

Mountain of Pills

John Crone

Mentally ill patients wanted. No insurance? Not enough insurance? We take 'em all. Wheel them in. Push them in. Drag them in. We'll take care of 'em, and you can go back to worrying about bills and traffic.

Is that skim or whole milk in my latte? Did you remember to put my return address on the gas bill?

We'll take any patient. We don't discriminate. Rich or poor. Black or white. Slobbering, kicking, screaming, catatonic, silent or just depressed. Come on down Jefferson Avenue. Just past Belle Isle. It's not that far from downtown, don't be scared. You know where it's at. It's that tall building just past Big Boy's on the left-hand side. Hop in the elevator. Hit the button for floor six.

We give the best care. St. John's Detroit Riverview. We've been here forever. Who knows how long? How many patients have we seen? Who knows? What can we do for him? What can we do for her? Will they ever get well?

Pills. Everyday there will be plenty of pills. Mountains of pills. Your loved one will be sledding down our mountains of pills. Xanax. Klonopin. Prozac. Valium. Uppers. Downers. How do you want them? One at a time? Two at a time? Six at a time?

He won't perk up. He doesn't stop to smell the roses like he used to. No problem. We'll have him happy in no time. She can't sleep. No problem. She'll sleep for weeks. He's hearing things that aren't there. She's talking to nonexistent people on the bus. No problem. She'll never talk again.

Restraints. Gurneys. Padded Walls. Locked windows. Lights that never turn off. Lights that never come on. Plastic trays of food. Oatmeal in one compartment. An apple in one compartment. A hard-boiled egg in the other. Well balanced meals. Pills. Television. Pills. Orange juice. Pills.

Is it scary? Is it humane? Well, you tell me. What if you were them? How would you feel? You would be dying to come to this place. You would

be begging for treatment. No, you would be begging for relief. Living with insanity is like never getting a good night's sleep. Ever. Imagine that. Bring 'em in. We'll give them their life back. You're doing the right thing.

Best of all, you get your life back. No more worrying. No more sleepless nights. No more crying. No more asking why. Don't have any money? Don't worry. It won't cost you a thing. Just charge it to the State of Michigan. Charge it to the Federal Government. It's covered. Get your life back. Go to work. Turn on 105.9. You and the DJ and the air freshener in your car can argue about what they should do with R. Kelly.

We'll take 'em all. Rich or poor, but mostly poor. You'll get 'em back. Good as new. Don't want 'em back? We'll keep 'em. Keep 'em as long as you want. Keep 'em forever if that's what you need. Sure, you can visit. Every Thursday at 1 PM. Stay for the whole hour if you want.

Don't forget footies. We've got footies with traction on the bottom so they won't slip. We've got cloth pants without strings. No belts. No shoe laces. No lighters. No matches. One hundred percent suicide free. No need to worry. Just come on down Jefferson. You know where it's at. We take 'em all. Get your life back. Give them back their life. No need to worry. We got pills. Mountains of pills.