

The Girlfriend's in the Basement

FEATURE SCREENPLAY

A boy, Arden, who is a part-time scientist, has figured out how to bring his girlfriend Jule back to life after a tragic accident.

However, things are not quite the same as before.

ACT I

Scene 1

INT. ARDEN'S BASEMENT - NIGHT

ARDEN is in his late teen years, a handsome boy with a distraught look about him, dark circles under his eyes, and dressed in dirty, raggedy clothing. He has brown, shaggy hair, brown eyes, and facial hair that hasn't been taken care of in weeks. ARDEN is messing around with liquids and dangerous, scientific methods in his garage with goggles on. The phone rings and he drops something, looking annoyed.

ARDEN

What do you need?

LYNN, ARDEN's sister, is on the other line.

LYNN

I'm just checking in with you. I know this is really hard but you know I'm here for you no matter what, right-

ARDEN

Yeah, yeah. Is that all?

LYNN

Um, well..John's hosting tonigh-

ARDEN

Thanks for the offer Lynn, but I'm not interested in partying right now.

LYNN

No, no, it's not a party. It's just a little get together. And, uh..we all agreed that it'd be really good for you to come and hang out with us all. You know, you need to get out of the house sooner or later, Arden.

ARDEN

Yeah, uhh.. I'm busy tonight.

LYNN

(whispering, embarrassed) Please don't tell me you're wasting your time with those crazy experiments in the basement.

Silence. The sound of a drop of liquid occurs.

LYNN

(sighing) Okay, well I'll see you later, lil bro. Go for a walk or something. Love you.

BEEP BEEP

ARDEN

(muttering to himself, laughing) Go for a walk, huh.

ARDEN gazes out the window, reminiscing.

EXT. ARDEN'S BACKYARD - DAY - TWO YEARS AGO

ARDEN and JULE are laughing, swinging on a swing. JULE is a beautiful and vibrant young girl, in her late teen years, dressed in happy colors and has a sweet look to her. She has blonde, wavy hair, and pink, rosy cheeks.

ARDEN

You make me so happy, you know?

JULE smiles, then looks away with a fearful look.

ARDEN

What's up?

JULE

(hesitant) I really need to tell you something, Arden.

ARDEN looks at her, concerned.

JULE

(rambling) If I'm being completely honest, I've been putting this off for a little while now..I really just don't even want to say it out loud because then it makes it that much more true-

ARDEN

Jule, you're scaring me.

JULE

You know how I've been complaining a lot about being tired all the time, losing weight, and uh..I don't know..just a lot of weird things happening with my body..?

ARDEN stares, listening hard.

JULE

Well, I went to the doctor with my Ma to see what was going on with me.

JULE is silent for a moment.

JULE

(sad eyes, but is accepting) I've been diagnosed with Leukemia. I don't have much time left, Arden. Maybe a year or so, I don't know, I really don't, but things aren't looking too good for me.

ARDEN'S mouth is wide open with shock and pain in his eyes.

ARDEN

And this is all one hundred percent? You're telling me there's no chance you'll be able to fight through this..that WE'LL be able to fight through this?!

ARDEN grabs onto her hand tight.

JULE

I mean..it's just really unlikely but..I guess there's always a chance right? (sad smile)

ARDEN looks her straight into the eyes.

ARDEN

Jule, look at me. We'll get through this together, I promise you. We'll be graduating together, then we'll go to University of Mellbock, and we'll live our life as planned..together.

INT. ARDEN'S BASEMENT - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

ARDEN knocks out of his trance from staring out the window, taking a deep breath. He returns to his lab table, returning to being busy at work. He is fixated on the project at hand.

ARDEN

(places one substance into another tube slowly) Oh my god..

ARDEN backs away from the table, knocking into stuff, as he takes off his goggles in disbelief. His mouth is wide open and gas clouds start arising from the tube.

ARDEN

(He starts smiling and laughing as he realizes his plan must've worked now) There's no way..

ARDEN unlocks a door, leading to a closet. There is a table with a tablecloth covering a body. He rips the tablecloth off, revealing

JULE, lying dead, looking blue and disgusting. He pours the substance into her mouth, and waits for a minute.

ARDEN

(eyes wide open, nervous) Come on..

There is a moment of silence and then JULE rises suddenly, and lets out a yelp. ARDEN, startled, knocks into the table, breaking glass and knocking things over. He rushes over to her and takes her by the arms.

ARDEN

(trying to quiet her) Shh, shh, Jule, it's me, it's Arden.

JULE stares at him dead in the eye with a blank look.

ARDEN (smiling wide with tears pouring out) It's me, it's me, Jule. I'm so happy you're back, I'm so happy. They doubted me, they really did..They didn't think I could do it but..I did! I really did! I DID IT! (shaking JULE from her shoulders)

JULE has no response.

ARDEN

There's so much I have to tell you.. Ugh, I'm just in shock right now. (uncontrollable smiling) How do you feel, Jule?

Nothing.

ARDEN

(smile disappearing) Jule?..Jule?..Jule, I said how are you feeling?

JULE makes an inaudible, monstrous sound as she slaps him in the face. The look in her eyes is frightening to ARDEN. He comes to the realization that she isn't her old self as he holds her down.

ARDEN

(desperate) Jule, IT'S ME! Arden! Arden Sanchez! And you're Jule Birling! Jule, please..SAY SOMETHING TO ME!

ARDEN starts uncontrollably sobbing, as he struggles to pin JULE down, who is out of control, continuing to slap him and kick him.

ARDEN

STOP! DON'T HIT ME, IT'S ME! IT'S ME, JULE! REMEMBER ME, YOU HAVE TO REMEMBER ME! IT'S ARDEN SANCHEZ, YOUR BOYFRIEND OF THREE YEARS, JULE, IT'S ME!

JULE lets out a roar of some sort as she punches ARDEN in the jaw, hurting him, and he spits out blood. She goes for more, until ARDEN pushes her with force as defense, leaving her to fall on the floor

and get hurt. JULE howls in pain. ARDEN's mouth is wide open with shock as he realizes that he has just hurt his beloved girlfriend.

ARDEN
(whispers) I'm sorry..

ARDEN closes the door to the closet to leave her by herself. He falls down on the other side of the door, just sitting there, crying.

INT. HOSPITAL ROOM - DAY - 11 MONTHS AGO

JULE is lying on a hospital bed, so sick that she is barely able to move. JULE's mother, BECKY, who is an older looking version of her, is dressed down, and it is noticeable that she has been sobbing. She is sitting in a chair next to the bed, holding JULE's hand. ARDEN walks into the room, holding a bouquet of orchids to give to JULE.

ARDEN knocks on the door, even though it is wide open, to make notice of his arrival. JULE gives a sweet smile.

BECKY
Oh, you're the sweetest, Arden.

JULE
My favorite.

ARDEN places the flowers on the nightstand next to the bed, then takes a seat on the bed next to JULE.

JULE
(looks at ARDEN lovingly) Hi, how are you?

ARDEN
Well, nevermind that..How are YOU feeling, Jule?

JULE
(laughs a little) Good?..I don't know how to answer that anymore, to be honest.

BECKY
My Jule's a strong one. She's handling everything very well, and she has a great tolerance for pain.

ARDEN
That's good to hear.

JULE
(sarcastically) Yeah, it's so good to hear. I've just been lying here watching Saturday cartoons all day, eating my Cheez-Its.

There is an awkward moment of silence.

BECKY

(smiling) Well, I'll let you guys have some alone time.

BECKY rises from her chair, and exits the room, shutting the door behind her.

JULE

They barely let me go on walks anymore, you know. I miss the feeling of the outside air..I miss the scents of places that aren't hospitals..I miss the energy of being around crowds of people..I miss living, Arden.

ARDEN

I know..And in all good time, you will be again.

JULE

How can you say that? How can you so easily lie to my face? Look at the state I'm in, Arden..and I'm only getting worse.

ARDEN

Because..I just know. If you don't have hope, then what else is there? I refuse to believe in a future that's not with the both of us.

JULE

(stares blank at the door) Well, you're gonna have to start.

ARDEN

(worried look) Don't think like that. Where's the *obnoxiously* optimistic Jule that everyone knows and loves?

JULE

Yeah, maybe that Jule died when she found out she had Leukemia and that she's actually going to die any day now. (nods her head)

ARDEN

(a moment of hesitance) Are you serious?

JULE looks around the room, then looks ARDEN in his eyes.

INT. JOHN'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - PRESENT DAY

JOHN is making drinks for everyone in his kitchen. JOHN is a tall and muscular redhead, who has been lifelong friends with LYNN and ARDEN. There are around ten other people over, who are all close-knit friends. LYNN and her friends are all in college.

LYNN has just hung up the phone with ARDEN, and is disappointed.

JOHN
Well?

LYNN shakes her head.

JOHN
Christ. I know, a situation like this would make anyone go crazy..It's horrible. I remember losing my favorite aunt when I was young. But to imagine a girlfriend..sheesh.

SARAH, one of LYNN's friends, is receiving a drink from JOHN.

SARAH
Oh my god, it's absolutely tragic. Lynn, tell Arden I said I'm so sorry, would you?

LYNN
Thank you, yeah, I'll try, but..He isn't one for taking pity from people.

JOHN
I miss the ol' fella.

ERIC, another friend, who is drunken, and barely knows ARDEN, enters the kitchen.

ERIC
Well, if he won't come to the party, why don't we bring the party to him, am I right?!

LYNN
Yeah, I'm not sure that's a good idea. I tried convincing him to come, but I think he really needs his space right now.

JOHN
I agree with Eric for once. A little surprise visit from his sister and friends won't hurt 'em, eh?

LYNN
I don't know. He's doing one of his little science projects right now.

SARAH
Ew, why? All the more reason to go, in my opinion. He probably needs people to cheer him up. Your brother's cute too, you know? And isn't he single now, cause, like--

JOHN
Sarah, what is wrong with you?

SARAH
(taken aback) What?

LYNN
(shrugs) You guys are right, I guess. Let's just go before I change
my mind.

EXT. OUTSIDE OF ARDEN'S HOUSE - NIGHT

LYNN, JOHN, SARAH, ERIC, and six other of their friends are outside ARDEN's house. LYNN rings the doorbell as they wait. ARDEN is currently in the basement, sulking, not expecting guests.

DING DONG! DING DONG!

ARDEN looks up from his head being in his hands, pondering who would be at the door. Expecting the mail or something, he carelessly leaves the basement door unlocked.

ARDEN opens the front door, startled to see so many guests.

EVERYONE BUT ARDEN
Surprise!

JOHN
How's it hanging, fella? I missed my bro!

JOHN squeezes ARDEN in a tight hug.

SARAH
Hi Arden, how are you doing? Listen, I'm here if you ever want to talk, and I know it's all really, really hard to deal with, but you look great for being depressed, you really do!

They all let themselves in as LYNN closes the front door behind her.

ARDEN
(says to LYNN, annoyed) What is the meaning of this?

LYNN
Everyone wanted to surprise you. Just loosen up and have some fun,
God knows you need it, lil bro.

ARDEN
(referring to ERIC falling over in the living room) How drunk is that
guy?!

LYNN
Um, just a little.

SHANE

Hey, bud! I never got to properly introduce myself. I'm Shane, and--

ARDEN

Listen, I appreciate the thought but uh, now's not really a good time, guys.

JOHN

It'll never really be the *perfect* time, so that's why you need to learn to make the best of things, dude! (playfully nudges ARDEN)

ARDEN

Mm, yeah, uh..but seriously, it's really not a good ti-

SARAH

Where's your bathroom?

LYNN

It's downstairs, then take a right.

SARAH

Thanks. And by the way, I love your top!

SARAH goes downstairs to use the restroom. After, she is fixing her appearance in the mirror when she hears weird grunting sounds coming from the basement. She exits the bathroom.

SARAH

Oh my god, tell that dog to shut up!

The grunting sounds turn into feminine shrieks, and SARAH starts walking towards the sound of it, slowly approaching the basement. Her curiosity gets the best of her as she opens the door and hears a woman crying.

SARAH

Oh my god..Hello?! Is someone there?

The crying continues.

SARAH

Hello?! If you can hear me, say something!

SARAH approaches the closet, and turns the knob, opening the door to find JULE, banging her head violently against the wall.

SARAH

AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH!

SARAH frantically runs up the stairs as she dials 911 on her cell phone.

SARAH

(pointing at ARDEN, scared) HE'S A KIDNAPPER! OH MY GOD, OH MY GOD!

JOHN

Sarah, calm down. What is wrong?!

SARAH

(shaking hands as she is pointing at ARDEN) I'M CALLING 911! THAT BOY IS A KIDNAPPER, OH MY GOD! EVERYONE THOUGHT JULE WAS DEAD BUT NO, HE HAS HER KIDNAPPED AND LOCKED IN HIS BASEMENT FOR A YEAR, HOLY LORD HAVE MERCY-

Everyone is standing around with their mouths wide open in disbelief.

SARAH

(hysterical) WHAT IS WRONG WITH YOU PEOPLE?! RUN!

SARAH sprints out of the house. LYNN stares straight ahead, knowing about ARDEN's experiment, but in disbelief that he actually got it to work.

ARDEN

(whispers) No.

ARDEN makes a run to head downstairs toward the basement, but JOHN puts his body weight in front of him and stops him. The cops arrive, and see JOHN holding ARDEN down.

POLICE OFFICER #1

(placing handcuffs on ARDEN) Arden Sanchez, you are under arrest for the kidnapping of Jule Birling. You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say can and will be used against you in a court of law. You have the right to an attorney..

ARDEN remains quiet, knowing his story wouldn't do him any good.

As ARDEN is getting arrested, everyone but LYNN, JOHN, and ERIC leave the house. ERIC is passed out on the floor near the living room fireplace. JOHN stands with LYNN, holding her arm, watching the scene play out. LYNN stares at her brother getting arrested, tears falling from her eyes.