

Your Name Is...

You're 6 years old, you're at Disneyland and your name is Benjamin. Mum just said you get to pick out an extra birthday present from one of the shops and you're dancing your way towards the nearest one. You already know what you want. At least you thought you did. There's a lot more stuff here than Toys R Us. You've got to hurry up or you'll miss the parade. Nemo or Mickey. Nemo or Mickey. It's frustrating and you're about to say so until mum says that if you get the smaller ones, you can have both. She's the best mum ever.

You're 8 years old, you're at your aunt's house and your name is Benji. 6-year-old Sophie is having a tantrum about how she only has boy cousins and why wasn't she allowed to go Lucy's house. It's starting to get annoying and you don't really want to play with the others, so you tell Sophie that, even though you're a boy, you'll play whatever game she wants. Together, you tell the story of Sophia, the fighter princess who saves the kingdom from a dragon by becoming its friend. Matt says it's stupid, but he's the stupid one.

You're 10 years old, you're in a pool and your name is Ben. You're starting to regret having a pool party because that weird feeling in your chest is back. You want to put your t-shirt back on but that'll look weird. And it's your birthday. You should enjoy yourself. The presents are cool: Nerf guns, Lego, and Theo got you a big Hot Wheels set. He asks you about the bag with the skirt in. Grandma's present. You make something up about a cousin with a similar birthday and he buys it.

You're 12 years old, you're in the canteen and your name is freak. Jacob tried to cut your hair in maths and you both got told off for messing around. He invited you to his birthday last year. Last week he wouldn't let you in the changing rooms because "I don't want some freak staring at me." He didn't use the word freak, but you really don't want to think about the one he did

use. Katie punched him for saying it. She's sat next to you now and just gave you half a Kit Kat. It's nice to have a friend.

You're 14 years old, you're at your computer and your name is Orianna. When Katie first told you about D&D, you were confused: that's a nerd thing, and Katie's anything but. You're now 4 months into the campaign, 8 months on blockers and you're having the time of your life. Orianna has magic and a sword and horns and confidence. And Katie even flirts with you. But that just her character Atien. Just Roleplay. Definitely not real. No matter how much you want it to be.

You're 16 years old, you're at a party and your name is Jade. The dress you picked out doesn't fit exactly the way you want it to, but the shadows and colourful lights make it look like it does. Katie's the only one here who knows you, and she casually introduces you as her girlfriend. You falter a little when they start asking questions, but a little of Orianna's confidence creeps in and after 3 hours and a few drinks, you feel like you've known them for years.

You're 18 years old, you're moving out and your name is Jade. Mum's tearing up as you tuck little mementos into your suitcase and by the time Katie pulls up, she's full on crying. Worried about her baby being all those miles away ("It's an hour in the car Mum") and making sure you know how to get to the flat and promising to call her if you're worried. As you climb into the passenger seat, Katie kisses your cheek and promises to Mum that she'll take care of you – before you remind her of her cooking skills. You start crying 15 minutes into the drive, but you insist that it's just Sam Smith.

You're 20 years old, you're at your computer and your name is Jade.