

The August Journals

August 3rd

BELLE. August 2nd, 2019 I was checked into Banner Health psychiatric hospital. Today is August 3rd, I would've written this sooner, but I didn't get my stuff until today when we had parent visitation. My mom brought me this journal to write about my days being here in the hospital, so I'll describe my experience so far.

By the time I got here it was 2 in the morning, and I only know that because the nurses told me. There's only one clock here and it's in the front area. A nurse walked me to my room which I shared with this girl, Illiana. We'll talk about her later. Anyways, we both got woken up the next morning by one of the techs. She told us to meet in the dayroom and since I had no idea where that was I followed Illiana.

ELI. This morning when I walked into the dayroom, I saw there was a new girl, so I decided to sit next to her. Her name is Belle, and this is her first time in a facility, so I helped her with everything she needed to know. I showed her where our daily schedule is and I let her know that she needs to always stay on the girls side of the dayroom or she'll get in trouble. So yeah, she seems nice. `

BELLE. I think I already made a new friend! Her name's Eli and it's cool because it's spelled like Eli. She showed me around and introduced me to everyone. So first there's Illiana, my roommate-

ILLIANA. Alright "*Dear Diary*"--haha nah I'm playin'. So, today is Friday, and it's also one of my last days locked up! I'm escaping this dumbass place. Stay tuned.

BELLE. She's detoxing from--something. Then there's Jordan-

JORDAN. Dear Jordan, I'm soo excited because my birthday is in a week! I'll be 18! The only bad news is that means I get checked out. I don't wanna leave the hospital because that means I have to go home. My mom would never admit it to the doctors but she hates that I have problems and she doesn't understand why I want help. It makes me so angry sometimes. Sincerely, Jordan.

BELLE. She has aspergers and she's so sweet but I can tell she has a temper problem. The last person is Tyson.

TYSON. So, I just found out there's this new girl here and I think she's pretty cute. When we played dodgeball today at recreational therapy we talked to each other a LOT, so I'm sure the feelings are mutual.

BELLE. He seems.. nice.

August 4

BELLE. Not gonna lie, this kinda sucks. I'm away from everything I know and there's not much here to keep me entertained. Especially when we have an hour of "room time", I usually just sleep because the one puzzle I did bring in here literally had like 100 out of the 500 pieces needed. And I keep getting pulled aside from different doctors asking me all of the same questions, which gets irritating. I don't know, in all the group sessions I've gone to here so far, everyone seems pretty open with their issues. Maybe I should be too.

TYSON. Tonight a couple of us were watching t.v. in the day room while the techs called us up to take our medication. When I saw Belle come back I told her to come watch Shark Week with us and she sat on the couch closest to the boys side, even though she

could've sat somewhere else. Was she purposely trying to be close to me? I think I'm gonna write her a letter asking her to be my girlfriend.

August 5

ELI. Today was not a good day. I'm feeling really disappointed with myself with the way I handled something. So earlier, Belle and I were playing cards when Tyson walked past us and dropped a note in front of Belle, but that's a different story.

After that I was so taken off guard when Illiana bursted through the room super loud and excited. She ran up to me and Belle and told us she's planning to escape? I don't know it was all so overwhelming and then she hugged me super tight and just like that, everything I had been working on here was gone and I lost it. I started having a panic attack and the next thing I knew I was on the floor and the tech, Nicholette, took me back to my room.

ILLIANA. Damn, some people are so soft. I told this one girl that I'm leaving and she started crying. It was so funny and weird I was like what's happening right now dude.

Anyways, I got my whole plan, right. I'm gonna ask a nurse to come into my room and say I don't feel good but then when she comes in, I'll have someone else jump out of the bathroom and we'll both knock her out and use her nurse scan key to get out. I'm thinking of asking Jordan to help, or maybe Belle since she's my roommate.

BELLE. Wow, okay, I have a lot of updates. Today in the dayroom, me and Eli were playing a card game when Tyson walked over and handed me a note. It said:

TYSON. "Okay, I may not know you, but I want to get to know you, and want to be with you as your boyfriend. I really like you, you're a great person and you're so funny. I

hope I am not asking for too much. I'll just say I care about you and I hope you don't think I'm weird. What do you think, would you give it a shot and be with me?"

BELLE. "Check Yes or No" Oh man, this is hilarious but it's also not good. I wrote him a note back letting him down gently.

TYSON. She wrote me a note back saying she thinks I'm really sweet but we should put our treatment first, which, totally understandable, we just gotta give it some time. She'll come around.

BELLE. Not only that, but after I gave Tyson a note back, Illiana came out of nowhere and was talking so fast I couldn't really understand her but she said something about her wanting to leave. And then she hugged Eli and then Eli started freaking out and screaming and I tried to calm her down but she just kept yelling. Nicholette took her to her room and I haven't seen her since.

August 6

JORDAN. Last night, Illiana asked me to escape with her. She knows that I don't want to go home once I turn 18 so if we just run away I could go anywhere I want. Illiana said we won't get in trouble so I think I'm gonna do it.

ELI. I had a session with my psychiatrist and although I did have a breakdown yesterday, she still thinks I have made enough improvements that I can still get discharged today. I'm so excited but I need to make sure I say goodbye to Belle.

BELLE. Today I have a meeting with my parents and case manager to decide when I'm getting discharged. I'm hoping I can leave tomorrow, I've been opening up and participating in every group session and I think I'm ready to face my real life problems outside of the hospital.

ELI. Tyson said that Belle's in a meeting so I won't be able to see her before I leave.

BELLE. So my meeting today didn't go as planned. My parents and my case manager agreed I should stay until Thursday, which is ridiculous. But that meeting got cut short when Jonathan, one of the techs, interrupted to ask my case manager for Eli's discharge paperwork. I freaked out because um, Eli, never told me she was leaving. I ran out of the room and caught Eli with her bags just in time.

ELI. I'm so glad I got to see Belle. I explained everything to her, why I freaked out and the reason I'm here. I just told her I have a hard time when people touch me in an affectionate way and it's something I'm really working on. She understood completely and told me she had similar trauma. So I'm really glad we got that last goodbye, I think we both needed it.

BELLE. I'm really sad Eli is gone, but I'm happy we got to share the moments we did together. And finding out that we are struggling with the same problems helped me stop and think about how I should take these extra days seriously and work on myself. I have the opportunity here to get better. So that's what I'm gonna do.

JORDAN. I'm about to go into Illiana's room to jump the nurse, and I'm super scared. I'm shaking so much and I just feel like something bad is gonna happen.

ILLIANA. I'm just waiting for Jordan to come in here before I call a nurse in. Belle also just walked in so I might as well tell her about the plan.

BELLE. Holy crap. I think Illiana and Jordan are jumping a nurse tonight. She asked me to join them but I said no, obviously. I'm trying to convince her to not do it but she wouldn't listen to me. I'm so nervous because I don't know what Illiana is capable of, I mean she's heading straight to juvie after she's discharged.

August 7

ILLIANA. Last night was trash, Jordan never even came into our room, what a wuss.

JORDAN. I couldn't do it, I feel so bad for Illiana but I was too scared. I hope she isn't mad at me. I just want to make my mom happy.

BELLE. I'm so confused, Jonathan just came into my room to tell me that I'm leaving, but I'm supposed to leave Thursday. He even said my parents were here which I didn't believe until I walked out and saw them there. They both were happy that they got to surprise me. I guess my case manager called them and said I can leave early. As I was leaving to grab my stuff, I saw Tyson, who looked crushed.

TYSON. I wish we had more time, luckily I wrote my number down for her so we can keep in touch, although, I'm not really sure when I'm getting out of here. Like, it's gonna be a while.

BELLE. Tyson gave me his number before I left which made me laugh. Clearly this boy can't take a hint. After that, I said goodbye to Illiana and Jordan, and the techs Jonathan and Nicholette.

I'm actually gonna miss them. I'm gonna miss this whole place actually. It's weird, but somehow I've managed to get comfortable here. But I am so ready to get back to my family and my friends and school and my own bed. I'm very thankful for my experience at the hospital. But, my story isn't over yet. I still have 3 months of intensive outpatient to graduate from, but something tells me I'll really enjoy it.