

Serendipity

Quick Summary:

Four college students become fast friends and suitemates, living their best life for four years...or that's how it should have been. Instead, four becomes three after a sudden car accident. In the wake of their friend's death, the three remaining suitemates and one mutual friend are left to grieve, pick up the pieces, and deal with...a possible ghost? Past, present, future, drama, mystery, friendship, love, and life with a touch of supernatural all play out in *Serendipity*.

Characters:

Arya - Arya is a cheerful, easily anxious college student. She likes to care for those around her, which often leads to her being perceived as nosy or annoying. At the end of the day, though, she is motivated by a soft heart and a wish to piece together her fragmented friend group.

Gloria - Always well-dressed, calm, and levelheaded, Gloria can be heard a mile away by the tapping of her heels. She's intelligent, hardworking, athletic, and by far the most put-together in the friend group. However, she tends to put more on her shoulders than necessary, and she struggles between the expectations of her mother, her own grief over her friend's death, her instinct to hide her emotions, and the secrets she carries due to her perceptive and caring nature.

Amy - Introverted, cynical, and pessimistic, Amy isn't the one to make the best first impression. Hiding behind her spiky outer shell, she struggles to let people close or to express herself truly. This is partly thanks to growing up with extremely strict and conservative parents. Amy is a closeted bisexual; she has a boyfriend named Erik; however, she starts to feel drawn toward her friend Mia. Despite this, Amy has difficulty saying anything until Mia dies, and she loses her chance forever.

Mia - Mia is a bright, cheerful girl who always sees the best in people and things. She passes away before the play starts and comes back as a ghost. She hides her pain under her cheerful mask and always puts others before herself. This can be seen in how she comforts her grief-stricken friends rather than complaining about her death.

Emma - Emma is Amy's adopted daughter and looks exactly like Mia. Like Mia, she likes math, yet unlike Mia, she's snarky and sarcastic, as teenagers tend to be. For the purposes of this play,

she should be played by the same actress; however, their mannerisms and clothing should be different. To clarify, reincarnation may or may not be assumed, but they are two different people.

Erik - Erik is a pretty nice guy, affable and friendly, he always has a smile on his face. But it's hard to keep smiling when your girlfriend tells you that your entire relationship has been a lie.

Note:

1. Scenes 1 and 10 take place in the mid-2030s. As of now, there's nothing firmly futuristic in the scene. However, the director is free to use their artistic sense to add or design the scene in a more futuristic sense or change any language or props, especially to be more futuristic.
2. There's a song in this play that is linked to Amy and the theme of the whole play. The song was supposed to be Em Beihold's "1, 2, 3, 4, 5" but due to possible copyright issues, the song is not. The director or anyone else involved in production has the freedom to choose this song but there are a few key things to remember. First, the song is linked to Amy. It's her favorite song, the song she uses as her ringtone, the song that centers her when her grief and other emotions get the best of her. It could be melancholic or bluesy, but quite honestly, it's up to the director and how they interpret Amy and Serendipity.
3. Mia and Emma are played by the same actor, but they are *different people*. This is important to note. While reincarnation may play a role, it's deliberately left vague, and their personalities are supposed to differ despite their similarities. For this reason, the actor portraying Mia/Emma is challenged to bring two different characters to light, so keep this in mind when casting.

Scene 1:

The stage is set somewhere on a college campus in the mid-2030s. Erik wanders onto the stage as if seeing the campus for the first time in years, examining what has changed and what remains the same. He pauses at a certain point, examining a statue and muttering to himself.

ERIK:

Huh, I'm surprised they still have this old thing. It's ugly as ever.

After a few moments of bending down to examine it, he stands straight and looks around at the buildings.

ERIK:

They added more to the business school. Other than that...they don't seem to have changed much.

All of a sudden, his musings are interrupted by the click, click, clicking of heels. Gloria walks on stage, fully clad in heels and a professional outfit as if she arrived straight from work. Erik looks towards her and grins.

ERIK:

Gloria.

GLORIA:

Erik.

ERIK:

...I see you haven't changed much.

GLORIA:

What's that supposed to mean?

ERIK:

Oh, not much. I can still hear you from a mile away.

GLORIA:

Excuse me?

ERIK:

Nothing. Did you come straight from work?

GLORIA:

Yes, I had a few meetings this morning about a new project we started.

ERIK:

Of course, you did. And still managed to get here early.

GLORIA:

Naturally. This is important. You are earlier than me, though.

ERIK:

Yeah, true. Are you going to the reunion later?

GLORIA:

I don't know. We're at a busy point in our project.

ERIK:

Yet you still made time for this.

GLORIA:

I had to, you know? Amy asked us to be here. Isn't that why you came?

ERIK:

Yeah.

They pause for a couple of seconds.

GLORIA:

Anyway, how are things with you?

ERIK:

Good, I just recently got married.

He holds up his finger to display a ring.

GLORIA:

Congratulations!

ERIK:

Yeah, thanks. I'm pretty happy. We're thinking of adopting soon, too.

GLORIA:

Adopting?

ERIK:

Yeah, you know, since we're both...His name's Alex.

GLORIA:

Oh. When you were with Amy, I assumed you were...

ERIK:

That's what I thought too, till I met him.

There are a few seconds of awkward silence since the two don't have much to talk about. Finally, Erik breaks the silence.

ERIK:

Do you have anyone?

GLORIA:

No, I don't. I was dating someone, but...well, it's over now. My current priority is work.

ERIK:

That's so you. You've always been hardworking probably the most driven person I know.

GLORIA:

Thanks.

They have a couple more seconds of silence, then Erik speaks.

ERIK:

I wonder when everyone else is coming.

GLORIA:

Arya should be here soon; something came up at work, so she's running a bit late. As for Amy, I haven't seen her since we graduated.

ERIK:

Yeah, same here. Honestly, her call came out of nowhere. To be honest, I'm not even sure why I came.

GLORIA:

For the same reason, Arya and I are making time out of our busy schedule to be here.

ERIK:

And why is that?

GLORIA:

I can't explain it well, but what happened back then during college is like an unfinished book. It needs an ending, a closure of sorts, you could say.

ERIK:

Wow, I never pegged you for the poetic sort.

GLORIA:

Neither did I. Mia and Arya were always the sentimental ones.

They're silent for a second. Suddenly, Gloria notices someone offstage from behind Erik and frowns.

GLORIA:

Erik, is that...?

ERIK:

What?

He turns, and his eyes widen in surprise.

ERIK:

Isn't that Amy? But wait, who's with her? I'm not seeing things, am I?

GLORIA:

No, I see it too. That looks exactly like—

Gloria and Erik are assumed to be seeing Amy along with Emma, who looks exactly like Mia. Their reactions are because of the striking resemblance. To clarify, the audience does not see them. The last thing the audience sees is Erik and Gloria's shocked expressions.

Blackout.

Scene 2:

The lights come on, and the stage is set to be either a dorm common room or a therapist's office in 2022. Arya sits in a chair. The director has two options for this scene. Either Arya is either writing/typing in a journal, or she's speaking to a therapist. If the director chooses to have a therapist, the therapist can be assumed to be either offstage, on Zoom, or a covered figure on stage who never speaks and only writes. Arya, for her part, starts out sitting, but through the course of the scene, she walks around as she narrates her monologue.

ARYA:

A four-leaf clover. Rare, but when you do find it,...precious beyond measure. Balanced, unlike three. Three is too many or too few, depending on how you look at it. The third wheel can't be evenly split...unless you get into fractions, and that's a whole nother mess we don't need to address.

But four? Four is perfect. It can be split evenly in so many ways: a mother, a father, a sister, a brother, or with friends, they can go off in pairs of two and two. Like when you need to sit on a bus or a roller coaster, and there are only rows of two—or bathroom buddies like in elementary school. Four is perfect.

Or so I thought. But four also means death. Or, I guess it's associated with death since four and death are both the word “si” pronounced with different tones. In Chinese, Mandarin Chinese. Mia told me that before she...

We were four: me, Mia, Amy, and Gloria. Whenever we split, it was me with Gloria, Mia with Amy. I mean, we could split other ways too. Regardless, it was *balanced*. But where's the balance now?

I don't know. Is it because Mia told us four means death? One of us had to die? But that's stupid. Just as stupid as me trying to find meaning in every little dumb thing now that she's gone. Even her succulent passed away within a week, even though we did our best to water it.

Is that a sign? A sign of what, I don't know. But I can't help but wonder why? How many college students, heck, how many people face something like this in their early 20s? Why us?

And the worst part? It doesn't hit you how often this kind of thing happens till it happens to you. Then you're in the *in-group*. You're the one everyone talks about. Oh, she's the girl whose suitemate passed away. Passed away. It sounds almost peaceful when you say that, but then you remember it was a violent car accident and—

And now I'm rambling. But they say rambling is good. Let it all out, they say. All of it? Even the dirty and the mucky. Even the frustration and the pain? I don't know. When I bring it up to others, they say, "Oh, I'm so sorry," and that's the end of it. If you bring it up again, you're the one being too much, making it too awkward.

It's over and done with for them. But they don't realize it's constantly on your mind. They don't realize it's in your dreams; it's *always* there. The reminder that you're no longer four, that you never will be...ever again.

Never again. The laughs, the jokes, the banter it's still there yet somehow changed. Irrevocably.

It hurts. But what's worse is that it doesn't make sense. It doesn't make sense that she's just...*gone*. It's painful. We're all trying to deal with it in our own way. If you ask me, we need an open discussion. It won't fix everything, but it's a start. Well, for those of us who'll cooperate.

Arya turns to look towards Amy's door, then turns back to face the audience.

Arya:

Anyway. We're here now. This is us, us three. And the sooner we come to terms with that, the better...I don't know. I really don't know. But what I do know is we need to talk.

She turns back to Amy's door.

Arya:

Whether we want to or not.

Blackout.

Scene 3:

The lights slowly come on. It's still the dorm common room. Click. Click. Click. The stage fills with the sharp tap tap tapping of heels, brisk and short. Gloria walks on stage in short, sharp steps, finally coming to a stop in the center. She's holding a phone or wearing a pair of AirPods, and her expression is clearly frustrated. As she speaks on the phone, she pauses after each sentence as if listening to the person on the other end.

GLORIA:

I know.

I know, Mom.

Mom, you've been saying the same thing again and again!

No, I'm not trying to be disrespectful. No. No, I'm not undervaluing what you and Dad have done for me. I'm not.

Mom, will you just listen to me?

Mom, for God's sake, I know, I understand everything you're saying right now; you've said it a million times—no, I'm not being defensive. I just don't want to talk about this right now! ...Yes, I know she was a sweet girl! I know it was a tragedy, I *know*. I know more than anyone else! And I'm fine, I really am. Ok, Mom! Mom, I'm taking 21 credits; I'm on exec for three clubs—I *seriously* don't have time for this...

No, no I'm not changing the subject! *Seriously*.

I'm not raising my voice at you! Mom I—

With a frustrated sigh, Gloria pauses for several seconds, listening to her mother lecture on the other end. She starts pacing impatiently, waiting to interrupt her mother's lengthy lecture. At this point, Arya comes into the room. Seeing Gloria is on a phone call, she quietly slips in and sits down, taking out several pages of stats homework.

GLORIA:

I know. No, I'm not just saying that. Seriously.

Yes...yes, I'll be fine. I'm busy enough with my schoolwork; I really don't have time to think of anything else...

What do you mean I sound perfunctory?

Mom, would you just quit it?!

Arya flinches at Gloria's tone, burying herself deeper in her work. For a moment, Gloria is silent.

GLORIA:

Mom...don't cry...

With a sigh, she slides into the nearby chair.

GLORIA:

Mmhmm...Ok...yes, love you...I'll talk to you later, yeah...

Ending the call, she slumps back in the chair with a gusty sigh. She starts zoning out, her mind still running through her conversation with her mother. Seeing her conversation is over, Arya tentatively calls out.

ARYA:

Gloria?

Gloria doesn't respond, still absorbed in her thoughts.

ARYA:

Gloria?

GLORIA:

Huh? Arya?

ARYA:

Hey, do you have time to answer a question? It's totally okay if you don't.

Gloria glances towards the packet.

GLORIA:

Stats?

ARYA:

Yeah.

GLORIA:

Sure.

Arya comes to sit by Gloria, and she shuffles through the paper till she finds what she's looking for. She points it out to Gloria.

ARYA:

Here, can you help me find the p-value?

GLORIA:

Yeah, sure...you just use the z table and do the reverse of what you'd normally do.

ARYA:

What?

GLORIA:

Like, instead of starting at this part of the table, do the opposite.

Arya looks at her blankly. Gloria sighs and turns the paper towards herself.

GLORIA:

See here. You use this instead so that the p-value would be...0.025.

ARYA:

Why?

GLORIA:

Because...didn't you hear a word of what I just said?

ARYA:

Mmhmm. I still don't get it, though.

For a moment, Gloria is speechless in exasperation. And suddenly, a loud noise comes from offstage. Both girls turn towards it.

GLORIA:

Is she still...?

ARYA:

Yeah.

They're silent for a moment. Then Gloria sighs exasperatedly.

GLORIA:

Man, this is all so fucked up.

ARYA:

I mean, there's got to be something we can do...

GLORIA:

Like what?

ARYA:

Well...we could...

GLORIA:

Yeah?

ARYA:

We could talk!

GLORIA:

Great idea; let's all sit in a circle and talk about our feelings.

ARYA:

That's what we should do.

ARYA:

I was being sarcastic.

ARYA:

I was being serious.

There are several more seconds of silence.

ARYA:

Mia would have agreed with me.

GLORIA:

Yeah? Well, she's not here.

Arya looks hurt, and Gloria flinches, immediately regretting her words.

GLORIA:

That's not...I didn't mean that.

ARYA:

...I know.

They're silent for several more seconds.

GLORIA:

Alright, let's do it.

ARYA:

What?

GLORIA:

Talk. Let's all sit down and talk about our feelings. Let's get it all out in the open.

ARYA:

Seriously?

GLORIA:

Yeah. And I'll get Amy out of her room...or we can just go into hers.

Both girls turn to look towards Amy's room. After a moment, Arya snaps out of it and starts collecting her papers.

ARYA:

I may as well do this later. Night.

GLORIA: Night.

Arya walks offstage, leaving Gloria lost in thought.

Blackout.

Scene 4:

The stage has a single bench or two chairs to the side. There's a pile of snacks in the corner of the room. The lights come on, but not completely. It's either a different color or dimmer, as it's a dream (up to the director's artistic decision). Laughter fills the stage as four girls come in: Gloria, Arya, Mia, and Amy. Gloria strides forward, and Arya keeps pace with her. Behind them, Amy trails behind as Mia accompanies her cheerfully with a bounce in her step. They're chattering as they come to the center of the stage. This scene alternates between casual banter and more in-depth conversation. The casual banter should be quick and energetic, especially at the start. And actors should slow down a little for the latter part of the scene when it comes to the deeper conversation.

GLORIA:

Stupid rain.

Arya:

Who knew it'd just start pouring?

GLORIA:

The weather report...which we *should* have checked.

MIA:

Come on...don't you just love the adventure?

GLORIA:

No.

Arya:

Don't be grumpy...

GLORIA:

I'm not.

Arya:

Aww, look how cute your little pout is!

Arya reaches out to poke Gloria in the cheek, but Gloria shoos her away.

GLORIA:

I'm not pouting!

Arya:

Yeah, yeah...

Arya and Gloria leave the stage, Gloria walking with quick, sharp steps, Arya bouncing along, teasing her and giggling. Amy and Mia remain on stage.

MIA:

Hey..., you ok?

Amy goes over to sit on a nearby bench, and Mia comes over to her.

MIA:

Hey...

AMY:

I'm fine.

MIA:

You sure?

Amy doesn't respond, and it's silent for a second.

MIA:

Have you ever wished you could fly?

AMY:

What? No.

MIA:

Not even once? Wished you could just rise above everything, see *everything*.

AMY:

Never.

MIA:

I've felt that way before. When the guy's bald head blocked my view in the theater, I wanted to just fly above and see everything!

AMY:

That's because you're short.

MIA:

No, but it's not just there! There'll be times during the day when I just want to fly above, float more like...

AMY:

That's because you're too lazy to walk.

MIA:

Aw, come on, don't be such a grouch.

AMY:

Why do you still hang out with me, then?

MIA:

Because we're friends, stupid, anyway, you've really never dreamed of flying?

AMY:

No.

MIA:

Oh.

AMY:

But I have dreamed of other stuff.

MIA:

Like what?

AMY:

Sometimes...I wish I could teleport. Whenever I'm feeling awkward or anxious or being such a miserable, crabby sourpuss that I'm bringing everyone down, I wish I could just snap my fingers and bam! I'm in the comfort of my own room. I don't have to talk with anyone or deal with anything.

Mia snickers.

AMY:

What?

MIA:

Sourpuss, haha; I've never heard someone use that word in real life before.

AMY:

Wow, you just completely ignored what I said.

MIA:

No! I'm not ignoring it, just sourpuss, haha haha...

AMY:

You're being stupid.

Mia laughs.

AMY:

Stop; you're going to make me laugh too!

The two start laughing and eventually find themselves sitting or lying on the ground together.

MIA:

So you wish you could hide from the world in your room whenever you want to?

AMY:

Not hide exactly....well, yeah, hide, sometimes. Other times, I want to protect everyone...from *me*.

For a moment, it's silent. Then Mia smacks her on the shoulder.

MIA:

What do you mean by protect everyone from you? Stop being melodramatic! Do you think you're the vampire dude from Twilight?

AMY:

Of all references, you *had* to choose Edward, and what do you mean, vampire dude? If you're going to use that reference, get the name right.

MIA:

Yeah, yeah, but hey, your words sound like every cringy teenage romance movie or novel out there. "Oh, I'm so powerful and mysterious, I need to protect you from me. Oh, I'm dangerous...blah, blah, blah". God, just thinking about it makes me nauseous.

Amy laughs.

MIA:

Anyway, so what's your deal, vampire lady?

AMY:

Huh?

MIA:

Why do you want to "protect us"?

AMY:

I'm not...well, you saw. I'm such a pessimist. I feel like I'll bring you all down by just being here.

MIA:

Oh, for crying out—do I look down to you? Does anyone look down to you—well, besides yourself?

AMY:

...No.

MIA:

Exactly! You're not bringing anyone down, but by thinking you're bringing everyone down, you start bringing yourself down. It's like a weird conundrum situation. You know?

AMY:

Hmm.

MIA:

Honestly, though, going back to your dream wish, I agree about the anxiety part. Like, sometimes it'd be nice just to escape everything and take a break.

Mia looks out into the distance, her gaze caught by something somewhere.

AMY:

Yeah.

Mia doesn't respond for several seconds, and just as Amy gets ready to ask her what's wrong, she starts speaking, her voice dreamy sounding. The director can choose to add faint, ghostly or melodious music to the background. Through the course of the following conversation, Mia continues gazing away from Amy, lost in her imaginings.

MIA:

Imagine if you were someone, anyone else, in any other situation, who would you want to be?

AMY:

I don't know.

MIA:

You know where I'd want to be? There was one time my family and I went up to Canada. We were hiking, and we reached a certain point. My brother was like six at the time, and my parents were tired, too, but there was still some way to go. So, my dad dared me to go further.

AMY:

Did you do it?

MIA:

Obviously. I started walking, and it got to a point where there was a gap in the trees. I could see the sky and some of the surroundings. I didn't want to give up, so I kept going for a while till I came by this cliff.

AMY:

That's where you wish you were? On a cliff?

MIA:

Well, it's not just any old cliff!

AMY:

Oh yeah?

MIA:

Yeah, totally.

AMY:

If you say so...

MIA:

Standing there, I felt like...like in that singular finite moment, I was...

AMY:

Dumb?

MIA:

No! Small. So, so small, yet at the same time, in all my smallness, *I* was the one standing there in that moment and everything I was experiencing, every glimmer of the sky, every tweet and twitter of the birds, the vast expanse of mountainous...*everything*...just laid out in front of me, at that singular moment, it was all...mine. And, at that moment, there was one word in my mind.

AMY:

What?

MIA:

Serendipity. Because sometimes life works out in mysterious ways. And in that moment, it felt like I was *meant* to be there. Like mysterious forces had conspired to put me in that spot at that exact moment.

AMY:

You're so sentimental.

The background music/noise stops and Mia smiles and turns back to Amy.

MIA:

You say that like it's a bad thing!

Amy gives her a look, and Mia shrugs. She walks over to the center of the room and gives a twirl just for fun.

AMY:

You're such a kid.

MIA:

Do you ever wonder?

AMY:

About what?

MIA:

Just...pretty soon, we'll all be separating, all going our separate ways. No promise we'll be in the same state, in the same country even. Considering that, it's amazing how close we, the four of us, have become in the span of one—scratch that, not even one year.

AMY:

Uh, sure.

Amy looks away from Mia. She goes to pick up one of the snacks piled up in the corner.

MIA:

Why only sure?

AMY:

Graduation is a long way away.

MIA:

I suppose...but it'll be here before we know it.

AMY:

...I guess...

MIA:

And then...

AMY:

And then what?

Amy continues staring into the distance, crunching away at her snacks. Mia doesn't answer her, frozen and staring off to the opposite side from Amy.

AMY:

Mia?

Amy turns back around to see Mia staring somewhere offstage. She gets up to try to see what's wrong with her, dropping the bag of chips/some sort of snack along the way.

AMY:

Hey, Mia?

Mia doesn't answer her. Suddenly, the lights go off, and Mia rushes offstage. The lights flicker on and off, then they turn on fully, no longer dim or colored, leaving a confused Amy looking left and right.

AMY:

Mia? Mia! Where are you?

After a couple of seconds of searching frantically around the room, Amy slowly sinks to the floor and curls up into a ball. She starts rocking back and forth nervously, murmuring Mia's name. After several seconds of this, she scrambles up.

AMY:

MIA! I know you're here; I know you're right here!

She's met by either silence or a faint howling sound, like the sound of the wind. Amy bends down and gasps as if undergoing a panic attack.

AMY:

No no no no nonononono!

Amy starts moaning, and soon, the moaning transforms into Mia's name. Amy walks around the room dazedly, running into and knocking over something on either the bench or one of the two chairs. The objects (maybe binders) clatter to the ground. Offstage, Arya and Gloria call Amy's name.

AMY:

...one, two, three...one, two, three...where's four? Where *is* she?!

ARYA:

Amy?!

GLORIA:

Hey Amy!

AMY:

...nonononono...

ARYA:

Amy!

GLORIA:

Shit! We have to go in.

ARYA:

But how?!

GLORIA:

Give me a second.

After that, sounds the clatter of a pin being inserted roughly into a doorknob. Amy continues moaning, stumbling, and finally crumples to the floor and starts whimpering or sobbing. After several rattles, Arya and Gloria force the room door open. They rush to either side of Amy, Arya whispering comforting words and hugging her while Gloria awkwardly pats her back from the side. Slowly, Amy becomes aware of their presence and starts speaking to them.

AMY:

...as here.

ARYA:

What?

AMY:

She was here.

ARYA:

Who?

AMY:

Mia! She was here just a few seconds ago; she was just—just—

ARYA:

Amy...

AMY:

She was! I know you don't believe me, but—I...

GLORIA:

Mia's dead.

It's silent for several seconds.

ARYA:

Amy...?

Amy takes three breaths, each breath getting softer as she calms down.

AMY:

I know.

ARYA:

Are you...?

AMY:

I'm fine.

GLORIA:

You're *obviously* not.

AMY:

I'm *fine*. I just had a dream. We all have dreams. Gloria, remember that one time you dreamt there was a kumquat in your bed, and you were so sure there was until you woke up and there was nothing? Or Arya! When you dreamed that Gloria helped you with stats and even started dream singing!

ARYA:

Amy...that's not the same.

AMY:

But see, it *is*! You have a dream, and you think it's true. You think it's true, and you truly believe that it is until you wake up and realize...realize...

GLORIA:

I don't moan, scream, and hit chairs in my dreams.

ARYA:

Amy...

AMY:

I'm *fine*. Besides, don't you guys have class?

Arya checks her phone.

ARYA:

Oh shit, it's 9:54; we have to run! I can't miss anymore sessions; I've already exceeded my drops for this class.

GLORIA:

But what about Amy?

Arya glances toward Amy.

AMY:

I'm fine.

GLORIA:

But—

AMY:

I'm seriously *fine*. Don't you *dare* skip class because of me.

ARYA:

But if you're not okay...

AMY:

Did you not hear me? *Go.*

GLORIA:

You know what? I'll stay.

ARYA:

Are you sure?

GLORIA:

Yeah, I still have a couple of drops left; you can go.

AMY:

No, don't—

ARYA:

Alright, call me if you need anything.

GLORIA:

Sure.

Arya leaves.

AMY:

No, just go to class! Don't stay here because of me—

GLORIA:

It's not because of you. I just don't want to go.

AMY:

I want to be alone right now.

GLORIA:

Okay. I'll be right outside, in the living room.

Gloria leaves the stage. After she leaves Amy slowly sits down, staring into the distance. Her breath starts to get disorderly as she has another panic attack. As she starts whimpering, her phone starts ringing. It plays a song. This song should be specifically chosen as it will be repeated throughout the play.

As the music plays, Amy slowly calms down. She gazes towards the floor, and the lights go off.
Blackout.

Scene 5:

The scene is set in a classroom. Gloria and Arya are sitting side by side at desks. Each desk has a paper and pencil or an open laptop. Arya has her phone in her hand under her desk, and Gloria has her phone lying next to her on her desk. Any dialogue after Arya's first line is assumed to be text messages for this scene. Either the actors can whisper to each other, or if a projector is available, project the texts behind the actors along with pre-recorded audio. Or, let it be a scene with no talking and only projections and messaging noises.

Suppose it's not feasible to have a phone on stage or to use a projector. In that case, this conversation can just be whispered or spoken at a lower volume and in that case, please disregard Arya's first line and continue from her second line: "Is Amy okay?"

Arya reaches over to Gloria's desk and knocks on it with her knuckle. Gloria looks towards her quizzically. Arya gestures with her head toward her phone. Not understanding, Gloria continues to look confused. Arya gestures again, and Gloria continues to look blank. Finally, Arya forcefully grabs Gloria's phone, shakes it in front of her, and speaks in a harsh whisper.

Arya:
Your phone!

Gloria shushes her, and Arya looks around in embarrassment as if the students around her are staring at her. She takes out her phone and starts texting Gloria.

Arya:
Is Amy okay?

GLORIA:
Yeah, I made sure she was before I left the dorm.

Arya:
No, like in general. She's been having constant dreams, right?

GLORIA:
Yeah...

Arya:
Today, it has to be *today*.

GLORIA:
What?

Arya:

The conversation!

GLORIA:

Amy doesn't look ready for it, though.

Arya:

It's *because* she's like this that we need to have it asap.

GLORIA:

I guess...How much will it actually help, though?

Arya:

At the very least, it's better than bottling it up like we're doing now.

GLORIA:

I guess. Word of warning: I can't do it till pretty late.

Arya:

Why?

GLORIA:

I have to work out. Then I have class. After that is two club meetings—

Arya:

That's fine; I have more classes too. And it's probably better to do it later in the evening once we've finished up everything else for the day.

GLORIA:

Yeah.

They sit in silence for a few seconds.

Arya:

Have you heard anything from Erik?

GLORIA:

No, he hasn't contacted me since...before. And I haven't seen him with Amy.

Arya:

What is he doing? He should be here for her!

GLORIA:

Well...

Arya:

What?

GLORIA:

Never mind, it's probably nothing.

Arya:

Tell me!

GLORIA:

Amy and him got into a fight after...

Arya:

A fight! Why?

GLORIA:

Because, well...

Arya:

What?

GLORIA:

It's nothing.

Arya:

It's *obviously* not.

GLORIA:

I'm not sure about it, and I'm probably overthinking it anyway.

Arya:

Tell me.

GLORIA:

I'll tell you later. Anyway, the professor's going over the problem you had a question about; you probably want to pay attention.

Arya:

Fine, but make sure to tell me later.

Arya and Gloria put down their phones and start watching the board.

Blackout.

Scene 6:

The lights come on, and it's Gloria, standing at the side of the stage holding a pair of dumbbells. She's doing bicep curls one at a time. After she does a couple, Erik strides in from the other side of the stage with his own set of dumbbells.

ERIK:

Hey, Gloria.

GLORIA:

...Hey Erik.

Erik starts doing tricep extensions, accentuated with a loud grunt. Gloria glances over at him as if she has something to say, but he remains absorbed in his workout. She does a curl, glances at him, does a curl, glances at him; finally, she can't take it anymore and opens her mouth to speak.

GLORIA:

Erik.

ERIK:

What's up?

GLORIA:

Why aren't you with Amy right now?

ERIK:

She doesn't want me to be with her.

GLORIA:

What do you mean?

ERIK:

She told me to leave. So I left.

GLORIA:

You're her boyfriend. You should be there for her; besides, she's not herself right now.

ERIK:

Well, whether she's herself or not, she *obviously* doesn't want to see me.

GLORIA:

She's like that with everyone. She doesn't want to see anyone right now, but someone needs to be there for her. It may as well be you.

ERIK:

Aren't you guys there?

GLORIA:

Yeah, but she won't take to us, and Arya thinks you being there might help.

ERIK:

Yeah, well, what does she know? Being as dense as she is—

GLORIA:

Erik!

ERIK:

Sorry. But like, you *know*, right? That Amy and the dead girl...

GLORIA:

Her *name* is Mia.

ERIK:

Yeah sorry. But like the two of them...

GLORIA:

The two of them *nothing*. Mia and Amy were friends.

ERIK:

So you're deluding yourself, too? Huh, I would have expected more from you.

GLORIA:

Hey. Are you going to see Amy or not?

ERIK:

What good would that do?

GLORIA:

It might help; you guys used to be so sweet together. Remember the day we all got ice cream, or the other time with the puppies, or—

ERIK:

I get it.

It's silent for a few seconds. While the two are discussing, actors can play around with different exercises to add a touch of comedy or to fill the silence, ranging from but not limited to lunges, squats, reverse flies, etc.

GLORIA:

Anyway, she really needs you right now.

Erik gives her a skeptical look.

GLORIA:

Fine, she needs *someone*, and you might as well be it. Try and see her sometime?

ERIK:

I don't think this is going to end well...

Gloria gives him a look.

ERIK:

Okay, fine, you said it, not me. I'm going to do some pull-ups.

He turns and leaves the stage. Gloria remains behind, still using the dumbbells. After a few seconds, she sighs, setting the dumbbells down; she sits on the floor and starts stretching.

GLORIA:

God, what a mess everything is. We can't do anything without you Mia.

She shakes her head as if to clear it.

GLORIA:

What am I even saying? Mia isn't here anymore. She's...in a better place, away from all this...

She looks towards the side of the stage where Erik left.

GLORIA:

He can be an insensitive asshole sometimes, but...I feel for the guy. Amy, what were you thinking? But then again, I guess it's not that straightforward, is it?

She thinks for a moment, then irritation wells up in her, and she jumps up and yells.

GLORIA:

God! Why is everything so damn complicated!

She looks around her, embarrassed by bothering the people around her.

GLORIA:

Sorry.

She picks up the dumbbells. Then, she turns and exits the stage.

Scene 7:

The scene opens with Amy in her dorm room, the same set as the dream scene, sitting on a chair, humming or singing the same song she uses for the phone ringtone. The lighting is either dim or colored. While it's not a dream, a ghost does come on stage.

AMY:

Hmmm...hmmm...

AMY:

Ah, geez, what am I doing?

Amy sits up and looks at the room around her, the binders on the floor, and the chair toppled over.

AMY:

I'm a mess. I'm a complete, utter mess. God, if Mia were here, she'd make me clean it all up....if Mia were here.

She's silent for a moment. Once she speaks, there's a waver in her voice.

AMY:

The worst part is...I can never, ever have a conversation with her again. I can never see her, never talk to her. I almost feel like if I just go in her room, she'll be there, laughing at another one of those dumb cat reels. And she's *everywhere*. She gave me this.

Amy holds out her hand where she's wearing a cute bracelet (maybe one with a cat design/bead).

AMY:

She'd always tease me about how messy my room was. Not like hers was much better; she just stuffed things in the closet and under the bed. Every time you looked under there, it'd be clothes, books, shoes. God, she had so many shoes, and she'd always leave them in my room! Sometimes, I still find a random flip-flop of hers lying around. She's *everywhere*. She even recommended my shampoo, something as stupid as *that* reminds me of her. What can I possibly do? She's everywhere, but nowhere that I can actually see her. I find a decent Instagram reel; I go to send it to her... Then I remember. I remember she can't see it; she'll *never* see it. Again.

And I just. I just can't. Technically, I understand that life goes on. I understand I have classes, and eventually, I'll have interviews and find a job, and I'll be busy. I understand that plenty of others have gone through what I'm going through, and I understand that people die all the time. I get it all; I really do.

But it's not *easy* to comprehend that she's just... gone. And all the memories, all the moments, all the ice cream sandwiches and cat reels, will never happen again...except in my head or heart. Screw that! It's not fair! Why her? Mia was the brightest person I knew, the brightest person in the world! Why not someone grumpy and dull, like me? She was the one who had dreams and aspirations; I'm the one who's always running away, always hiding.

No one answers her, and Amy buries her head in her hands. After a few seconds, Mia walks on stage. She looks around confusedly and then notices Amy at the side.

MIA:

Amy?

Amy doesn't hear her. After a few moments, Mia goes to sit by Amy.

AMY:

Mia...

Mia flinches in surprise at hearing Amy call her name.

MIA:

Amy?

AMY:

Mia...

MIA:

Amy!

Mia waves a hand in Amy's face, but she doesn't respond. It's clear that Amy can't actually hear Mia. Despite realizing this, Mia responds to Amy's words as if they're having a conversation.

AMY:

Mia, what do I do?

MIA:

Anything you want to Amy. The sky's the limit.

AMY:

Will you ever forgive me?

MIA:

For what?

AMY:

Of course, you won't.

MIA:

For *what*? You haven't done anything that needs my forgiveness.

AMY:

I shouldn't have gone with Erik that day; I shouldn't have stayed with him at all!

MIA:

What? Wait—

AMY:

If I hadn't gone with him, if I'd hung out with you instead...maybe you'd be alive.

MIA:

What bullshit, even if I did hang out with you that day instead of going out, who's to say I wouldn't get into another accident another day! Who's to say you wouldn't go with me and get killed yourself?!

AMY:

It's all my fault...

Amy breaks into sobs as Mia frustratedly circles her. After several moments, Amy's phone starts ringing; it's the same song as earlier. After a moment, Amy slowly picks it up while Mia hovers around her.

AMY:

...Hello?

She freezes, and her expression visibly changes to a frown upon hearing who is at the other end.

AMY:

...What do you want?

She listens for a second.

AMY:

No. I don't want any of it. You can keep it all or throw it away.

She hangs up the phone sharply, leans against the wall, and sighs. She stays there, staring up and reminiscing. Meanwhile, Mia hops around the room, a little curious, antsy, and unsure. After a few moments, Arya's voice sounds.

ARYA:

Amy, look who I found outside!

MIA:

It's Arya!

Amy frowns.

AMY:

What?

ARYA:

Can I come in?

AMY:

Fine.

Arya steps on stage, bringing Erik behind her. He has a couple of bags of clothes and stuff with him: it's Amy's stuff. Note: In this section, Mia interjects between the three who cannot see her. The director/actor can make their own choices whether the actors speak at the same time or whether there is a pause.

MIA:

And Erik, hi guys!

AMY:

What are you doing here?

ERIK:

I'm just here to give you back your stuff...

AMY:

I told you I didn't need it!

MIA:

Amy?

ARYA:

Amy!

Amy rounds on Arya angrily.

AMY:

Why the hell did you let him in?

MIA:

Why are you mad at Arya?

ARYA:

I just thought—

AMY:

Yeah, you thought. You're always thinking about everyone else's business! Always thinking you know what's best for *everyone* else. Why don't you just mind your own business for once?!

MIA:

Amy!

Arya looks hurt, and Erik tries to mediate.

ERIK:

Hey, I was the one who asked her to let me in, don't—

AMY:

And you. I said I never wanted to see you again!

MIA:

No, don't say that!

Arya:

Excuse me. Do you think you're the only one that's hurt? She was my friend too. Stop acting like the victim and taking it out on everyone else! Besides, that's your boyfriend, and he's here to help. Stop treating all of us like enemies!

AMY:

He is *not* my boyfriend. And you wouldn't be my enemy if you didn't *betray* me like this!

ARYA:

What do you mean betray you? I was just trying to help you!

MIA:

She was just trying to help!

AMY:

Ha! Help me? Yeah right.

Arya looks ready to argue further with her, but Erik stops her. Meanwhile, Mia either continues to move around anxiously or watches nervously.

ERIK:

Alright, enough. Stop acting like a brat, Amy.

AMY:

What do you—

ERIK:

I get that you're feeling hurt and in pain, but that's no reason to act like this. Especially since Arya and I haven't done anything wrong.

AMY:

Haven't done anything wrong? How dare—

ERIK:

We dated for two years. Then you turn around and tell me that you were leading me on. That you never liked me, you were just fucking lying the entire time. Are you seriously going to blame me for everything right now?

Amy tries to respond, but nothing comes out.

ARYA:

What's going on?

ERIK:

Amy's just upset that she couldn't admit her *real* feelings, and now it's too late.

ARYA:

What do you mean?

ERIK:

She was in love with the dead girl.

MIA:

Dead girl...*me*?

ARYA:

Is that true, Amy?

AMY:

...It's none of your business.

ARYA:

You loved Mia? Like... romantically?

AMY:

I said it's *none* of your business!

ERIK:

Yeah, keep lying to yourself. That's what you did for the past two years when we were together, isn't it?

ARYA:

Erik!

ERIK:

What? It's true. I don't even know why you dated me. What was I, just a spare you could throw away when you were done with it?

AMY:

Get. Out.

ERIK:

You—

ARYA:

Come on, let's just go.

Erik opens his mouth to speak, but Arya pulls him out. The two leave, leaving behind Mia and Amy. Amy slowly sinks to the floor, and Mia watches her, worried. After a few seconds, Mia realizes she isn't going to move, and she comes further downstage.

MIA:

I always liked math the best. Specifically, calculus. Because it's straightforward...well, it may be challenging, but there's always one right answer. With people, it's rarely ever as simple. Take Amy, for example; I had no idea that she...No, I can't say that. I can't say I had *no* idea.

But what could we do? She was dating Erik, and now...well, she can't even see me, can she? No point in dating a ghost. If I'm even a ghost. I really don't know what I am. Maybe I'm a figment of someone's imagination. A made-up apparition, being transcribed onto some page somewhere in a one-bedroom apartment with instant ramen packets scattered around.

She pauses for a moment, thinking about that.

MIA:

Well, when all is said and done, here we are. Here I am. Why am I here, exactly? And, am I even really here? Who's to say? Once again, if I *am* really here, then *why*, indeed, am I here? Don't they usually say ghosts have some purpose? Some lingering last wish that prevents them from moving on? Do *I* have one?

At this moment, Amy sobs and calls out for Mia from her bed.

AMY

Mia...

MIA:

Amy?

Naturally, Amy doesn't answer her.

MIA:

Oh...I wish you could see me.

Blackout.

Scene 8:

The scene is set in the dorm common room, the same space where Arya initially did her monologue and where Gloria had her phone call. At the side is Arya's journal/laptop and a chair.

ARYA:

I'm sorry.

ERIK:

It's not your fault.

Arya tries to speak, but nothing comes out. Finally, Erik turns to leave.

ERIK:

I should go.

ARYA:

I...yeah.

Arya watches as Erik walks out. Then she comes to sit by the journal and picks up the pencil/gets ready to type. She bites her lip in thought, and then Gloria steps into the room.

GLORIA:

Arya?

ARYA:

Hey...

As Arya starts to speak, her voice ends in a sob.

GLORIA:

Hey, what's the matter?

ARYA:

I—

Arya shakes her head with a sob.

GLORIA:

Hey, hey shh...it's okay.

She gives her a hug, and Arya hides her face in Gloria's embrace. After taking a few breaths, she slowly separates and speaks.

ARYA:

I don't know what to do...I just, wanted to help her, but Amy said I betrayed her and I was a busybody and, and—

GLORIA:

What happened?

ARYA:

I let Erik in to see her, and she—

GLORIA:

Ah.

ARYA:

I didn't think it would be—wait, you knew, didn't you? That's why you said that in class!

GLORIA:

That Amy liked Mia? Yeah, I did.

ARYA:

So it was just me who didn't know?!

GLORIA:

I mean, either way, it's not like she was going to do anything about it. Hell, she probably wouldn't have ever said anything if not for...

ARYA:

Poor Erik.

The two stand in silence for a second.

ARYA:

So...what now?

GLORIA:

Well, first, I have to shower.

ARYA:

We need to talk.

GLORIA:

After my shower.

ARYA:

But can we actually talk? With Amy acting like *that*?

GLORIA:

Well...

ARYA:

Honestly, I don't know if I can face her right now.

GLORIA:

Why don't we do it another day?

ARYA:

When?

Blackout.

Scene 9:

The lights come on, and it's still the dorm common space. Arya is sitting at the desk/table, writing in her journal. Near her, Gloria sits on the couch, reading a book.

ARYA:

Wow, hard to believe exams are in a few days, huh?

GLORIA:

Yeah.

ARYA:

Last time that we're all living together, and Amy is still...

Amy tentatively steps onto the stage, on the side where Arya can't see, and Mia trails behind her. Gloria notices Amy, but Arya doesn't (none of them can see Mia for now).

GLORIA:

Amy.

ARYA:

Yeah.

GLORIA:

No, Amy's here.

ARYA:

Yeah in her room, I know—

GLORIA:

No. She's *here*.

Arya whips her head around in shock.

ARYA:

Amy?!

AMY:

...Hey guys.

It's silent for a second. The pause is embarrassingly long.

AMY:

Uh, how are you all?

GLORIA:

We're doing fine; how about you? Why don't you take a seat?

Amy awkwardly sits at the very corner of the couch, and Mia sits on the ground next to her or remains standing. Arya looks conflicted but hurt by the previous remarks; she doesn't speak. After another moment of awkward silence, Gloria finally speaks.

GLORIA:

So...how are things?

AMY:

They're...fine, yeah.

GLORIA:

That's good.

Gloria tries to look toward Arya and signals with her eyes. If telepathy existed between them, this is what they'd be saying the following (if a projector is available, it can be used to project their words, maybe along with emojis or emoticons to add a touch of comedy).

GLORIA:

Didn't you want to talk?

ARYA:

Yeah, but...she said I was being a busybody

GLORIA:

But she's not herself right now.

ARYA:

But does that excuse it? Mia's death didn't just affect her.

If it's too difficult to show actors having a conversation with their eyes, the actors can be texting each other the above along with a projector. Or if all options are too difficult, just assume Gloria gives Arya a look, and Arya looks reluctant.

ARYA:

So...why'd you finally come out?

GLORIA:

Arya!

ARYA:

What? After all this time, she finally decided to show her face. Why now?

AMY:

I...I'm sorry.

ARYA:

Are you? Are you really? Stop acting like a victim; Mia's death affected all of us, not just you.

AMY:

Yeah, but you didn't *love* her!

It's silent for a moment. Mia stares at Amy in shock, and the other two don't know how to respond.

GLORIA:

Alright, everyone calm down.

ARYA:

If you were in "loved her" (*Arya uses finger quotes*), why didn't you ever do anything about it?! You were off happily dating Erik, and you never would have said a word if Mia hadn't *died*—

GLORIA:

Arya!

AMY:

Shut up! Shut up, shut up!

ARYA:

Why? Because I'm *right*?

AMY:

What the fuck do you know?! You're not the one who...

ARYA:

Who *what*?

AMY:

I couldn't just—she's a girl...

ARYA:

So? This is 2022, not the fucking 1900s.

GLORIA:

Arya, Amy's parents are really conservative. Like, *really* conservative.

ARYA:

So? Do they make her choices?

GLORIA:

You always complain about how your parents expect all A's, even in college. Everyone has their own stuff going on.

ARYA:

...Fine. That still doesn't excuse your behavior towards me the other day.

AMY:

I said sorry.

ARYA:

But you don't really feel that way, do you?

AMY:

Look, I've already apologized. What more do you want?

GLORIA:

Alright. Calm down.

ARYA:

I won't. She says that to me, then waltzes in here like everything's fine and—

AMY:

I'm not "waltzing in like everything is fine." Do I look fine to you? Does anything look *fine* to you?

ARYA:

There you go again, making everything about *you*!

GLORIA:

Guys calm down—

Amy and Arya interrupt Gloria and start yelling at each other at the same time. Mia hops at the side helplessly, trying to interrupt the fight.

AMY:

No, I will *not* calm down! I just lost...*everything*, and now I'm being blamed by everyone and...

ARYA:

You're always making it about you, you, you! We're upset about Mia, too!

MIA:

SHUT UP! Shut up, shut up, shut up! Stop fighting like five-year-olds! You guys are grown-ass adults. How do you think I feel seeing all of you fight like this? Do you think I wanted to die? No! But at least I had you guys as the best friends in the world, and at least we got to spend all that time together. Now, here you are fighting like stupid little kids, screaming about your problems, problems, problems! At least we had the time that we did together, and at least you guys are *alive*.

As Mia starts talking, Arya, Gloria, and Mia fall quiet, listening. After her outburst, Mia grows silent, only then realizing that the other three seem to be able to hear her.

ARYA:

Is that...

When Amy speaks, there's a waver in her voice.

AMY:

Mia?

GLORIA:

I heard her too.

AMY:

Mia!

MIA:

...Guys, can you hear me?

Hearing her voice again, the three look for her but can't find her. Arya and Gloria look spooked, while Amy looks ecstatic, frantically searching for her location.

AMY:

We can hear you! Where are you?

GLORIA:

What in the...

ARYA:

How is this possible?

MIA:

I don't know but uh...hey guys it's me. Long time no see? Or I guess hear since you don't seem to be able to see me...

No one laughs.

MIA:

So...what's up?

Arya lets out a nervous laugh. Meanwhile, Amy continues looking for Mia by the sound of her voice.

ARYA:

This is fake, an illusion, an—an—

GLORIA:

We're a mess without you, Mia.

MIA:

I can see that.

ARYA:

Wait, Gloria, are you for real right now? This isn't real; it's—

GLORIA:

It's what? We can obviously hear her.

ARYA:

But you're an atheist!

GLORIA:

I don't believe in God. That's different from acknowledging that weird shit sometimes happens in the world.

MIA:

Thanks, Gloria.

GLORIA:

You're welcome.

AMY:

Where are you, Mia?!

MIA:

I'm here, but apparently, you can't see me or feel me.

AMY:

But—

GLORIA:

Amy, calm down. At least we can hear her.

AMY:

But what if she leaves?

MIA:

Hey, you know I'm right here? I'm not going anywhere.

GLORIA:

Can you say that for certain? What if you disappear as you came? That's why we need to take advantage of this time.

MIA:

To do what?

GLORIA:

To talk. Like Arya said.

The three look toward Arya; she still seems freaked out by the whole ghost thing.

GLORIA:

Anyway, how are you?

MIA:

Eh, however, you can expect a ghost to be.

GLORIA:

Have you been here since you passed away?

MIA:

I've been here since two weeks ago.

GLORIA:

In our apartment?

MIA:

Yeah, well...with Amy.

AMY:

With me?

MIA:

Yeah.

ARYA:

But why? It doesn't make any sense.

GLORIA:

Are you really talking about what does and doesn't make sense right now?

ARYA:

Is this like a, clock strikes midnight and you disappear kind of thing?

GLORIA:

This isn't Cinderella, sweetie.

MIA:

Like I said, I have no idea. But you guys are probably right in that we don't know how long this will last. While it's still happening, is there anything you want to ask me? Mind you, I don't actually know where people go after death; I've been stuck here since I can remember.

GLORIA:

Do you regret it?

MIA:

My death? Yeah, obviously. But what can I do? Not like I had a choice, and all I can do is be glad that at least I had a childhood, I got to be an adult. Many don't even get that.

GLORIA:

Wow, what a positive outlook—

AMY:

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*. Even if I did stay home with 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 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, then 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—no more headaches in corporeal form.

Mia awkwardly laughs. Amy frowns, and 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? Are you still there?

MIA:

Yeah, I'm here.

But Gloria, Amy, and Arya don't hear her.

GLORIA:

I 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.

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. Because of that, she made me promise never to be like him, never to lie. But...I just did it 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 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 tinkling music starts to play, and the lighting changes too. It takes Mia several moments to hear it, but she looks up as if in a trance once she does. She slowly starts to walk towards it, like a zombie, light on her feet as if she's drifting. She disappears off stage. After several seconds of silence (almost to the point where it's awkward), you hear a baby's giggle.

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 is not able to clearly see Emma (it should be a surprise that she looks like 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—

Arya:

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 sits down, still visibly trying to make sense of the 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.

Gloria, Arya, and Erik look a little queasy or awkward hearing this.

AMY:

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

Gloria forces a smile on her face and tries to continue the conversation.

GLORIA:

Do you know what you're interested in?

EMMA:

I like math. Numbers just make sense.

Gloria flinches at this.

ARYA:

...Just like Mia.

GLORIA:

Don't.

EMMA:

Who *is* Mia?

AMY:

A friend.

ARYA:

Our good friend she was especially close to your mom.

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

EMMA:

Really? Why isn't she here if she was so close to you guys?

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 lady?

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 a 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 make 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 doesn't look surprised. Presumably she's heard this story already.

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. And besides, I have a partner waiting at home.

He flashes the ring on his finger.

ARYA:

Congrats!

AMY:

Congrats.

ARYA:

Then Amy, back to my question...

AMY:

No, I don't have a partner.

ARYA:

Then *why* did you...?

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?

It's silent for several seconds. Then Emma speaks.

EMMA:

So you adopted me because I look like your dead friend?

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!

At the side, Arya still looks conflicted. Gloria gives her a warning glance.

ERIK:

If nothing else, at least you guys found each other. It's kind of poetic in a way, all thanks to fate. I've learned to really believe in the word ever since I met my partner.

ARYA:

But...

AMY:

Yes, exactly! Fate. That's why I gave Emma her middle name.

ERIK:

What?

AMY:

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

ERIK:

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:

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:

...Alright.

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.