



Audioplane

JULIANA HALE FINDS THE SILVER LINING IN “CHILL (SO SERIOUS)”

PLAYING NASHVILLE

Cillea Houghton

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Photo Credit: Shania Houchens

Juliana Hale maintains a daily gratitude list, taking the time to write down what she's grateful for. The practice reflects her ability to find the positive in life's bleakest moments, a mindset she carries over into her latest single, "Chill (So Serious)."



to Nashville with her family to pursue a career in country music, the young star performing her original songs in the local honkytonks by age eleven. Inspiration from then-new artist Taylor Swift and Hale's parents' divorce led her to songwriting, the powerful art form also lending itself as an outlet for her emotions when she began struggling with gastroparesis, a disease where severe acid reflux destroyed her vocal chords. During her multi-year battle with gastroparesis, the singer-songwriter was awarded more than \$600,000 worth of scholarships to study pre-med in college, with the initial goal of becoming a gastroenterologist. But deep within, Hale knew that music was her true passion, so much so that she felt a shift from country music toward a growing interest in the organic pop and Americana realm. While going through vocal therapy to heal her voice, she often found herself turning to songwriting for support.

“It was a big outlet for me as far as an escape to really get through those times. To have my voice and then have it taken away from me suddenly was definitely a big thing to go through. My songwriting and my singing has changed as my voice has begun to heal and get better, so it's a big growth process,” Hale tells *Audiofemme*. “It was a lot of sad songwriting about feeling like I couldn't really control things and I feel like I've become more of a control freak in a way because of that. ‘Chill’ was a big reminder for me to just let go and let things happen. In a weird way, it affected my songwriting to write positive songs because I was always trying to find the silver lining in the things [that] were happening, because there's always a silver lining. I feel like once my voice did heal, it ended up being more unique than it was before, so that's the big silver lining I tried to hold on to was it made me grow in a certain way.”



Through “Chill,” Hale managed to find the light during a time of darkness. Co-written over Zoom with Earl Cohen, Calvin Gaines and Andrew Thomas in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic last year, the 21-year-old entices listeners, with upbeat, breezy lyrics: “Come and vibe with us/We got no stress/Kicking back like jokers/Serious bad days are over.”

“I was super stressed, as everybody was, and I realized sometimes you just have to be thankful for being alive,” she explains of the song’s inspiration. “It’s a big song to try to tell myself to let go, because that’s one thing I’ve also been trying to do musically – not be such a perfectionist, and not be so hard on myself and just chill out.”

While the first verse originated from Hale’s experience dating a guy who was coming on too strong early in the relationship, the song began to take on a life of its own as she and her co-writers moved toward a celebratory mindset. The second verse finds her abandoning her insecurities, dancing like no one’s watching and encouraging listeners to do the same, while the personal bridge gets to the heart of what she hopes to convey in the song. “Toast to the life/Every day’s a celebration/We’re still alive/That’s a special occasion,” Hale sings.

“I feel like that encapsulates what I was trying to get across with the song – that every day can be a celebration and there’s always something to smile about. We’re alive and that’s a gift. I feel like everything happens for a reason and we’re all here. Life is a celebration,” she reflects. “I was trying to share the message that even in these tough times, I’m always trying to find the silver lining. So it’s good to chill.”



Things are looking up for Hale lately – she stars in the upcoming film *And You Call Yourself a Christian*, set for release on Amazon on September 19, and she’s releasing a new song each month for the remainder 2021, with plans to release them all together as an EP at year’s end. But the intent with every piece of music she offers is to gift others with a hopeful mind and open heart. “I want to bring a positive, different aspect to people. I want to bring something real, and my main goal with music is to connect with people,” she shares. “My favorite part of music is playing shows and meeting people afterwards and having those conversations, so I hope that I make people feel understood and that they connect to me and they take away something good from it.”

Follow Juliana Hale on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#) for ongoing updates.

W R I T T E N B Y



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A proud native of Cape Cod, MA, Cillea is currently a freelance writer based in Nashville. In between covering all aspects of country music and the Nashville community, she tries to find time to pursue her many passions.

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