

HB 2259

For many years I could not tell reality from imagination. I lacked all insight into my mental illness. I absolutely did not believe I was sick, I unequivocally believed my delusions. I thought there were cameras watching me everywhere; I believed I was running the CIA; I was sure everyone with a phone was a spy. I lost my marriage, my career as a documentary film director, and, obviously, my sanity. Nothing saved me. Not my Master's degree from Stanford, not my Fulbright, not my supportive family. Mental illness doesn't discriminate. I was arrested for a minor nuisance crime and went to jail. I was hospitalized against my will six times, but I refused to switch my medication, because I didn't have any knowledge that I was sick.

Finally, in 2015 I switched my medication and was delusion free in three days. To find out that everything I believed for years was a symptom of a mental illness, not the truth was as shocking as finding out aliens had invaded earth.

If I am forced to try cheaper, older drugs there is a chance they might have scary side effects and health risks. If the medication does not work – and many medications do not work for me – I am sure I will immediately develop delusions again and will refuse treatment. I could lose more years of my life and end up costing the system much more money due to stays in psychiatric hospitals or even jail. My prescribing doctor should be in control of my medication, not a committee.

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