

ALL AT ONCE!

Scene-by-Scene Overview

ACT I — THE PATH OF LEAST RESISTANCE

The world keeps showing her how much easier it would be to disappear slowly.

Scene 1

Classroom. Jules fails another chemistry test despite understanding the material. Mr. Hendricks gives her a card for a support group. Derek invites her for coffee. She catalogs every sound in the room without meaning to.

Song: “Seventeen Directions” (Jules) — Chaos as identity, not dysfunction.

Scene 2

Coffee shop. Jules meets Sam (Derek’s brother, a guidance counselor), Maya (a graphic designer with ADHD), and Emma (Maya’s eight-year-old daughter who describes her brain as a kaleidoscope). Marcus sits across the room looking organized. Jules doesn’t yet know what it cost him.

Song: “The Learning Curve” (Sam, Maya, Jules) — Three people who stopped trying to fix themselves.

Scene 3

Support group. Jules joins the circle. The group confronts the core question: what if there’s nothing wrong with them? Sam announces the district board vote on student accommodation policy. Jules admits her parents don’t know she’s here.

Songs: “What If There’s Nothing Wrong With Me?” (Jules, Marcus, Maya, Derek) | “Not Alone Anymore” (Full Group)

Scene 4

Classroom / Home / Walking home. Jules earns a B-plus by holding herself smaller for one week. Her parents exhale. Derek says she seems lighter. She files all of this away. Walking home, she starts a thought she can’t finish.

Song: “Almost Works” (Jules) — The seduction of compliance. Must sound like relief, not warning.

Scene 5

Coffee shop. Derek tells Jules she seems lighter this week — more present, easier to be around. He admits he gets scared when she’s in seventeen places and he only exists in one of them. Neither of them knows what to do with this.

Scene 6

College library. Jules finds Marcus alone. He reveals he can’t remember the last time he felt like himself. He’s succeeding at everything the system asked for and feels absent from his own life. He doesn’t miss the noise anymore. That’s the part that scares him.

Scene 7

The Chen kitchen. Jules’s parents confront her grades. She’s been accepted for a prestigious art scholarship interview. Her mother breaks: seventeen years of missing it. Her father: what if we still are? Jules: “Parents who are failing me now by making this about your guilt instead of my future.”

Scene 8

A week in fragments. Jules complies fully — notes in rows, dinner in sentences, easy evenings with Derek. Her parents sleep without anxiety. She holds the relief everyone feels. Something should feel like relief. She waits for it.

Scene 9 — Act I Finale

Jules’s bedroom / A dinner table, forty years from now. Older Jules sits at a candlelit dinner — composed, successful, admired. When a guest asks if she still paints, she says warmly: “Oh — I haven’t had time for that in years.” Nobody thinks this is sad. Her eyes drift slightly. Young Jules watches. The two melodies collide. Young Jules, barely a sound:

“When did I stop being in the room?”

Song: “Not Yet / Too Late” (Young Jules / Older Jules) — Two timelines that cannot hear each other.

END OF ACT I

ACT II — THE COST OF CHOOSING YOURSELF

She chooses the harder path. Now she has to survive it.

Scene 10

Dawn. Jules's room. She draws an atomic structure — the elaborate, branching, beautiful kind. She made her choice quietly, in the middle of the night, alone.

Song: “Now There’s No Going Back” (Jules) — Resolute, not triumphant. The choice has already been made.

Scene 11

The price. Grades slip. Parents panic. Derek grows distant. Three voices build in overlapping canon: Mr. Hendricks, Linda, Derek — each asking a version of “what happened?” in their own melodic fragment. The voices peak and cut. Jules types a message to Derek offering to go back. She deletes it. Phone face-down on the bed.

Song: “The Cost” — 60–90-second underscored pressure canon. Not a standalone number.

Scene 12

Sam's apartment. Jules arrives — not fleeing a fight. She is choosing. She tells Sam she had a good week and knew she couldn't keep going that direction. Sam: “Does choosing yourself feel like the right thing?” Jules: “Yes. And it's terrible.” Sam: “That's how you know it's real.”

Song: “Chosen Family” (Jules, Sam) — Recontextualized. She is choosing, not fleeing.

Scene 13

Guidance office. A school administrator advises Sam to back down before the board vote. Sam picks up the phone: “I'm not backing down.”

Scene 14

Support group room, before the meeting. Marcus alone. He picks up his pen, sets it down, picks it up again. He is trying to remember what it felt like to just start something without the system. He cannot.

Song: “Somewhere Along the Way” (Marcus) — The interior cost of compliance. The signal he learned not to hear.

Scene 15

Support group room, after the meeting. Marcus tells Jules about a graduate school interview for exactly the work he said he wanted. His girlfriend asked him when he's going to stop performing and just be a person. He knows exactly what she meant. He goes to the center of the empty circle of chairs and sings to every version of himself that learned to be fine.

Song: “I Did Everything Right” (Marcus) — Never loud. The restraint is the devastation. Ends: “So why am I not / Here.”

Scene 16

A park bench. Derek tells Jules he doesn't always know how to love her when she's all of herself. He runs out of words mid-sentence and stands up — not leaving. He sings instead.

Song: “All of You” (Derek) — Not a love song. A song about discovering what love actually requires.

Scene 17

Art studio. Scholarship interview. Jules walks in as herself — the same person outside the room as inside it. The interviewers are skeptical. She doesn't try to read them. She simply creates. The work is extraordinary. She walks out not knowing if she got it.

Song: “Hyperfocus Magic” (Jules) — She is not performing. She is simply in it.

Scene 18

District School Board hearing. Emma speaks first — her brain is a kaleidoscope. Parents rise in organized opposition. Board Member Torres announces eleven minutes until the vote. Jules is cut off mid-speech, loses the room, waits in silence, and reclaims it without raising her voice. She sings mid-fight — the vote is still happening. The pilot program passes 4-3.

Songs: “Fair Isn't Equal” (Board/Opposition) | “All at Once!” (Jules / Full Company)

Scene 19

Hallway, outside the boardroom. Jules asks Marcus what if she was wrong. He asks if it felt like her. She says yes. He says: “Then you weren't wrong.”

Scene 20

The boardroom / Derek arrives. Sam announces the pilot program launches in three weeks. Derek appears with an envelope — a full art scholarship. The room goes quiet without being asked. Everyone receives the news in their own way. Marcus smiles in a way Jules hasn't seen before. Derek takes her hand. They don't resolve. They continue.

Scene 21

Later. Linda and David Chen. They were at the back. They heard everything. Linda: “You were completely in that room. I don’t think I’ve ever seen you so completely in a room before.” Not a resolution. A beginning.

Scene 22 — Finale

The full company. Marcus stands slightly apart — at the edge of the circle, not yet inside it. Her parents slightly behind — also beginning. Derek’s hand in hers, still learning. Underneath the final image: the “Almost Works” melody transformed, resolved, then gone.

Song: “Where The Noise Becomes Music” (Full Company) — Earned exhale, not triumph.

“I’m still in the room.”

Final blackout.