

Do you blame me?

MIA:

What?

AMY:

For everything that happened to you.

MIA:

No. *Never*.

AMY:

But—

Mia:

Look, my death was an *accident*, okay? You hanging out with your boyfriend that day didn't do *shit*, okay? Even if I did stay home and hang out with you that day, who's to say I wouldn't be in another car accident the next week? So stop moping about something you have zero control over. It's *not* your fault, get that in your head.

AMY:

...Did you ever like me?

MIA:

What?

*Hearing this, Gloria drags Arya to the side of the stage where they sit or huddle in a corner.*

ARYA:

Hey—

GLORIA:

Come on, give them some privacy.

AMY:

Did you ever like me at all?

MIA:

I mean, you were one of my best friends—

AMY:

No, not as a friend.

Mia:

Well, I mean even if—if there was something else, not saying there was or would be at all, it's over and done with now.

AMY:

Because of Erik.

MIA:

No! I mean, well yeah you were obviously taken when I *was* alive. But regardless, it's unfair to blame Erik. And...I'm not alive anymore so I guess none of that matters.

AMY:

It's all my fault, I deserve to have you hate me...

MIA:

No! Stop it! Why the hell do you have to keep acting like this? It wasn't your fault. And I don't hate you, but—but I don't like you that way, okay? I'm dead now but even if I wasn't I'm *straight* and I'm okay so stop ruining your life and get your shit together! Where's the Amy that never missed a class? That got almost straight A's huh?

AMY:

I—

MIA:

You have nothing to blame yourself for—well, except screwing yourself over like this! Get yourself together, if not for yourself, for me. Promise me you will.

*Amy doesn't respond.*

Mia:

*Amy.*

AMY:

...Ok.

Mia:

Good, okay the first step is to go and watch all the lecture videos you missed. Man, I feel like a mom.

*Amy is silent for a moment, then she speaks.*

AMY:

Are you okay?

Mia:

I'm fine, better than ever actually. No more headaches in corporeal form.

*Mia awkwardly laughs. Amy frowns, then she opens her mouth again.*

AMY:

Was there really never any hope between us?

Mia:

...No. There was none.

*Amy is silent for several seconds.*

AMY:

Ok.

Mia:

But—but you'll always be my best friend.

AMY:

Me too.

GLORIA:

Hey don't forget about us!

Arya:

Yeah!

Mia:

Love you guys!

GLORIA, AMY, Arya:

Love you Mia!

*It's silent for a moment and maybe the clock strikes midnight. Then Gloria speaks.*

GLORIA:

Mia? You still there?

Mia:

Yeah I'm here.

*But Gloria, Amy, and Mia don't hear her.*

GLORIA:

...Guess she left.

Arya:

We should go too.

*The two look towards Amy who is still standing there.*

Arya:

Come on Amy.

AMY:

Is she really gone?

GLORIA:

Seems like it.

AMY:

But—

GLORIA:

Come, on. You might as well do what she said and catch up on those lecture videos for the exam this week.

AMY:

I guess.

GLORIA:

Come on, you promised her.

AMY:

...Fine.

*Amy exits with the other three and Mia is left on the stage.*

Mia:

Guess they can't hear me. Huh.

*She takes a few steps in the direction the other three left.*

Mia:

Lies. I make it a habit not to lie. My mom hates lies, especially after the situation with dad...she was never the same till she met my stepdad. Cause of that, she made me promise never to be like him, never to lie. But...I just did...twice.

I'm not okay. And I'm not...straight. I lied, I lied, hahaha...

*Mia starts crying while laughing hysterically. She squats down covering her face.*

Mia:

I'm not okay. How could I be okay? I'm fucking *dead*. I'm fucking dead and I can't do anything except stupidly hang around *here*, seeing my friends get on with their lives and—and—

I want a life too! I want to go on dates with a cute girl and even take stupid exams because at least then I'll feel something and be fucking alive! At least then I...I...

*She leans back against the wall, heaving for breath. Then, just as it looks like she's calmed down she lets out a shrill scream.*

Mia:

Why? Why? FUCKING *why*?

*If there's a pillow on the couch or something throwable nearby she chucks it across the stage in her rage (If I wasn't afraid of the actor being hurt, I might have her punch the wall). When Mia speaks again, she speaks with a sob.*

Mia:

Why...

*Some sort of tinkling music starts to play and maybe the lighting changes too. It takes Mia several moments to hear it but once she does, she looks up as if in a trance. She slowly starts to walk towards it, like a zombie except light, as if she's drifting. She disappears off stage. After several minutes of silence (almost to the point where it's awkward), you hear the giggle of a baby.*

Scene 10:

*The stage is once again set as the college campus years in the future. To one side, Erik, Amy, and Arya are standing or sitting in a huddle. The audience should and Arya not be able to clearly see Mia, ideally she's wearing a hoodie with the hood up, obscuring her face. Arya rushes onto the stage from the other side, frazzled and dressed in business casual or semi formal attire from having just come from a meeting. She notices the trio and comes over to them.*

ARYA:

Hi everyone!

GLORIA and ERIK:

Hi Arya.

AMY:

Hey.

*Amy and Arya share a look, they parted on less than the best terms, and it's a little awkward now. A second later, Arya catches sight of Emma who's likely staring at her phone or distracted by the buildings or something around her.*

ARYA:

Mia!?

EMMA:

Huh?

ERIK:

Oh boy.

GLORIA:

Arya she's not who you think—

ADITI:

Are you Mia? No, you can't be, but...

AMY:

Arya!

ERIK:

She's not.

EMMA:

Why is this happening *again*?

AMY:

It's complicated sweetie. Arya, come sit down, let me introduce you to my daughter Emma.

*Arya comes to sit down, still visibly trying to make sense of the whole situation.*

ARYA:

Hi...I'm your mom's friend.

EMMA:

Hey.

*There's a moment of awkward silence.*

ERIK:

The campus hasn't changed much, has it?

GLORIA:

Yes, I was surprised. Our old dorm is still there.

AMY:

I gave Emma a whole tour, I told her that's where her mother spent her college days.

EMMA:

And you keep telling me to go here too.

AMY:

Well, you still have plenty of time but there's no harm in exploring options.

GLORIA:

Oh? Do you know what you're interested in?

EMMA:

I mean, I like math. Numbers just make sense.

ARYA:

...Just like Mia.

AMY:

Don't.

GLORIA:

Arya.

EMMA:

Who's Mia?

AMY:

A friend.

ARYA:

Our good friend, she was especially close to your mom.

*Gloria tries to signal to Arya with her eyes to stop talking, but Arya ignores it.*

EMMA:

Really? If she was so close to you guys, why isn't she here?

ARYA:

She passed away.

EMMA:

...Oh.

ARYA:

But in the time she was alive she touched a lot of people. She's one of the brightest people I've known, even today. And she liked math, just like you.

EMMA:

...Are you comparing me to a dead girl?

ARYA:

No, no not like that. I just wanted to—

AMY:

Arya, stop it.

EMMA:

Mom, I want to hear about this person.

ARYA:

Amy, I'm not trying to start conflict. I think it's about time we bring everything out in the open, isn't that why you arranged this reunion?

*Arya and Amy have a few seconds of eye contact while Erik and Gloria look slightly awkward on the side. Finally, Amy sighs and breaks the eye contact.*

AMY:

You're right. I called you all here so we could all talk and finally lay things to rest.

EMMA:

What things?

AMY:

Hush Emma, don't interrupt the adults when they're talking.

EMMA:

Fiiiine...

AMY:

You guys know I skipped graduation, right? I wanted to go abroad, to travel and see the world like Mia saw it. Then, one day at this temple, I heard a baby crying, and something made me go to the backside of the temple. I only had two hours there, and of that, I'd already spent an hour and a half. I really should have moved on.

But something made me follow that sound, and when I walked to the back of the temple, I saw...

ARYA:

What?

AMY:

...A baby.

*When she says this, Amy's gaze goes toward Emma.*

EMMA:

Me?!

ARYA:

So she's adopted?

AMY:

Yeah.

ARYA:

But at the time, you didn't even have a stable job. Why did you...do you even have a partner to take care of her with?

*As she says this, Arya darts a look at Erik.*

ERIK:

Hey, don't look at me. I wasn't in contact with her until a few years ago when I became her editor. And besides, I have a partner waiting at home.

*He flashes the ring on his finger.*

ARYA:

Congrats!

ERIK:

Thanks.

ARYA:

Wow. It's crazy to think how many of us are married now. I feel so behind.

EMMA:

Okay. Can we focus on what's important here? I just found out that I was picked up at a *temple*.



ARYA:

Didn't you know you were adopted?

EMMA:

I mean, I did, but I didn't think it was in the middle of nowhere!

AMY:

It's actually a pretty well-known temple...

EMMA:

That's beside the point!

*It's silent for several seconds.*

ARYA:

But *why'd* you do it?

AMY:

Because...it just seemed like fate, you know? As if everything that happened up till that point was predetermined. If someone as bright and beautiful as Mia had to die...well, at least someone else could get a chance to live, you know?

*At this, it's silent for several minutes. Finally, Mia speaks.*

EMMA:

So it's because of your friend? Because I'm like her, that's why you adopted me?

AMY:

Of course not. How would I know who you'd look like when I picked you up?

EMMA:

So I'm not like a replacement for her?

*At this, Amy starts laughing.*

AMY:

Obviously not!

EMMA:

But you said I'm just like her!

AMY:

In that, you're bright and beautiful and love math? Yes. Personality wise? Not at all.  
You're you, my little Angel.

EMMA:

Hey, don't call me that!

ARYA:

You know, it is kind of weird.

GLORIA:

Like fate.

AMY:

Yeah, that's why I gave Emma her middle name.

ERIK:

What?

AMY:

Serendipity. Because sometimes life works out in the funniest ways.

ARYA:

Serendipity...

AMY:

A death can lead to a life. You never know.

GLORIA:

You really never do...

ERIK:

Well.

*He stands up and they all look up at him.*

ERIK:

I say this has been enough talking for one evening. Why don't we all take a walk around the campus before it gets dark?

GLORIA:

Sounds good.

ARYA:

Fine by me.

AMY:

Good idea; we'll probably also get going soon after. Emma has school tomorrow.

*The five walk across the stage, pointing at, exclaiming at, and looking at how the buildings have changed around them. Either they make it off stage, or they see something that catches their eye.*

*Blackout.*

*NOTE: This is a temporary ending. I'm most likely going to extend this scene by a few pages after the read-through.*