

"JOHN WAYNE NEVER PLAYED A GUY NAMED MURRAY"

Written by

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A Monologue  
By Bruce Kane

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*(Lights up on a speakers podium. Our SPEAKER strides to the podium, places his notes on the lectern, forcefully grasps either side of the it, looks out over the audience and begins to speak with passion.)*

SPEAKER

Since the founding of this great country of ours, groups of individuals who've suffered the sting of marginalization and discrimination have organized to seek redress of their grievances. And, in that great tradition, I stand here before you as the vanguard of a great, new movement. A movement determined to right the wrongs committed against a group that has been demeaned for far too long. A group that has to fight every day to overcome negative stereotyping that prevents it from realizing its full potential. I'm talking, of course, about men whose mothers, for reasons still unexplainable, saddled them with names that guaranteed they would have their lunch money stolen and be chosen last for dodgeball.

It is no secret that names are destiny. A strong name can carry a man to great heights. While a powerful name doesn't, necessarily, guarantee success, a wimpy name is a guarantee of a life filled with giggles, wedgies and "kick me" signs.

Everyone loves a heroic name. Every movie hero has a heroic name. People go to see movies with heroes who have heroic names. I ask you... would people continually flock to movie theaters all over the world to hear Double O Seven introduce himself as ... "Bond... Sheldon Bond?" Of course, not. Would George Lucas have made history and a gazillion dollars if his arch villain "Sherman Vader" had, in that climactic moment, wheezed, "Herbie, I am your father."? I don't think so. Would anyone have parted with their hard earned dollars to see Clint Eastwood face down the bad guys as "Dirty Bernie?" Or, Sly Stallone fight for the heavyweight championship of the world as... "Percy."

Even John Wayne wasn't born John Wayne. He was born Marion Morrison. That's right... Marion... Look it up. Marion. A name that could only have cursed him with identity issues all his life. Look at the roles he played. Don't you think there's just a little bit of overcompensating going on there?

In order to become John Wayne, John Wayne had to change his name to John Wayne. No guy named Marion had a chance in hell of winning World War II all by himself. No, he had to become John Wayne to do it. Now, you'd think a guy who suffered through childhood and adolescence being called... "Marion"... would have shown some empathy when naming the characters in his movies. Just once, couldn't he have thrown a bone to those who, unlike himself, couldn't take a name that looked good on a marquee. Would it have killed him to bark out orders to his posse with "Lefty, you take the ridge. Tex you cover the pass and you, Clive. Keep an eye on the horses."

Or how about when he was defending the Alamo? Just once couldn't have called out... "Rusty, you bar the main gate. Luke, don't let 'em reach the wall. And, you... Phil... Stay here with horses." And it's just not in the old west, where the Duke could have struck a blow for the name impaired. How about when he was storming the beaches at Iwo Jima? "Brooklyn, I'm going in... cover me. Red, circle around and knock out that machine gun nest. And, you Hershey... Keep an eye on the horses."

I say the day of the "name challenged" has come. I say, it's time we stood up to a life of giggles and titters caused by mothers who were expecting to name their little girls Carol or Lynn or Ashley and were too whacked out on pain killers to notice they'd had a boy. To all those sons of English majors whose mothers were fixated on Jane Austen novels, I say stand up and fight for your right to be mistreated like everyone else... and not because your name makes you sound like an English twit. And to those of you who had your ass kicked every day because you were named after an ancestor who got his ass kicked every day, it's time you were given the opportunity to storm the beaches, defend the Alamo, wipe out invading aliens and win the hearts of the Brittanys, Ambers and Tiffanys. Take heart my friends. We are at the forefront of an unstoppable movement. While I am out climbing the barricades of discrimination to confront the bullies who have tormented us all our lives I say to all you Arnies, Hermans and Cedrics out there. Be brave, stand strong and, most importantly, keep an eye on the horses.

THE END