.

The other 80% of names have no true meaning to me. After choosing the first letter of my name, my parents hit a dead end. They couldn't think of a name they both agreed on or liked enough to use. So, they turned to literature, or to be more precise ¨1000 Baby Names¨ and chose the name from a book. Only later did they realize the connection with Russia and the possible residence of my ancestors. I can not complain about their decision, and I´ve found I enjoy the name sounds on other lips. Unlike other names, It doesn't seem as if my name offers any emotion. It's on the shorter side which could be interpreted as cute or fun, but the s sound makes it seem more elegant. In a way, I think my name is a combination of my parent's name Adam and Larissa.

Sometimes I wonder if the first person to say my name at the beginning of each day is the one to connect my name to my consciousness. But I consider, what if no one were to call me by my name for hours? days? weeks? months? What would happen to this name gifted to me; Would it slowly fade like a memory until eventually forgotten. Or keep a place in my memory, possibly replaced but not forgotten. I have no answers to these queries, but I do know how I identify with my name. For my name, no matter the history, definition, or interpreted meaning is nothing but another word, One sequence of syllables given to represent something; to represent me. So, my name might be the boxes label however, it does not make up the contents inside.