Mike asked if my name was really Mario. He asked before sex, though I told him my name was Rick. I was not Rigoberto. Rigoberto knew better than to get picked up by a stranger for pseudonymous sex.

The strangers I slept with were all named Mike, or John. They had all slept with Rick, not Rigoberto. Though this Mike wanted to sleep with Mario, Mario who didn’t want to admit to his true name because he was an educated Latino who knew better than to let himself get picked up by a stranger for pseudonymous sex.

When they introduced themselves at the bar the first time they met, a cosmopolitan glowing like lava in Mike’s martini glass, Rigoberto told Mike his name was Mario, not Rick. They didn’t have sex or even kiss. Mario knew better.

The second time they met, Mario was weak. He had just broken up with his boyfriend whose name, interestingly enough, was John. He missed John’s warmth, the hard touch of his fingers tapping against his spine. The stubble of his chin, the wetness of his neck, the scent of his chest—all of these were on Mike that night and they seduced Mario into letting down his guard. “My name is really Rick,” he said, and they kissed and they had sex.
The next morning, I woke up in Mike’s bed and it felt comfortable and familiar.

“What is your *real* name?” Mike asked again.

“I knew it,” Mike said. And he reached over to embrace me.