

Asylum

By Madeleine Roux

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Madeleine Roux's *New York Times* bestselling *Asylum* is a thrilling and creepy photo-illustrated novel that *Publishers Weekly* called "a strong YA debut that reveals the enduring impact of buried trauma on a place." Featuring found photographs from real asylums and filled with chilling mystery and page-turning suspense, Asylum is a horror story that treads the line between genius and insanity, perfect for fans of *Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children*.

For sixteen-year-old Dan Crawford, the New Hampshire College Prep program is the chance of a lifetime. Except that when Dan arrives, he finds that the usual summer housing has been closed, forcing students to stay in the crumbling Brookline Dorm—formerly a psychiatric hospital. As Dan and his new friends Abby and Jordan start exploring Brookline's twisty halls and hidden basement, they uncover disturbing secrets about what really went on here . . . secrets that link Dan and his friends to the asylum's dark past. Because Brookline was no ordinary mental hospital, and there are some secrets that refuse to stay buried.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

MY TOP 5 ASYLUMS By Madeleine Roux

While writing ASYLUM, I turned to some of the following hospitals and institutions for inspiration, to bring in that real world touch. Some of the stories and histories I stumbled across were almost too intense and gruesome to be believed.

I. Norwich State Hospital for the Insane

Preston, Connecticut 1904 ? 1996

When most people think of an asylum, they probably picture a giant looming mansion that looks something like Norwich State Hospital for the Insane. It has one of those iconic, red brick exteriors with columns and a steep roof. The hospital is also notable for its maze of underground passageways. It’s considered by creep and ghost aficionados to be extremely haunted. Several shows have featured the hospital, including the popular series *Ghost Hunters*.

II. Whittingham Asylum

Lancashire, England 1869 ? 1995

Whittingham Asylum, charming and even quaint on the outside, makes the list if only for its sheer size. Whittingham was virtually a miniature city, and its expansive grounds included a brewery, post office, and even its own brass band. It was also the sight of some seriously scary allegations, with an inquiry in the 1960s that included reports of cruelty and fraud, complaints that were kept quiet with threats. Reportedly, some wards were infested with vermin, while others were left freezing cold. There were even rumors of a “wet towel treatment” involving a cold, wet towel wrapped around the patient’s neck until they passed out.

III. Waverly Hills Sanatorium

Louisville, Kentucky 1910 ? 1962

The architecturally stunning Waverly Hills was built to house a sudden influx of tuberculosis patients in the county, but closed after only fifty years when medical advances rendered the facility obsolete. Considered to be one of the most haunted hospitals in the eastern United States, it has played host to scores of reality TV shows about the paranormal, including *Scariest Places on Earth* and *Ghost Hunters*. It gets creepier?there are currently plans to renovate the hospital into a hotel for those looking to have a spooky spot to stay.

IV. Lier Mental Hospital

Buskerud County, Norway 1926 ? 1986

Perhaps the scariest thing about Lier Mental Hospital is its murky involvement in experimentation linked to pharmaceutical companies from the United States. This postwar hospital was used for experimentation and research into lobotomies, LSD, electroshock therapy and more.

V. Topeka State Hospital

Topeka, Kansas 1872 ? 1997

Topeka State Hospital may look cute and charming on the outside, but on the inside it was home to some unbelievably dark rumors. By far the creepiest allegations leveled against the hospital? (Brace yourself, it's pretty gross.) There are stories of patients strapped down for so long that their skin began to grow *around* the straps. Yeesh. Nowadays, you can sometimes hear music playing from inside the abandoned hospital and spot shadows peering out at the windows.

Heather Brewer Interviews Madeleine Roux

HB: The imagery was so vivid in ASYLUM and the photographs throughout were just gorgeous?was it based on anywhere you've visited personally?

MR: The admittedly limited travel I've done in Europe included some incredible ruins and castles. There's a feeling you get in those places, a sort of wonder and terror that you just don't feel in new buildings. I tried to draw on those memories for Brookline. I also grew up in an old Victorian farmhouse, and . . . I don't want to say it's haunted but there were certainly times it felt haunted. To this day, when I visit my parents, I feel eyes on me at night in the hallway. The hairs on the back of your neck go up and you can sense there's history there present with you. I wanted that same feeling to come through with Brookline.

HB: I felt really connected to Dan Crawford, your main character. What part of your fabulous mind did he come from?

MR: I was kind of a weird kid. I loved school. I wasn't so much a loner as a gigantic nerd, always with my nose in a book or writing my own scripts and stories. There's a good bit of my own insecurities and childhood memories in Dan; that same geek pride mixed with a constant fear that maybe life would be easier if I veered more toward the mainstream. Writing a male perspective is intimidating in the sense that I wanted it to feel authentic, so I would stop every once in a while and ask a friend if it was reading correctly to them. Having honest buddies helped, it always does for writing. They weren't shy about saying, "I'm sorry but no guy would do/think/act that way, try again."

HB: Has horror always appealed to you? If not, why now, why this story? If so . . . well . . . same question.

MR: The first two novels I did had a certain creep factor, too, since they were about zombies and survival. The irony here is that I'm a huge wuss when it comes to scary movies. I spent most of *Cabin In the Woods* whimpering in someone else's lap. I'm not good with scary movies or gore or anything like that, but I find myself drawn to that kind of story again and again. It's like I know it's going to keep me up all night but I can't help myself. I think that's probably common, though . . . . We all test ourselves now and again, see where our boundaries and limits are. I get a kick out of pushing those limits for myself and exploring the darker parts of my imagination. My life isn't all that adventurous, so writing darker stories gives me a chance to indulge in the more morbid thoughts that cross my mind.

HB: I know you probably get asked this a lot, but what's your favorite piece of writing advice for the writers out there?

MR: It comes from Neil Gaiman and is infuriatingly straightforward and simple. "How do you do it? You do it. You write. You finish what you write." And it's true. As I'm sure you know, there's no magic button. Sometimes you can't write a sentence and other times you can't stop, but just sitting down and making yourself do it is the key. You have to practice. You have to do the work, over and over. He also has another

great piece of advice somewhere (I’m an unabashed Neil fangirl, I can’t help it) about getting out and living life, and not feeling upset or pressured if you don’t have a huge well of experience to draw on. The best inspiration comes from falling in love, falling out of it, getting your heart broken, just being present and showing up, you know? You won’t have anything to draw from if you guard yourself too closely. You have to risk life changing you in order to have something there to write about.

HB: What’s next from the shadowed mind of Madeleine Roux? What are you working on, and when can I have it? :)

MR: I’m notorious for starting new projects and then abandoning them, but I’ve had a gritty YA fantasy series cooking in my head for a while now. I’ve been taking down tons of notes for it and I’ve even started a few chapters, so right now I hope that has wings and takes off. You can have it the second I manage to get it all down!

From Publishers Weekly
Horror author Roux makes a strong YA debut with this creepy tale of a haunted asylum and the teenagers who are drawn to it. When Dan Crawford attends a summer program at New Hampshire College, he ends up housed in Brookline, a former asylum now being turned into a dorm. Along with fellow students Abby and Jordan, he starts exploring the basement of the dorm, where (conveniently) old records are stored. As they investigate, the students are plagued by horrifying dreams, and Dan starts to have blackouts, discovering strange unsent texts and emails and learning about conversations that he doesn't remember. Students are being attacked in the dorms, and as Dan begins to unravel his own ties to the asylum, he wonders if he might be responsible for the crimes. Roux (aided by unsettling photo illustrations of abandoned asylums and tormented patients) creates an entertaining and occasionally brutal horror story that reveals the enduring impact of buried trauma and terror on a place. Open questions at the end invite a sequel, though there's also a good sense of closure. Ages 14-up. Agent: Kate McKean, Howard Morhaim Literary Agency.

From School Library Journal
Gr 9 Up—Dan is thrilled to be spending the summer before his senior year at the New Hampshire College Prep program, where he'll have a chance to meet other studious teenagers. He doesn't mind that his dorm, Brookline, was once an asylum for the criminally insane. In fact, Dan is curious about the institution's history and begins exploring Brookline's old passageways at night. At first, Dan and his best friends at NHCP, Abby and Jordan, think it's fun to sneak around in the dark and look at old patient records, but soon the things they find begin to frighten them. Dan starts receiving ominous notes, and he is plagued by nightmares in which he sees Brookline as if he were really there, all those years ago. When people start dying, Dan is convinced that the killer's identity is buried in his dorm's darkest history and that his own strange connection to the institution may be the key to stopping the murders. Eerie black-and-white pictures throughout the book add to the creep factor of this story, but unfortunately many images are redundant photographs of Dan's notes, while others seem unrelated to the text. The plot drives forward too quickly, with some circumstances and events feeling forced. Dan meets Abby and Jordan on his first day, for instance, and within hours they carry on with the rapport of lifelong friends. Mystery lovers will be disappointed with the lack of answers and explanations here. Hand this one to horror fans who don't mind a few loose ends.—Liz Overberg, Darlington School, Rome, GA

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Phyllis Kelly:

The book Asylum gives you the sense of being enjoy for your spare time. You can utilize to make your capable more increase. Book can to be your best friend when you getting pressure or having big problem using your subject. If you can make reading through a book Asylum to become your habit, you can get a lot more advantages, like add your capable, increase your knowledge about some or all subjects. You could know everything if you like available and read a guide Asylum. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science book or encyclopedia or other people. So , how do you think about this book?

Annette Carroll:

A lot of people always spent all their free time to vacation as well as go to the outside with them family members or their friend. Do you know? Many a lot of people spent they will free time just watching TV, or playing video games all day long. If you want to try to find a new activity honestly, that is look different you can read any book. It is really fun for yourself. If you enjoy the book that you just read you can spent the entire day to reading a reserve. The book Asylum it is very good to read. There are a lot of people that recommended this book. These people were enjoying reading this book. Should you did not have enough space to develop this book you can buy often the e-book. You can m0ore easily to read this book from a smart phone. The price is not too expensive but this book has high quality.

Kirk Qualls:

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Larhonda Kennedy:

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