

## Bipolar Opposites

There's no time like summer for that of a young college student. It was the best summer ever for one girl who had just turned twenty-one and was able to finally go out and party with all of her friends. The nights were long and the parties were raging with hundreds of beer guzzling college frat boys and hardcore cocaine addicts drinking and snorting their lives away. As the "Summer Party" began to dissolve like sugar in water, the new drinker decided to return home to her family. Her family was anxiously awaiting her arrival when she finally came home for the first time in three months. The Father was a bearded old man, resembling Santa Claus standing at about 6 feet tall. His name was Richard and he worked as the head of a research facility in the local area. Her mother was a nice old lady of middle age that had a very strong relationship with her daughter. Finally, her siblings were her two brothers, one older and one younger. Both were often fighting with their sister and causing her constant tantrums. Though the family seemed almost as normal as they come, they were far from it. The father was an unwieldy fascist ruler of the household. Her oldest brother suffered from social anxiety disorder while her mother had manic depressive syndrome. She was a heavy drinker herself, and only her younger brother was the one without any psychological irregularities.

The young girl was at home for about two days when she decided that she wanted to have a late birthday dinner with her family and boyfriend. She had invited her boyfriend over the next evening and they all dressed up to eat at a fancy Italian restaurant that she had picked out herself. The night was glamorous and elegant, only the food was more wonderful than the place. Perhaps, the mussels were the greatest dish served, as

they were freshly made and soaked in a buttery lemon sauce that made your mouth feel like a field of buttercups. After the dinner everyone headed home and went for a good night's rest. The days passed and everything was going just wonderfully, until the girl received a phone call from her dentist that she would have to come and have her wisdom teeth removed in a week. She was in shock, there were only two weeks until the start of the next semester and she would be spending her first week of school in uttermost pain. Thinking about the situation she frustratingly cried out, "I don't want to get my damn wisdom teeth pulled, I don't want to start school off in pain, and I don't want to do this!" Days passed and she continued to complain up until the day of her surgery. The young girl was obviously terrified of having the dentist cut out her wisdom teeth rather than pull them as he would normally do. This procedure made for a much more difficult time and a much worse situation. She went into surgery that day with her parents waving her good luck and hoping for the best. Everything went fine, her teeth were out, and she would be ready to tackle college once the pain went away. Constantly she lay in bed covered with blankets and pillows and two ice packs on both cheeks that made her appear to be a chipmunk. Finally, she got better and was able to return to school and party again with her friends and boyfriend. Everything was perfect, she was doing well in school and she was making good grades on her third college year. No problems were evident, nothing was to worry about. At home her younger brother lay awake trying to fall asleep as he heard his mother answer a call from his sister. He could only hear bits and pieces of the conversation, but he could tell something wrong. All he had to hear was his mother saying, "I'm coming to get you."

Late that night around 1 o'clock AM the mother headed out to Boone, North Carolina where she discovered that her daughter had suffered a severe anxiety attack. The next day the young brother woke up at around 6 o'clock AM and got ready to go to another "exciting" day of school. As he got ready, ate breakfast, and was ready to go, he realized that his mother was not going to be taking him to school as usual, but that unfortunately, his tyrannical father was going to escort him. The day went as normal and as boring as it always did, but today he worried about what had happened to his sister in Boone that made it so urgent that his mother had to depart to see her. It was later that day after he arrived home from the bus that he saw his mother and sister for the first time since the incident. As he walked in the door he could suddenly feel the eeriness of the situation and became very uneasy. From the simple word of, "hello" from his sister's mouth he could sense an immense difference in her. With every word and action that she displayed he could only see that she seemed helpless. Helpless, like that of a four-year-old child, curious of her surroundings and just learning to speak English. That first night as the young boy was intensely working on his homework in the upstairs computer room (which was also his sister's room) he came across his sister for the first time in an actual interaction since her anxiety attack. She asked him strange and uneasily answered questions like, "Do you think I'm crazy?" and "Do you think I'm smart?" questions that would never be expected to be answered entirely truthfully at any point by anyone. He did as he would always do to answer a question to which he did not desire to answer, "I don't know."

For the rest of the week the nights were very much the same, which encouraged the boy to take every chance that he could to get away from his own house and his sister.

It wasn't that he hated his sister, but that he was incapable to deal with the situation at hand as well as his studies and his extracurricular activities. Not only this, but he also had absolutely no clue to handle and approach the instances when he would encounter his sister. He didn't want to hurt her feelings, but he also did not want to be drawn into her world of terror either.

That weekend, his sister's boyfriend came over, in order to give her some happiness for once in a while during her time of distress. He quite reluctantly allowed her to calm down and escape from her overwhelming uneasiness. Until one night, she was almost entirely calm and composed. However, on that night she became enraged with uncontrollable anger and regret. Her bipolar and manic depressiveness finally came out in full form, and everyone got a taste of what kind of wild ride they were in for. She began to just ramble on and on about past events of how she had been the "forgotten child" and that she felt like her two brothers had received more attention than herself. She was angry and crying and yelling at the top of her lungs and would plead over and over again, "I can't do this, I just want to feel normal, I don't want people to think I'm crazy, I want to go to Holly Hill, I want to get better." After countless outbursts of overwhelming shouts and screams and cries both of the brothers decided that they should head upstairs in order to escape what seemed to be turning into an epidemic.

She was taken to Holly Hill and instituted with all of the "real" insane people in order to seek help for her problem. At first, the medication that she was on seemed to work well and she seemed to be back to almost normal. She was eating better and starting to gain a little weight, which was good for a person in her condition. She started to exercise and run everyday on the treadmill as well. She started eating strange and

extremely healthy foods such as soy and skim milks and whole wheat everything. As a few weeks passed everything seemed to go smoothly and she had not done anything irrational as before. However, she still exhibited and began to develop many strange habits throughout her condition. For starters, she became almost intolerably fascinated with the movie, “The Royal Tenenbaums” and watched it at least 20 times in one month. She also began to write EVERYTHING down in black composition notebooks, what she ate, what she wore, who called, what time everything happened, everything! In about a month she had to have written over 5 journals completely filled with cut outs from magazines and descriptions and movie remarks/ comments, and things that would happen around the house.

It was strange, but things were starting to look up until once again her bipolar manic depressiveness started to come out. As the young brother lay asleep in his bed around 1 o'clock AM he unintentionally was awakened to the sounds of screams and bangs coming from his sister who was unable to get to sleep. Little to his knowledge she had not gotten sleep in over 3 days and she had finally reached her breaking point. He could find nothing to drown out the sounds that were keeping him awake and he himself could now not sleep either. In the room next to his, his sister began kicking and screaming at the walls and eventually put a six-inch diameter hole in her wall. It was once again time for her mother to take her to Holly Hill again for further examination and to receive more medicine.

She had stayed there for a couple of days and eventually came home once again to her family and her boyfriend and was on new medicines. She was still unable to drive and still not completely functional as a mature adult in both speaking and in her overall

actions. With the new medicines it seemed to help her out and keep her to the most level of normal that she had seen for some time. However, only time will tell and as time is forever so may be the bipolar manic depressive that haunts this young adult, and could very well haunt her for the rest of her life, but as her family hopes for the best, she will hopefully be the person that everyone used to know once more.