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By Any Other Name |B|S'?55' by Silver Donald Cameron fij'IVIClxWi' by Silver Donald Cameron INTRODUCTION: The Story of the One That Got Away! By now, lots of people know the story about the making of Silver Donald Cameron's book Sterling Silver: Rants, Raves & Revelations. Ronald Caplan asked to edit a collection of Don's work that had not been in book form. Don had kept a copy of everything. He opened a huge archives from over 25 years of writing, including 50 boxes kept at the Beaton Institute. For Caplan, it was a huge, enjoyable job. In the end, Caplan gave Silver Donald his selection; Don was surprised at how personal, even revealing, it was • he balked, Caplan insisted and argued, Don considered, Caplan waited, Don was generous • and the book was published pretty much as Caplan had planned. But through it all, there was one story they never found. They knew it was small, but they both felt it was important • a story about Donald Cameron choosing Silver Donald Cameron as his name. Where was it? Don could not find a copy. They went through the index of several periodicals. They went back through the boxes. Don searched his computer and under the bed. Finally, Sterling Silver was published without the article. Some time later, Don visited an aunt in British Columbia • his favourite aunt, and no wonder: she saved his articles as they appeared. And didn't he find that story! So, with the generous permission of Silver Donald, here's the one that got away. Those who own a copy of Sterling Silver can revel in the knowledge that they haven't quite completed reading that wonderful book yet. And for those who have not yet had the pleasure of reading Sterling Silver, here's a taste of it • an article that would have been there if we had found it in time. It was written by a guy named Donald Cameron. By Any Other Name The name's Cameron. Donald Cameron. Oh, yeah, the senator, from the Banff School of Fine Arts? No. The proprietor of the A&W Drive-In in Port Hawkesbury, Nova Scotia? No, not that one. The registrar of Mount Allison University? Sorry. The CBC producer? Not the CBC producer, nor the CTV news boss either. The Nova Scotia MLA? The guy from the Industrial Development Bank? No. the magazine writer. Not the Donald Cameron who did the travel piece on Yugoslavia, though: the one who writes about Cape Breton fiddlers and moonshiners, university professors and folklorists. You wouldn't believe how many Donald Camerons there are in this debased North American Scotland. Hundreds, I tell you. Thousands. Possibly millions, each one helplessly impersonating the others. Thirteen Donald Camerons in the Toronto phone book, not to mention 26 Donald Camerons, five D.A. Camerons and 22 D. Camerons with some other initial. Seven Donald Camerons have phones in Halifax. In Port Hood, Nova Scotia, there is nobody named Jones-but there is a brace of Donald Camerons. There's one of me in Picton, two in Antigonish and six in New Glasgow. How's a boy supposed to make a name for himself when everybody Don, Donald and D.A. is making the same damn name? Oh, to have been christened James Quigley, Richard Rohmer, Gabrielle Roy, Mordecai Richler, do you truly appreciate your good fortune? With a name like Raymond Souster or Edgar Z. Friedenberg, how could one miss? Better to be the



unforgettable American social scientist Hortense Powder- maker than an anonymous Donald Cameron. It's not a new problem. They were born Sam Clemens, Charles Gordon and Mary Ann Evans, but we know them as Mark Twain, Ralph Connor, and George Eliot. William Davies solved it neatly: he dropped his first name, took his second, and became the elegant Robertson Davies. If I go the Robertson Davies route, I become Allan Cameron. Give a weak cheer: there are four of those in Toronto alone. What about Don Allan Cameron? No: too close to the musician from Mabou. I need a new name. But what? A neighbor has a name which

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