My name is Natalie Ross
[redacted] years old
[redacted]. Not sure why you need it though, so I probably shouldn't just left it sitting there.
Where I live now is not where I was bitten by a tick. I have no memory of ever being bitten by a tick and from the estimates I have been given around the age of when I contracted the disease I lived in Broken Hill.
I guess you can call me on [redacted] it's the only number I have so don't go giving it to random people. Like I just did.
My story can be public and if I have written my name, which is there twice then it can stay.

I'm not sure if that covers everything in the pdf I found and I'm sorry it's late, I had some issues with my computer.

I can’t promise that most will make sense and I will probably use a wrong word here or there but I don’t think i was any good at writing essays in school, or much else at school really.
Hopefully I don’t leave anything out, can’t promise that though.

My name is Nat, I’m 20 and this is some of the crap I’ve had to deal with after finding out I was not in fact lazy or crazy but I had Lyme Disease and friends for basically my whole life.
So try to enjoy it and just be thankful it’s only 7 pages because I’m a bit rusty at essay’s, never liked them don’t think I was any good at them either.

The doctor who finally diagnosed me with Lyme disease as well as Bartonella and Babesia suggested that I have had them all since I was about 7 years old.
The second doctor I saw about getting treatment for this, I think said about 10 years old I don’t quite remember.
Either way at 5 years old I had moved from Orange to Broken Hill, which i believe was in drought for the time I lived there, then at 11 to [redacted]
The first time I ever left the country was, I think 2006 to New Zealand. Driving from top to bottom with 5 people in a camper van, not the best choice.

To be honest I’ve never had one of those ‘everything was great until’ moments. Nothing has really ever felt much different. Some days are worse than others like today I can hardly walk, the small step in my house I can’t get passed without a push to get up or being held to step down along with one of my horrible fevers.
Although I have gotten use to not being able to walk and the fevers, which were higher than I thought, my condition lately has been spiraling considerably.
I laughed way too much at the spiraling, like it was a good pun. My fever has yet to come down to a normal level yet, I feel weird.

So for pretty much my whole life I have seen, for a normal healthy person an unimaginable amount of doctors. Like that saying ‘if I had a dollar for every time’ I think I would be one of the richest people on the planet.
I got the same few answers every time my mother made me go to see a doctor:
She just doesn’t want to go to school.
You’re crazy, but you know in the subtle way.
Just lazy.
Viral infection.
They’re the ones I can remember anyway. There were also the few when I told them I had Lyme disease of course denied it, I had one doctor laugh in my face, I have argued with many of the so called ‘medical professionals’.

The last doctor I had the Lyme argument with I don’t actually remember her name I just called her Jar Jar Binks because she looked like a carbon copy, which thinking about it now is quite rude to the character.

Anyway the woman started telling me and my mother that she had treated Lyme disease before, but clearly I didn't have it and by this time after speaking with my Lyme Doc I had started Bicillin injections.
I had an appointment with a nurse in the facility to receive the injections, when the nurse came back to the room so did Jar Jar Binks. She began saying that she did not approve of the treatment I had chosen and suggesting other options I guess I don't know I just remember being so annoyed that when I looked at my mother who was trying to make this woman who was suppose to help me making half assed excuses as to why I was sick, that she would do tests to figure out why. She was lying, the woman had weeks when she could have ordered such tests but didn't, she had weeks when she could have prescribed the antibiotics that she now suddenly found to help my 'viral infection'.
After refusing this for not wanting to go through unnecessary bullshit for her, I can't think of the word is it pride? Is that why these people refuse to do their job and help people?
She simply walked out of the room saying she would not treat me because she did not agree with my choices. I haven't been back to that clinic in [redacted]

Two injections a week for a month, can tell you my butt wasn't happy with that decision.
Since those injections I have had a relatively normal few months until close to the end of 2015 the symptoms I had came back with a few new tricks.
Until a few weeks ago I had been putting up with my legs giving out, overheating, a couple of days I haven't been able to speak and the constant Lyme brain issues that never really left along with the depression and anxiety that I can hardly function.

Those few weeks ago on the train from Sydney to Broadmeadow. Halfway I started to overheat my entire body felt wrong, I could hardly walk to the car and as soon as the door was shut mody body started to shake and couldn't control it. The pain was horrible, whole body aching like somebody was tearing apart my muscles.
Like when I watched my sister tear apart pork with a couple of forks.
My boyfriend rang an ambulance, after my mother, trying to stand to walk to the vehicle was horrendous as controlling my shaking legs was painful enough without it causing my arms to shake. The paramedics gave me morphine which helped calm my breathing but not the pain.
I don't remember much, though the couple of people I rang were amused, I was there for 5-6 hours without any result except for the doctor asking the same questions multiple times she had this look that i had seen so many times before from doctors, she thought I was scamming for meds. So I left.

It has been the worst so far, it took 2 weeks to recover.
Because of this I had to quit my job, because of the way I get treated when I tell someone I have Lyme disease along with many 'professionals' and the government's ignorance towards the disease I did not write on the paperwork that I had any health issues, I didn't say that's why I had to leave either.
I am a qualified AIN, and that was my job for the last couple of months.
Now at the time I took the job I was relatively fine and the symptoms I did have were nothing new but did grow worse relatively quickly.

I left the job when I thought I could possibly put clients at risk if I was not my best, well the best that I could be anyway.

At the beginning of the course we were asked why we had enrolled and after hearing “to get a job” she suggested that all who said that had an underlying reason to be a carer. Unlike me the two lovely ladies I got to sit with gave their reason one having cared for her sister through the worst and the other going from childcare to now aged care.
So when it came to me that’s all I said “to get a job”, to be honest I kind of panicked because I didn’t want people to know and because I thought if I had to say it out loud I’d probably cry for the rest of the day.

I chose an Aged Care and Disability course because at the time all I saw when I went on the internet was people with Lyme disease in wheelchairs, nursing homes and dead. I wanted to see if I could help before I most likely ended up in that very same position.
Although like the few I suppose I decided I would not let this disease kill me, that I would do it myself. Then again it’s the same thing, isn’t it?

I have previously tried to get some support from the government but was pointless. After an interview for the disability support pension at centrelink i was advised to go to an employment agency because the woman thought i was just too lazy to bother to get a job.
I went to [redacted] as the woman advised and was told they couldn’t help me because ‘I wasn’t disabled enough’, so then I went to [redacted] and was told they couldn’t help me because to them i was disabled, thinking about it the only thing that i could have said was that i had depression. Come to think of it most people treat mental health like they do Lyme disease, well in my experience they do.

Whenever telling someone about your mental state when it all is pretty bad stuff most people approach it with a level of delicacy, but if you’re like me you kind of keep it all in until you hit rock bottom punching walls and openly telling people everything would be better if you were dead.
A tip, don’t do it then walk away when you’re uneasy at the best of times on your legs without your walking stick, just lucky there was a park nearby.

Now telling my mother that probably not the best way to go but with the way the few who know what happened look at me and treat me now i’d rather be dead.
I use to cut, blurting things out seems to be my style so I’ll just stick with it.
Whenever my mum would come into an appointment with me she would always bring up always straight out, guess that’s where I get it from.
Like with everyone there are some things you don’t want certain people to hear and with depression and anxiety it’s a lot worse. For me my mother now knows the reason I would cut myself and why I stopped and I’m not sure which one she hates more.
I think now knowing I switched slicing open my skin for getting tattoos will probably haunt her nightmares like the boogie monster, she still nags like my grandmother not to get any more but that won’t work. Basically trading one vice for another and I don’t talk about it but if asked I probably would. You get a sneak peek in my fucked up head.

Each line that appeared on my skin had something to go with it, some reason of why I was doing it whether it was something I had done or just one word each was different.

In 2012 after I had started treatment I went to Hong Kong for the Dragon Boating World Club Crew Championships. I think I was in a really bad mind set during that time, especially before that, as I don't remember much of anything good.
I was in a room with my sister and parents and for some reason we needed scissors but we ended up with a stanley knife and one day I decided I was going to end it. I took the blade from the room after the first I remembered I had to apologise to one of my teammates, I can't remember why, so I wrapped my wrist with toilet paper and went looking for them.
I found a different teammate first who was helping me find the other and I mustn't have been good at hiding my wrist. She continued to help me find who I was looking for and well they talked me out of it.
The next morning when were at the water getting ready to paddle one of the coaches did their little speech and while staring at me mentioned that she wasn't happy about some of the team staying up later than they should have. I can tell you that made me wish I was struck by lightning.

I started treatment for Lyme disease and two co-infections (Bartonella and Babesia) in 2012 when I was in year 11 at highschool. Cowden supplements and doxycycline are the only things I remember taking, but I do know I was taking a lot more than that.
What I do remember was there a lot of capsules, some of them from the cowden protocol, filling the palm of my hand.
I started counting them, the highest number I remember was 11 or was it fifteen? And the drops I had to mix with water were disgusting, I nearly puked every time I had to take the shit.

Anyway I started taking all that crap before the second semester and within 2 or 3 weeks of school there was no point in even trying to go. At this point I was going to a school about 40 minutes away I think, I'm pretty sure that I would have probably only had 2 full days at school and every other day I was usually gone before lunch.

Now if you're reading this and think that it was all just to get out of school, kindly pull your head out of your ass and slap yourself in the face. I know that's what I would want to do, you know slap you that is.

Because I was never really there the school put me into something called the pathways program, leaving school because of Herxing I truly did not see that coming.(Herxing - Herxheimer Reaction, Google says it's a short days/weeks detoxification reaction in the body.) Thank you google, where would I be without you and trying to explain this shit.

So with me being at home more than not I spent nearly all my time with my mother,I know watching the same things over and over got on her nerves probably not as much as the bright orange stain/s on her carpet. I don't remember how many times I actually got the damn carpet.

Before you get confused, or panic like I did, the Doxycycline that I was taking made EVERYTHING bright orange.
That was probably a little too much information but, meh too late now you'll have that burnt into your brain now. Haha have fun with that.
I don't think she has watched Pacific Rim since then.

The last couple of weeks have felt pretty similar to that time. I've been out of the house very rarely since my last appointment, which was bloody hard to get to. Having to rely on people to not only drive me around but even help me walk if it's too bright that I can't keep my eyes open or if I forget my walking stick, when it happens as often as it does is now somewhat degrading.

In the last 2 weeks I think I've only been able to leave the house, at most 5 times and one of those was to go to the movies so I guess that technically doesn't count. So about 4 then.

I don't remember what else I was suppose to or going to write. I guess I should have written this whole thing in 1 day instead of, is this day 4 I think it is.
Recently the feeling of being a prisoner in my own body and house has been amplified. I can't do simple tasks on my own all the time, in summer I couldn't cook as the kitchen got so hot that I could barely stand.

Add another day to the 'writing this shit' tally, and 4 days straight of being sick later I have decided I no longer like outside, it tried to make my body kill me.
Just a little swim at the beach on a hot day, well hot to me, and a couple of waves later sitting in the change room for about 10 minutes the burning in my eyes has started to ease, legs feel like jelly and shaking lightly, arms weak enough that it's hard to pick up the drink being handed to me. Then the real fun begins.
Killer migraine where any piece of light is covered, can barely speak my throat was that swollen and sore and the temperature was the best part. Completely covered with a doona while sweating like a pig and if any part was left uncovered shivers and goosebumps along with the feeling my body was being torn apart amplified immensely. I actually used my partner like an ice pack, come to think of it he probably didn't like that.
And I just remembered sarcasm doesn't transfer to paper very well. Or screen.

I don't remember if it was much different from herxing though, except I didn't leave an orange stain on the carpet for anyone to yell at me for literally just missing the tiles (the Doxycycline made everything orange. I think).

My partner keeps telling me he will take me to the hospital whenever I get sick, like what I just mentioned, and I have to keep reminding him that they will do nothing and just waste our time and it's wrong.
I don't mean me telling him that going there is wrong, but the fact that if somebody is sick and they can't even go to a hospital for help every now and then what is the point of having them.

Although I have a couple of people pushing me to get the treatment I don’t see the point of putting a good doctor in the line of fire for doing their job. I have had to get a fair few different and new, to me, tests done just so when people come snooping around and asking why people are being treated like this and what for they have a credible reason, I don’t believe that they think Lyme disease is.

Because of inquiries like that there aren’t many people willing to treat Lyme disease and once you do find someone willing to risk everything there is months before you could see them or you can’t at all.
With the targets like that there is usually a big cost. Now I barely have enough to pay the rent and bills let alone the costs of having to deal with this, in this country it’s just too much money wasted for time no one will get back.
Some i know have gone to Germany for treatment and for those it’s worked for it’s great and the others just paid a hefty price for an enema and a bit of a sauna.

Having battled this crap for so long it’s pretty damn easy to find a million reasons to just give up and in some ways I have, nearly all of them really.
Sort of like that saying, what doesn’t kill you makes you stronger which I think is wrong it doesn’t make you stronger it fucks you up so bad that you wished it had killed you completely the first time. So basically any episode of Supernatural.

Now there’s nothing else I can think of at the moment to put on this damn screen that would be relevant, so I think that’s me done. Unless you know I remember something later, which I will and will probably only have a few dozen panic attacks about how stupid it was to forget to put in.

Good Luck.
Nat.