

# Ten Days in a Mad House: A Harrowing and Hopeful Account of One Woman's Experience in an Insane Asylum

In 1887, Nellie Bly, a young reporter for the New York World, went undercover as a patient in the Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island. She wanted to expose the horrific conditions that women were subjected to in these institutions.

Bly's experience was harrowing. She was subjected to abuse, neglect, and even physical violence. She witnessed other patients being beaten, abused, and neglected. She saw women who were locked in cages, and women who were so malnourished that they were close to death.



## Ten Days in a Mad-House by Nellie Bly

★★★★☆ 4.4 out of 5

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|----------------------|-------------|
| Language             | : English   |
| File size            | : 1502 KB   |
| Text-to-Speech       | : Enabled   |
| Screen Reader        | : Supported |
| Enhanced typesetting | : Enabled   |
| Word Wise            | : Enabled   |
| Print length         | : 62 pages  |
| Lending              | : Enabled   |
| Recaps               | : Included  |

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But Bly's experience was also hopeful. She met women who were strong and resilient, and who had found ways to cope with the horrors of their

surroundings. She saw women who were determined to get better, and who were fighting to get out of the asylum.

Bly's story is a powerful indictment of the way that society treats the mentally ill. It is a reminder that the mentally ill are not dangerous criminals, but rather people who need our help and compassion.

Ten Days in a Mad House is a must-read for anyone who is interested in the history of mental illness, or who wants to understand the challenges that the mentally ill face today.

### **Nellie Bly: A Pioneer in Investigative Journalism**

Nellie Bly was born Elizabeth Jane Cochrane in 1864. She began her career as a journalist at the age of 18, and quickly became known for her investigative reporting.

In 1887, Bly went undercover as a patient in the Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island. Her experience there led to a series of articles that exposed the horrific conditions that women were subjected to in these institutions.

Bly's work was groundbreaking, and it helped to change the way that society viewed the mentally ill. She is considered to be one of the pioneers of investigative journalism, and her work continues to inspire journalists today.

### **The Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island**

The Women's Lunatic Asylum on Blackwell's Island was one of the largest insane asylums in the United States. It was founded in 1828, and by the

late 1800s, it housed over 2,000 women.

The conditions at the asylum were horrific. The women were overcrowded, underfed, and abused. They were often subjected to physical violence, and they were often locked in cages. Many of the women died from neglect or abuse.

Bly's exposure of the conditions at the asylum led to a public outcry. The asylum was eventually closed in 1955, and the women who were still there were transferred to other institutions.

### **The Legacy of Ten Days in a Mad House**

Ten Days in a Mad House is a powerful book that has had a lasting impact on the way that society treats the mentally ill. Bly's work helped to raise awareness of the horrific conditions that women were subjected to in insane asylums, and it led to reforms that improved the lives of the mentally ill.

Today, Ten Days in a Mad House is still read by students, scholars, and activists. It is a reminder that the mentally ill are not dangerous criminals, but rather people who need our help and compassion.

### **Further Reading**

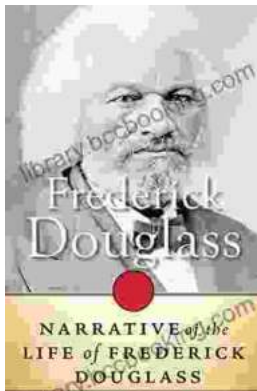
- Ten Days in a Mad House by Nellie Bly
- Ten Days in a Madhouse: Nellie Bly's Undercover Investigation of America's Insane Asylums by Smithsonian Magazine
- Blackwell's Island: A History of New York's Insane Asylum by History.com



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