



Postmodern Mutt:

A Profile

Natasha Sanders-Kay

*Postmodern Mutt:
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Mum's side

Irish English Scottish mix

Dad's side

Eastern European mystery

Me

mutt

named after

my mum's old dog

First name Russian

(after the dog)

middle Rose

(a Jewish aunt)

Last Irish-Jewish

(hyphenated – story of my life)

Two

birth certificates

Sanders

the day I was born

my parents already

split up

screaming Dad

banned from the hospital

mother's 'maiden' name

for bastard baby me

Sanders-Kay

maybe nine years later

after he took
me and my sister to Hawaii
border security frowned

his passport

(Kay)

ours

(Sanders)

accused him of kidnapping

held us for hours

'til they could confirm

he wasn't lying

that our mother was alcoholic
and this wild-haired man
had won custody

My hair
Irish ruby tinge
heavy thick unruly

Guilt

Jewish not Irish Catholic

Birth 'right' Palestine

also settler guilt

white gal grazing on

unceded Coast Salish territory

Chanukah dinners

check

but not since childhood

gleam of latke grease

jelly doughnuts

a week and a day of presents

candles

hunts for chocolate coins

prayers

I didn't understand

Christmas

check

(but no church no prayers)

pine needles

presents

tofu turkeys made

by my vegan mother

Big family

check

(with generational compression)

My maternal grandmother

pregnant for a decade

my cousins

too many to count

sisters one

brothers none

kids?

none

someone's gotta stop

this cycle

make do with pets and plants

Neuroses not just Jewish

from my mum's side:

depression

definitely

drugs

you bet

divorce

another cycle

to stop

modern woman

no marriage for this

cat-and-dog-mom

lethal liquor love affair

yes

though I've always hated whisky

and I stopped so soon

Accent Canadian
(overseas they think I'm American)

Nationality Canadian?

Language English only
splash of Spanish

Gaelic god no

Hebrew also no
(can't make that back-of-the-throat
'schchh' sound)

Yes I

drank a Guinness in Dublin

saw the Cliffs of Moher

swooned

under an Israeli desert sunrise

wear a ring

with a heart & crown

but don't ask me

what it's called

how it's pronounced

and no

I don't own

a menorah

Vancouverite sure

ocean lover tree hugger

cats two

dogs three gone more to come

Me mutt



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