

## My Proud Freedom

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Today, March 29, 1982, is a historic, hugely important day for me. I am on the verge of becoming fully independent, at last. I feel excited and strange, all at once. This day has been coming for a really long time, it was the next natural step, and yet I cannot help but feel an odd sense of relief at not having to consult things over with my father anymore.

I live up north, where only moose and arctic foxes dare roam in the freezing temperatures. It is bitterly cold but the view is breathtaking. It can be said that mine is an 'ocean view room'. My brother lives next door.

I come from a big family, yet we are all very different. My parents' marriage was not a happy one. They constantly battled over who would win my custody. Those seven years were gruelling, but my father was victorious.

Even though mom left shortly afterwards, I still have a strong bond with her. She is the reason why I am bilingual, and I believe some of my best features are hers. Good old dear Marianne, with her revolutionary ideas and poise.

John B., my dad, has an enormous influence over me. He is witty, reserved, and shy to the point of seeming distant. His best trait is his sense of humour – sharp and ironic, (though neither my mom nor my brother appreciate it much). I, on the other hand, find it hilarious. I've always valued a good, self-deprecating satire.

Growing up with both of them constantly fighting was hard. Mom said dad 'butchered' her style, they criticized each other's cooking; every disagreement ended up in a war. Things took a turn for the worse after my mom helped my brother break ties with my father. Sam has always been a sore point between them. I think Mom privately enjoys my brother's success because it means my father will have to live under his shadow. She is taking revenge on all those imperial years. Thankfully, time has made them more civil and now they seem to have left their differences behind and found some common ground.

Sam has always been the rebellious son. We are all very proud of him but it is not easy to live under his dominant personality. Although he doesn't say anything, Dad suffers it the most; always in a dignified silence, trapped in his own island. They have long ago rebuilt their relationship and are now strong allies, but we are all not-so-secretly competitive.

Despite our differences, I have a great relationship with my brother. Not unlike my father, Sam has influenced me substantially as well. As I have said before, we are neighbours, so everything that he does affects me in one way or another. Although he sometimes laughs at my expense and enjoys it when others say I am his copycat, I know that he respects me. I might even say he is a little jealous of my good reputation. Despite his flaws, he is supportive and helpful and, like good siblings, we always have each other's back.

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We do have many things in common but make no mistake; I am not an extension of him. I have my own, very distinct personality. I am praised for being polite, open-minded and law-abiding; although I am also regarded as being too trusting, passive and boring. That is always the case: the two sides of a loonie, I mean, coin.

Yet I am satisfied with what I have accomplished. From sea to sea, I have a stable economy, guaranteed safety, free healthcare and an incredible natural life. Not to mention my people and food which are top quality! On this day, I am proud to say my name is Canada.