

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's the chorus of Em Beihold's "12345".

Floating Away Like I'm a Kite

Reminding Myself I'm still Alive

Try not to panic every night

One, two, three, four, five

As the music plays, Amy slowly calms down and by five she's calm. She gazes down and the lights go off.

If "12345" cannot be used for copyright reasons, please select another song, maybe the ghostly song from earlier, maybe something else, which helps Amy calm down.

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. For this scene, any dialogue after Arya's first line is assumed to be text messages. 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 use a projector. In that case, this conversation can just be a whispered or lower volume conversation, 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 and 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. And class. And a club meeting.

Arya:

That's fine; I have more class too. And it's probably better to do it 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, and 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 talk 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 together, 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 some time?

ERIK:

I don't think this is gonna end well...

Gloria gives him a look.

ERIK:

Okay, fine, you said it, not me. I'm going to go 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're such a mess 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 mess.

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

GLORIA:

He can be an insensitive an 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 turns and exits the stage.

Scene 7:

The scene opens with Amy in her dorm room, same set as the dream scene, sitting on a chair, humming or singing Em Beihold's "12345" (or something else if copyright is an issue). The lighting is either dim or colored. While it's not a dream, a ghost does come on stage.

AMY:

I don't feel a single thing...have the pills done too much...

AMY:

Ah geez, what am I doing?

Amy sits up and looks at the room around her, the binders on the floor, 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, never 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 that has a cat design/bead on it).

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 do I do? 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 finding 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 in the world! Why not someone grumpy and dull, like me? She was the one who had dreams, had 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 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.

Mia:

Amy?

AMY:

Mia...

Mia:

Amy!

Mia waves a hand in Amy's face, but she doesn't respond. It's clear that she can't actually hear Mia. But Mia decides to respond anyway.

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, same song she was humming earlier whether that's Em Beihold's 12345 or something else. After a moment Amy slowly goes to pick 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 moment.

AMY:

I don't want them, you can keep them.

She sharply hangs up the phone, leans against the wall, and sighs. She stays there, staring up reminiscing. Meanwhile, Mia hops around the room, a little curious, a little antsy, a little 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 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 when the actors speak at the same time or if there's 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.

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 either slowly sinks to the floor or gets into bed, and Mia watches her, worried. After a few moments, 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, 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 busy body and, and—

GLORIA:

What happened?

Arya:

I let Erik in to see her.

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 kind of did.

Arya:

So it was just me?!

GLORIA:

I mean, either way it's not like she could do anything about it. And she probably wouldn't even say anything if not for...

Arya:

Poor Erik.

The two stand in silence for a moment.

Arya:

So...what now?

GLORIA:

Well, first, I have to shower.

Arya:

We need to talk.

GLORIA:

After my shower.

Arya:

But can we? Even? Like, with Amy acting like *that*.

GLORIA:

Well...

Arya:

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

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 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 embarrassing.

AMY:

Uh, how are you all?

GLORIA:

We're doing fine; how about you sit down?

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).

GLORIA:

Didn't you want to talk?

ARYA:

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

GLORIA:

But she's not herself.

ARYA:

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

They might also possibly be texting each other the above, if it's too difficult to show actors having a conversation with their eyes or have a projector for these few words. Or if all options are too difficult, just assume Gloria gives Arya a look, and she's reluctant.

Arya:

Why'd you 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 weren't in love with 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 "love with 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 didn't *die*—

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 things.

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", does anything look fine to you? Do I look *fine* to you?

Arya:

There you go making everything about *you* again!

GLORIA:

Guys calm down—

Amy and Arya interrupt Gloria and start yelling at each other at the same time. At the side Mia hops around 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? You think I wanted to die? No! But at least I had you guys as the best friends in the world, 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*.

The minute Mia starts talking Arya, Gloria, and Mia all become quiet listening. After her outburst, Mia grows quiet, 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 voice but they 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:

Is this even scientific?

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 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:
We don't know that. So we should take advantage of this time.

Mia:
To do what?

GLORIA:
To talk. Like Arya said.

The three look towards 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, I guess.

GLORIA:

Have you been here since you passed away?

Mia:

No, 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 and we have to take advantage of it.

Arya:

How?

Mia:

Talk...I guess. 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 treasure the memories I got to have. 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: