

Title Page

Once Upon a Bully

by

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characters

Tony Avati	<u>Carlo Scarito</u>	<u>Budding young artist and footballer</u>
Julie Sommers	<u>Luisa Puzella</u>	<u>Promising young singer songwriter with great potential. As a result of being bullied in the past she has become a champion for children being pushed about. She has already written several songs about the subject.</u>
Jessica Scriven	<u>Alexandra Fraser</u>	<u>Natural born leader, manages to exert a strong influence on girls and boy alike. She is feared by many and yet she does this with an amazing calmness, never loses her cool.</u>
Ella Wyndham	<u>Fabia Colorusso</u>	<u>Victim of Bullying, passionate about singing.</u>
Victoria Pascall	<u>Angelica Scrocca</u>	<u>Ellas friend who helps her out with the singing</u>
Louise Sylver	<u>Giorgina Polcino</u>	<u>Jessica's best friend, and talented singer</u>
Rocco Finucci	<u>Antonio La Gioia</u>	<u>Toughest kid self proclaimed in Jessica's gang</u>
Davina O'farrel	<u>Sabrina Scrocca</u>	<u>Very mysterious character who was a friend of and big admirer of Julie. She has made it her job to carry on the work of Julie, though she doesn't share Julie's writing ability she is a great singer and interpreter of Julie's songs and has become a reluctant vigilante.</u>
Gino Avati	<u>Anglelo Trofa</u>	<u>Tonys brother and writer and producer of a new musical. He is looking for performance talent.</u>
Julia Avati	<u>Alessia Clores</u>	<u>Tonys sister, drives her brothers crazy</u>
Analise Smith	<u>Katherine Armstead</u>	<u>Piano Player/songwriter</u>
Giuseppe Avati	<u>TBC</u>	<u>The Father. Very Old fashioned</u>
Sharon Coser	<u>Lucia Serpini</u>	<u>Working together with Gino in producing the Musical</u>
Pietro Serconi	<u>Leonardo</u>	<u>Working together with Gino in producing the Musical</u>

Scene 1. Julie Sommers Live Performance

Graphic appears on screen saying '5th July 2007'

The scene starts at a concert featuring young musicians.

ANNOUNCER

Before we move on to the next performance I have been asked to give a special birthday mention tonight to a little girl in the audience called Jessica. She has turned 8 today and is here because she's a huge fan of our next performer. Can we have a big round of applause for Jessica.

Crowd applaud.

ANNOUNCER

Ladies and Gentlemen, we now come to our final performance from a very talented young Lady who's songs, I'm sure, will one day be listened to around the world. Amazingly, at the tender age of just 14 she already has 56 songs to her name.

JULIE

One more.

ANNOUNCER

Sorry.

JULIE

One more. I wrote one earlier especially for birthday girl, she says she's my number one fan.

ANNOUNCER

And what's the new one called?

JULIE

Once Upon a Life.

ANNOUNCER

Sounds deep and meaningful?

So here she is performing her latest, sorry, her penultimate song, composition number 56 'Your Love' please give a big round of applause to Julie Sommers.

The audience applaud loudly. Julie performs 'Your Love' whilst playing a grand piano. As the song finishes the audience give her a standing ovation, camera scans the audience. A young Jessica brings out a bouquet of flowers which Julie accepts with gratitude and bows to the audience.

Scene 2. Julie's Murder

The screen is plunged into darkness and we hear the following voices and dialogue in echo form as Julie is attacked.

BULLY 1

You think you're something really special.
Just who do you think you are?

BULLY 2

If you're so special let's see how you deal

with this?

Physical attack, you hear Julie scream.

BULLY 1

Bitch? It's about time someone taught you a lesson.

Laughter in deep echo to fade.

Scene 3. Meeting in the cafe 30 years later

We start with a graphic that states 30 years later

A meeting takes place in a cafe between TONY Avati and Jessica who he hasn't seen for over 20 years. TONY is sitting there enjoying a coffee looking through a manuscript when Jessica arrives.

TONY

Hi Jessica. I'm really glad you could make it?

JESSICA

Any later and I wouldn't have been able to at all, I leave the UK for good tomorrow.

TONY

Oh yeah? Where are you going?

JESSICA

Australia to start a new life. I've become very disillusioned over here, I'm hoping that my luck will change over there.

TONY

Well I wish you all the best and hope you find what you're looking for. I'm glad I caught you before you left as I think your input is going to be of enormous benefit to the project.

JESSICA

Could you explain what the project is? a film or something.

TONY

Well you never know, a film would be nice but for the moment I'm working on a stage play based on that memorable summer when I was 12.

JESSICA

So what makes you think that I can help?

TONY

So far I've written it from my point of view, but it occurred to me last week that it was probably too one sided, and would benefit from hearing your side of things.

JESSICA

You mean from the point of view of your former enemy? Actually I thought it was pretty ironic that you tracked me down through friends re-united.

You know, whatever happened that year, I've tried to blank out of my mind, so I'm going to be pretty useless at telling you my side of things.

TONY

I can understand that, well how about I read through what I have so far then you can give me your verdict at the end.

JESSICA

I suppose there's no harm in that. Fire away

TONY

OK. The story starts on, what was for me, a very memorable day when everything seemed to be going wrong.

Scene 4. wrong side of the bed scene

Tony wakes up one morning, gets out of the wrong side of the bed and put's his foot straight onto his sisters roller-skate that she has left in his bedroom. Gets up and bangs his head on the furniture and curses his sister.

TONY

Julia's roller-skate. (out loud) Julia, I'm going to kill ya!

Tony walks out to go to the bathroom but as he does, he spots his brother Gino leaving his room for the bathroom at the same time. They look at each other and for a moment they have a Clint Eastwood Spaghetti Western style moment when they look at each other and are thinking exactly the same thing. The stare seems to last an eternity but suddenly they lunge forward in a race to get to the bathroom first. (We will see this on screen in slow motion) As they run they are playing unfair with flying elbow's etc. as if their life depends on reaching the bathroom on time. As they get close, their sister Julia, seemingly out of nowhere appears and reaches the bathroom before either of them with a big evil smirk on her face.

Scene 5. Breakfast scene

We witness breakfast at the Avati household. About 6 months earlier the kids lost their mum to illness so Giuseppe Avati has had a very tough time bringing up his 4 children. The family are gathering around the table. Giuseppe is making breakfast and trying to feed the youngster.

JULIA

Post! Hey, Tony, it looks like you've got another one of those soppy love letters again.

TONY

Shut up and give it here? (Snatches it off her)

GINO

This girl's must be mad about you. Have you sussed out who's sending them yet?

TONY

I've got no idea!

JULIA

Easy. Just look for the girl with really thick glasses who's always walking into walls.

TONY

Your jokes are getting more unbearable?

JULIA

Who said I was joking?

GIUSEPPE

That's enough you 2. Haven't I got enough on my hands that I have to listen you you guys squabbling? Can't you talk about something constructive?

GINO

I know let's talk about the musical that I'm working on. I might need help with the auditions this week cause we're expecting quite a few people to audition.

GIUSEPPE

What are you wasting time on that project for. When I was your age I was already earning good money in my first Job.

GINO

But dad that was in a factory

GIUSEPPE

and what's wrong with working in a factory?

GINO

Nothing. But I want to follow my passion and get involved in theatre

GIUSEPPE

Listen son. I know it's good to have a hobby but get real, to make it in the theatre you've got to know the right people, go off to one of those expensive colleges. And even if you get a foot in the door you will probably spend most of the time waiting for the phone to ring, get depressed and end up penniless. Focus on the contacts we do have and what we know. I can ask Zio Giovanna to take you on in his barber shop or Compari Luigi said he would take you on as a plasterers assistant. Now there's a lot of money in that!

At that moment Tony open up the letter and lots of confetti type paper falls all over his breakfast cereal.

TONY

Oh no. My breakfast is ruined.

GIUSEPPE

Well what you go and open it now for, couldn't you wait until after breakfast.

Gino snatches the letter off Tony and Julia runs round to have a look. Gino reads it out loud. Julia is pulling funny mocking expressions as the letter is read.

GINO

'To Tony, I saw you again yesterday and I can't stop thinking about you.'

Signed, 57

Camera zooms in and shows the letter close up.

JULIA

What a weird symbol. This is intriguing. She's probably a nut-case, one of those

stalkers, as well as being short-sighted.

We zoom in to the toaster just as the toast pops up. End of scene

Scene 6. TONY Comes across Julie

TONY is walking along a path returning from a private drawing lesson when he walks past a girl who is just sitting there.

JULIE

I wouldn't go that way if I were you?

TONY

Why not.

JULIE

I just came from there and there's a gang hanging around. They look like they ready to pounce on some unsuspecting victim?

TONY

So why didn't they pick on you then?

JULIE

They didn't see me.

TONY

What a whole gang and they didn't notice you. This is all a bit weird. I walk through here all the time and I've never had a problem.

JULIE

Suit yourself then .

Scene 7. Gang scene

TONY turns the corner and suddenly wishes he'd taken the girls advice.

ROCCO

What you staring at?

TONY

What are you doing to that girl.

ROCCO

What's it to you?

TONY

I think you should let her get on with her business

ROCCO turns to the rest of the gang laughing.

ROCCO

I think we've got ourselves a hard nut here.

The gang surround TONY. ROCCO grabs TONY by the collar.

ROCCO

So what ya gonna do about it.

Jessica walks over right near them.

JESSICA

Leave this one to me ROCCO.

ROCCO

I'm just gonna teach him a lesson.

Jessica calmly but firmly grabs ROCCO's arm and pulls him off.

JESSICA

I know this one from school, leave him to me.

Jessica grabs TONY's case.

JESSICA

What have we here then.

Jessica pulls out a portfolio of TONY's drawings and a pen drops to the floor.

TONY

Give it back.

JESSICA

Why, its only a stupid pen?

Jessica see's he's very upset.

JESSICA

I can see this means a lot to you?

I love things that have a lot of value. These drawing are really really good. Did you do them yourself?

TONY

Yeah I'm mad about drawing. In fact I've just got back from a drawing...

Jessica starts to tear up a drawing.

JESSICA

Oops clumsy me. I seem to have accidentally torn your drawing.

The rest of the gang are laughing in their admiration of Jessica who has the cool ability of drawing her victims in before tormenting them. Jessica starts tearing a second one.

JESSICA

Do you know what? this is fun. I'm really being quite artistic myself don't you think.

Suddenly Louise arrives all excited, which momentarily distracts Jessica.

LOUISE

Hey guys, you'll never guess what, I've got a place in that audition for the new show. They say that from my track record I've got a very good chance of getting it..

While the gang are distracted, TONY motions to Ella to make a run for it, he picks up his portfolio and they run before the gang have a chance to realise. Then the chase is on as they run through some windy pathways, this will be to the background of fast paced music probably 'i bully you'. As they run, Ella falls over, TONY carries on running for a bit before realising. He is faced with the dilemma, does he go back and help her, or does he save himself?

He chooses to go back. As he does so the gang headed by ROCCO surround them. ROCCO grabs him by the collar again and this time he's even angrier.

ROCCO

What are you gonna do now tough guy? Are you gonna draw yourself out of trouble.

Rest of the gang start to laugh, until they suddenly hear an unfamiliar voice.

DAVINA

Leave them kids alone.

ROCCO

Who the heck.

They turn to see Jessica with her hand held behind her back in a lock.

JESSICA

Guys this is hurting. Let them go.

DAVINA

And get out of here. I won't let her go until you're all out of my site.

The gang reluctantly disperse and Davina finally lets Jessica go.

JESSICA

You will pay for this, you do realise?.

Jessica walks away. TONY bends down to pick up his portfolio but before him and Ella have a chance to thank Davina she disappears

TONY

Thanks for that. Where's she gone?.

Ella

Sorry about your drawings, they were really good

TONY

I'm mad about drawing.

Ella

It's like me, I'm mad about singing

TONY

Oh yeah? Are you gonna audition for a part in the show.

Ella

I'd absolutely love to, but I'm too scared, and anyway it's probably too late now.

TONY

No it's not. My brothers organising it I'll get you an audition.

Scene 8. Football Match

This scene will involve initially letting the camera roll at an actual match capturing as many interesting scenes as possible. We would like to capture at least a goal on each side. We could make some use of slow motion throughout.

Tony is playing up front in one team and Rocco could potentially be the goalkeeper of the other team. Rather than have dialogue we would have music playing all the way through the match. During the first half, Tony's team win a penalty but Tony misses the goal completely and is mocked by Rocco. At the end Carlo wins a penalty when he is brought down by Rocco in the last minute, a team mate steps up to take the penalty but Tony assures him that he's confident enough to take this second one. The 2 then face each other in the penalty, camera will focus in on their eyes, again with music in the background rather than actual dialogue. This time Tony makes no mistake and manages to score leaving Rocco with hurt pride diving in the wrong direction. We see Tony teams celebrations, as they go ecstatic at having won the game at such a late stage.

Scene 9. A) Auditions

The auditions are underway, the contestants are waiting in the waiting room and they are called in act by act for presenting their abilities. Analise is at the keyboard. The performances vary from very good to positively awful. There is a big rivalry between Ella Wyndham, who has been persuaded to take part by Tony, and Louise who is Jessica's friend and is confident that she is the best one.

SHARON

Next?

In walk in 2 small boys, one with a guitar and one ready to sing, they walk up to the spot and start to sing. The camera visibly has to zoom in and dip to take in these 2 small boys.

GINO

Hold on. Hold on. do you know that you have to be at least 10 years old to take part in this audition? How old are you?

ROBERTO & FABBIO

Erm. I just turned 10 yesterday.

FABBIO

And I did the day before?

PIETRO

Sorry chaps, I think you'll have to come back with a birth certificate?

The camera has zoomed right in on Roberto so when him and Fabbio walkout and the judges call 'next' the camera position doesn't change, and in walks the next contestant who happens to be the 6 foot 7 inch Warby. The unmoved camera manages to capture his kneecaps and proceeds to slowly zoom up till they get to his face. Camera then films all 3 judges looking up very high.

SHARON

Right, what are you going to sing for us?

WARBY

You raise me up!

Scene 9. B) Auditions: Waiting room

In the waiting room we zoom in on Tony as he rips open an envelope, he takes a look. As he's looking we see Louise come up together with a couple of friends and snatches the letter off of him.

LOUISE

What's this then? Oh it's a love letter! Did you write it to yourself?

Louise's friends laugh.

LOUISE

No, actually I think I know exactly who sent

you this.

Just then Ella and Victoria walk in the room.

LOUISE

Talk of the devil, your ears must have been burning. So what are you doing here? Are you here to audition for the clown part?

More laughs from her friends.

ELLA

No, I wouldn't stand a chance against you in that role.

Louise moves right up to Ella.

VICTORIA

Leave her alone.

LOUISE

Don't push your luck with me. I'll wipe the floor with you.

Louise is called at that moment by the presenter.

PRESENTER

Louise Sylver. Your next.

Louise whacks into Ella and Victoria knocking onto the floor the music sheets that Ella's carrying. Tony quickly runs over to help her pick these up. He picks up a music sheet that has a photo of a familiar face.

TONY

Who's this?

ELLA

That's Julie Sommers, she wrote the song that I'm going to sing for the auditions

TONY

I saw her the other day just before we had our encounter with Jessica's gang?

ELLA

Not likely

TONY

What do you mean.

ELLA

She was killed a few years ago by a gang. They beat her up and pushed her into the canal.

TONY

You're kidding.

ELLA

No. It was such a shame cause she had so much going for her. She wrote so many songs. But she was going through a lot of bullying which is the subjective of her song that I'm going to sing.

TONY

I'm telling you though, she's the one I saw
unless she has got someone exactly like her.
She even warned me about the trouble ahead
and I ignored her. It's a bit spooky.

At this point we move back into the auditions room where we watch
Louise take the stage and start singing.

Scene 9. C) Auditions-Battle of the girls

Louise walks in and stands on the stage.

SHARON

Hi Louise. What are you going to perform.

LOUISE

I'm going to sing a song that was written
especially for my best friend by Julie
Sommers.

SHARON

That's a privilege indeed.

PIETRO

What's it called?

LOUISE

Once upon a life.

GINO

Great let's hear it then?

We watch as Louise performs the song and the judges, one by one, give
very favourable verdicts, they then call for Ella. Ella walks to the
centre of the stage.

SHARON

Hi Ella. What are you going to perform for
us?

ELLA

A Julie Sommers song called 'You're not
alone'.

PIETRO

Another Julie Sommer song?

GINO

Go right ahead Ella?

Ella performs the song and also gets very favourable verdicts from the
judges. The auditions are now over, the judges call in the people that
have auditioned to explain that they will go through their notes and
get back to them. Suddenly the door swings open and in walks Davina.

DAVINA

Sorry I'm late but my dad's car broke down?

SHARON

I'm afraid the auditions are over?

DAVINA

But I've been preparing this for weeks

GINO

Listen it wouldn't be fair on the others now
we have already wrapped things up?

PIETRO

give her a chance guys. Analise are you
alright to play one more.

ANALISE

yeah. no probs.

LOUISE

But that's not fair. If she can't get here on
time that's her problem.

SHARON

Sorry Louise could you be quite we need to
here the song.

Davina performs fighting for my life to the close of the scene

Scene 10. Runaway

Victoria is sitting down working on homework when the door opens and
her Mum walks in.

VICTORIA'S MUM

Victoria there someone hear to see you.

ANALISE

Hi Victoria. I've just been round Ella's
house to give her the good news that she got
the role for the musical. Unfortunately her
parents gave me the bad new that she's
runaway. She hasn't been seen for 2 days.
Her parents gave me this letter that Ella
left for you, it's open because they were
looking for clues but it's yours now.

Victoria takes the letter and begins to read it in her head (the
audience hear her voice with echo). We merge the image of Victoria
reading the letter, Analise performing Runaway at the Piano and Ella
in the back of a taxi making her escape with a sad tearful look.

Scene 11. Rehearsals

Gino and his team are conducting rehearsals for the musical, he is
sitting there together with Sharon and Pietro watching the dancers
perform to the songs 'Illusion'. Towards the end of the performance
Tony Comes rushing in to whisper in his ear, Gino motions to his
colleagues that he will be back shortly, clearly something important
has come up. (no dialogue is required here, it is enough to show that
they are talking and we can't hear because of the loud music)

Scene 12. Julie's warning

TONY

I know this sounds crazy again, but I just
saw her again?

GINO

Who?

TONY

The ghost of the barefoot singer.

GINO

You mean your imagining things again.

TONY

Trust me on this one. She says that we need
to get down to the canal fast so that
history doesn't repeat itself.

GINO

What does she mean about that.

TONY

She was found dead in the canal.

GINO

Come to think of it, Davina didn't turn up for rehearsals tonight and that isn't like her at all.

TONY

Then we better go quick.

GINO

Let me just make one call and I'll catch up with you.

Scene 13. Bully Confrontation

Tony & Gino run to the canal where they find that Davina is being pushed around. They approach the group. They throw Davina to the floor. She is too physically hurt by this time to be able to get up.

GINO

I think you better stop what you're doing right now?

Rocco

Let me sort'em out, Jess?

JESSICA

No, leave'em to me Rocco. Just make sure the good Samaritan doesn't get away.

Well look who it is, Batman and Robin.

GINO

You think you're so smart.

JESSICA

Certainly smarter than your friend over there. She thought she was coming to the rescue of someone being bullied and pulled her 'leave the kids alone' rubbish again. She weren't clever enough to realise she'd been set up and that the victim was one of us ready to pounce as soon as her back was turned.

TONY

So why her. She doesn't hurt anyone

JESSICA

She had it coming ever since she stuck her nose where it didn't belong. You saw what she did, she's not gonna get away with that with me.

TONY

So what makes you think you're so special?.

JESSICA

She should have known better. Everyone round here knows that you don't mess with me.

GINO

The only thing that you've got is that people are scared of you. Without that you're nothing. Think about it. Where would you be if suddenly everyone lost their fear of you?

Jessica starts laughing.

JESSICA

Get real. It's not going to happen.

At this point a large group of people walk from behind the wall. On seeing all these people, Jessicas gang begin, one by one to run, Rocco is the last one to go.

ROCCO

Jess, I think we better get out of here.

JESSICA

I'm not going anywhere. They don't scare me.

ROCCO

Sorry Jess, I'm out of here.

A few people help Davina up. The crowd begin to disperse. Tony approaches Jessica.

TONY

I think we've done you a favour today, Go home, take a long look in the mirror and see yourself for what you really are.

Tony turns and walks away. Jessica gets something out of her bag, for the first time, she loses her cool and lunges at him with a pair of scissors. Before she can get to him, Ella runs in to stop her and gets in between Tony and Jessica. We freeze frame here before moving to the final scene.

Scene 14. Cafe part 2

Jessica just stares at Tony for a while, while tears stream down her face.

TONY

Sorry Jessica. It wasn't my intention to get you upset over the story.

JESSICA

Like I said, I tried to blank those days out of my mind. Hearing you tell the story has made me relive those days.

TONY

Why are you blanking them out of your mind?

Jessica shakes her head like she's indicating that it's too upsetting.

JESSICA

Tell me. Did you really see Julie Sommers?

TONY

Well either her or someone who looked very much like her?

JESSICA

I don't think it's a coincidence, I've had a few incidents over the years where people have seen a young barefoot girl and in each case it seems that she is trying to protect

me.

TONY

Protect you from what?

JESSICA

From myself.

TONY

What I don't understand is that you were a huge fan of Julie's and yet you were in serious danger of becoming every bit as bad as her killers.

JESSICA

I know, and I think that's what she succeeded in stopping. You see, when she was killed I promised myself that that would never happen to me. Nobody was going to victimise me.

TONY

Yet you took it too far.

JESSICA

Yes, and Julie has been there to stop me taking it over the edge. Me, her number one fan.

What really hit home in your story was when Louise sung 'once upon a life'. That was the song that Julie wrote especially for me, it was her last song. I thought I understood it at the time, but running those words through in my mind, only now do I fully understand them. It's the story of my life.

TONY

So have you got big regrets.

JESSICA

At the time I thought that I'd avoid being a victim by having others be scared of me. I realise now that I became a big victim of my own actions.

TONY

In what way?

JESSICA

When you become the tough leader, you would think that you have freedom. You set the standards. In truth, you can't be seen to show the real you. If you're scared, you can't show it. If you like a certain kind of music, and it doesn't fit, you've got to make out you hate it, and you can only be seen with the right people even if you really like someone, you've got to show the opposite of what you're feeling. That's not freedom, you're in your own prison.

TONY

This is really interesting. I knew your input would be worthwhile. You'll have to excuse me, I just need to pop to the bathroom, I'll be right back.

While Tony's in the bathroom, Jessica opens up her bag and pulls out a gift and a sheet of paper, she wipes some tears, and begins to write on the paper. She leaves the gift and the note on Tony's side of the table and then gets up and walks out.

Tony walks back in, see's that Jessica is gone, quickly walks to the door to see if he can catch her but he's clearly too late. He sits back at the table, notices the gift and the envelope. He opens up the gift and finds the pen that Jessica took from him all those age years ago.

He opens the letter (camera zooms in) and begins to read in his head (the audience hear his voice)

Dear Tony

I'm sorry. This isn't a gift, I'm just returning what was rightfully yours. I took it from you then because it was precious to you and in turn it became precious to me which is why I have looked after it all these years. I'm sorry about about the incidents all those years ago but I hope your project about it goes on to be a big success.

By the way, you never did workout who sent the letters did you?

Signed

57 (wrapped in a heart)