

A Scene from
The Incomplete Life
& Random Death
Of Molly Denholtz

by
Ian McWethy

AT RISE:

SCENE 8

Julia is waiting in a daze.

Ivan approaches her. Sees her by herself. Takes a deep breath. psyches himself up. Then.

IVAN

Hey, Julia!

JULIA

Hey Ivan.

IVAN

Hi. Uh... eating lunch?

JULIA

Yeah. I guess. I'm not... super hungry. Or I haven't been lately. But... that is what I'm trying to do.

IVAN

Right. Yeah me either, I've been like a bundle of nerves all day.

JULIA

I don't know what that means but... sure.

Ivan stands suddenly.

IVAN

So... you tell me how you'd like this to go. Because here's what's going to happen. I'm asking you, Julia Thompson, to the prom. I am. And I have two ways I could do it. Scenario one, I have this elaborate, fun, over-the-top way that we could post on YouTube if you wanted. It's basically that scene in Love Actually. Have you seen that? Where Lincoln from the Walking Dead holds those signs up to Keira Knightley that says like, "I love you and I recorded your wedding and just shot close ups of you because I love you." Which honestly is creepy but the way I'm gonna do it, is gonna be like... sweet. And you know... funny. And not creepy.

JULIA

Okay, Ivan -

IVAN

Wait! Hold on. Or. I could just like ask you out now. Simple. No social media. I just ask. And I know this really kills the surprise of the whole... asking out thing. But like... I don't know. I don't want to have a repeat of when I asked Elise to homecoming last year. When I rewrote the lyrics to Formation to be about her and she said no and Harper shared it with everyone on Snapchat. Cause that was, uh, ha ha... not good! So I'm sorry. Spontaneity is out the window but I think the sentiment is what matters, so if you can just look past -

JULIA

Jesus Christ! Ivan. Get a grip and like... read the room. What do I look like right now? What makes you think that I'm like... looking to be woo'ed or be part of a video where you ask me to prom? What about my demeanor says, "I'm ready to go prom!"

IVAN

I... uh... I don't know. I guess I was kind of worked up with my own stuff and I didn't... uh.... so you don't want to go to prom? At all?

JULIA

No, I'm just like... a lot's going on right now. For me. Okay!

IVAN

Okay, so this is just bad timing?

JULIA

It's an extremely bad timing. Timing so bad it makes me... wonder like... if something's wrong with you. Like you're brain damaged or, or...

IVAN

I see.

JULIA

It's the worst timing imaginable Ivan. Absolute worst.

IVAN

But it's not a no? Right? You're just saying I have bad timing but not that you won't -

JULIA

Ivan. Okay. Ivan. It. Uh... it's... the timing with which you asked me out. Just now. While I'm sitting here looking sad and angry and out of my mind. *That timing*, is so bad, that my answer is actually a no. Cause you can never come back from it! Ever. And it's like... Ivan! Honestly. What the hell? Do you have any sense?!

IVAN

Uh... I guess... no. What am I missing?

JULIA

Do you... don't you know what the hell happened two days ago? That Faith... died.

IVAN

Yes! No, I... I'm sorry. I... didn't realize that you two were close, I guess.

JULIA

That we were *close*?!

IVAN

Yes, I didn't... you know realize that.

JULIA

Ivan! She was my step-sister.

IVAN

Oh my god.

JULIA

Yeah! So you coming in here, and like, proposing two different weird ways to ask me to prom is... uh... well it kinda blows Ivan.

IVAN

I... I'm so... Julia I'm so sorry. I had no idea she was your step-sister.

JULIA

Well now you do! So can you just leave me alone.

IVAN

Of course. Of course. I - I... I really had no idea. I...

JULIA

I get it but -

IVAN

No, I mean I *really* had no idea. Like no idea at all. I mean... Julia we're like friends right?

JULIA

Yeah. Sort of.

IVAN

Well friendly at the very least. And maybe, I thought, even more than friends possibly. I mean... not now. Seems like I've screwed that up but I... I should've known that you had sister.

JULIA

Step-sister.

IVAN

Right, but still -

JULIA

Well it's different. It is. And I'm sorry you didn't know that but... it's complicated. We weren't close and I was only living with her like, sporadically. My mom re-married three years ago so now every other week I cohabitate with her new husband, Mark. And then one of those weeks Faith would be there, so I only lived with her like one week a month for the past... three years. And we never really talked or hung out, she was just there. And so, it's... weird.

Julia starts to lose it a little. Takes deep breaths.

IVAN

Hey, it's okay.

JULIA

I'm fine. I'm really fine.

IVAN

I know, but -

JULIA

This is what I'm trying to tell you that, I'm... I'm sad, obviously. But also, you... you didn't even know she was my step-sister. Because we weren't close. We were... roommates every fourth week. She hated my mom and I didn't really care for her so... we didn't talk that much. And yet I'm still like... I'm a mess. I can't sleep. I'm either crying all the time or I'm numb to everything. And I just... don't know what's wrong with me.

IVAN

Well that kind of seems normal.

JULIA

It's not though.

IVAN

Yeah but -

JULIA

Look, stuff happens to people all the time that's... a hundred times worse than your... step-sister you barely knew dying. Like... did you read *What is the What?* In Teunis's class last year?

IVAN

No. I had Brighton.

JULIA

Oh. Right. Well... it's a book about this refugee from Sudan. And it's a true story. And it's about a kid and how his entire family, friends, and village is wiped out by this militia. His dad, mom, sibling, aunts, uncles. All of them. Dead. In like a day. But... here's the thing: even though all this incredibly sad and horrific stuff happened to him, he still has this... positive attitude and is... like, strong. I mean Faith... it's sad but I don't know why I can't just... be stronger. Because my mom and Mark are just... bad. They're really bad right now. And I feel like I have to be there for them because it's... I mean have you ever seen your parents cry?

IVAN

Um. My mom. Yes. She cries at everything. Like commercials or podcasts she... just cries all the time. My dad... not so much. He's a very tough... like sports, beer drinking... guy.

JULIA

Oh.

IVAN

Yeah. I think I'm a disappointment to him. I remember in middle school when I got really into Warcraft and stopped attempting to play baseball, which I was awful at anyway, he uh... he had a look on his face like... like I kicked a kitten or something. We don't... really get each other.

JULIA

Yeah, well Mark is kind of like that. Very bro-y. And he's been... seeing someone like him lose it. It's really unnerving.

IVAN

Yeah, I can't imagine my dad crying.

Beat. They sit for bit.

IVAN (cont'd)

Still though I... I still think it's okay. Just because that guy in the Sudan survived a genocide doesn't mean... you're like a weirdo for being sad. I knew Faith less than you did and it's still really bummed me out. I mean I get... depressed when celebrities die sometimes. Like remember when Robin Williams killed himself? A few years ago?

JULIA

Oh yeah, that was awful.

IVAN

And I'm not even like the biggest fan of his but... you know the movie Hook. It's about Peter Pan growing up and becoming a banker. He plays a grown up Peter Pan in it.

JULIA

Yeah. I... haven't seen it but I've heard of it.

IVAN

Right, well, anyway, he's in it. And Hook is like my family's Christmas movie. I don't know why, its not even really about Christmas but my parents were obsessed with it so every Christmas we watch it. I've seen it like 50 times. And honestly, it's not even that good. There's a lot of stuff in it that's just weird and... kinda bad. But... you know, as a kid it's awesome. And Robin Williams was like... so funny it. So then when he killed himself a few years ago I... I just took it really hard. Because, even though I didn't know him, I felt like I did in a weird way... (after a beat)... I don't know what I'm even trying to say really. I just... I think it's okay. How you're feeling.

They sit there for a bit.

IVAN

Well, I'll leave, I guess. Class is gonna start.

JULIA

Yeah.

IVAN

I assume you're going to the memorial service?

JULIA

Yeah. My mom's gonna pick me up. Like... now.

IVAN

I... I hope it's nice.

JULIA

Yeah.

Beat.

IVAN

And sorry about... prom. I -

JULIA

It's okay. But uh, Ivan.

IVAN

Yeah.

JULIA

In the future. If you wanna... ask out anyone. For any reason. Just ask her. You don't need to be so weird about it.

IVAN

Just ask?

JULIA

Just ask.

IVAN

Okay. That's good... yeah. Thanks.

Ivan walks off stage. Julia sits.

Ivan walks back on.

IVAN (cont'd)

What about Nina? Do you know if she's going with anyone?

JULIA

She's gay Ivan.

IVAN

What?! Nina?

JULIA

Yeah. She dated Faith for like a year. Where have been?

IVAN

Are you... fine. I'm done. This is... I don't understand women! I'm, I'm gonna go. Sorry again to... but I'm gonna go.

The bell rings. Ivan walks off stage into the crowd.