

My Name Is Sam

Calman Hart (with annotations by Ross Martin)

<p>My name is Sam and I'm the family dog I lie around sleepin' all day long While Trevor's at school I'm home alone And I run to the door when Trevor gets home He hugs my neck and he says my name He throws the ball for a while, then he's off again</p>	<p>Sam → Trevor Sam is all about Trevor</p>	<p>Loving acts of service echo throughout: hugs my neck → ruffles my hair; "says my name" repeats later. It's so meaningful to Sam and Ben when they hear their name</p>
<p>CHORUS It's just a few minutes of his time I'm just another stop on his way But those few minutes when he's all mine Are the best few minutes of my whole day</p>	<p>Focus is on how what Trevor does is so important, but nothing is mentioned about what Sam does for the family</p>	<p>Notice how the chorus stays the same throughout the song EXCEPT for the last one... "but for those few minutes, that dog's all mine!" Making tiny changes to familiar repeated phrases perk the attention of the listener</p>
<p>My name is Trevor and I'm in the sixth grade My dad is named Ben and he works long days After school I'm home alone And I run to the door when my dad gets home He ruffles my hair, and we talk about stuff He makes me dinner, then I go to bed</p>	<p>Trevor → Ben Intro Context Context Anticipation Loving act Loving act</p>	<p>Each verse has a mirrored structure where the speaker shares his name and how he identifies himself, then we see the world through their lens, then anticipation/longing, then receiving love from the one they are focused on, love that the other doesn't even think of as an act of love</p>
<p>My name is Ben and I'm a single dad My father's in a home and he's gettin' real bad I go to see him with Trevor and Sam Most of the time he don't know who I am But sometimes there's a light in his eye He says my name and we talk about stuff</p>	<p>Ben → Father We keep adding characters. This is the first verse where we know all the players and we understand the pattern, but we don't know the Father's story.</p>	<p>This verse continues to build the emotional power of the song. Where the prior verses show anticipation and excitement, this one shows the deep sorrow as Ben watches his father disappear. Then it recalls those two "small" gifts: says my name, talk about stuff</p>
<p>I'm an old man and I've lost my mind I can't tell what's real most of the time But there's a boy named Trevor and a man named Ben I've seen 'em before, but I'm not sure when And they always bring a dog named Sam Who licks my face and lays his head in my hand</p>	<p>Father → Sam! Old Man: All the others shared their names. The father can't remember his or its so meaningless that he doesn't bother sharing it. Sam's loving act is just him being a dog.</p>	<p>This is the verse where all the relationships become clear. Each is looking to the one ahead of him in the circle as the one who is so precious to him. The others (Trevor and Ben) are mentioned, but they are incidental. But Sam! Trevor's "off again" (rushing), "go to bed" (settling); "talk about stuff" (lingering), "lays his head in my hand" (resting) -- such a beautiful progression!</p>
<p>My name is Sam and I'm the family dog I lie around sleepin' all day long</p>	<p>Look at how time is referenced throughout</p>	<p>Repeating the first two lines is just enough to close the circle and make it complete</p>