

**Free For All**

written by

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For Jackie Noonan  
who loves the library more than anyone

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The screen is black.

"A library outranks any other one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never failing spring in the desert." - Andrew Carnegie

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Engraved stone phrase above the front doors of an old suburban library:

"Free For All"

Summertime sunrise: shaggy dewy grass, squirrels play, birds chirp amid American oak, elm, and sycamore trees. Front lawn, main library sign:

"Bay Village Library"  
"a branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library"

An empty parking lot with faded white lines. A metal book return box with slot. A Senior Citizen Man carries an armload of books and walks his dog. He pushes a book in but the box is full. At the front doors he pulls on the building's original book return: locked or jammed. The Man is fed up. He looks around. Looks to his dog. Makes a decision.

Senior Citizen Man walks away. His books left behind on the concrete.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

A sign in front of the building reads:

"Westlake Public Library"  
"a branch of Cuyahoga County Public Library"

A more modern structure. Grass cut in straight manicured rows. Parking spot lines painted bright white.

"Friday, June 20"  
"7:02 AM"

A brand new Mini Cooper Electric parks. A petite female form pulls a keycard from her purse, unlocks a side door, and walks inside the library.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY. MONTAGE.

She makes the rounds and performs her morning tasks:

Brews a gravity pot of coffee.  
 Flicks on lights, pushes in chairs.  
 Answers emails at her desk.  
 Preps her whiteboard for the daily All Hands meeting.  
 Checks the programming planned events for the day.  
 Sees a Noon Branch Managers meeting in her calendar.  
 She checks her Apple Watch: 8:28 am.  
 She grabs her iPad and wheels the whiteboard out to an open area.

We see her fully from the front for the first time: Dorothy (Dot) Geiger (37) tiny, perfectly put together, she is the youngest branch manager in city history. Her thirty member Team assembles: some librarians sit, some staff stand, others lean against book stacks drinking coffee.

DOT

Good morning. Just a few items.  
 Paul, any pornography filter update?

Paul Gordon, Systems Administrator (62) sits at his desk eight hours a day, not up-to-date on current technology but an expert at library legacy IT systems, waiting to retire.

PAUL

No.

DOT

If you could prioritize that I know we'd all appreciate it. Especially for Mister Flemington. Taylor, Fourth of July status.

Taylor Savage, Programming Director (44) gay man, always juggling a million events but very good at it, former boy band member.

TAYLOR

On schedule, test run next week.

DOT

Publicity, Camila.

Camila Jovel, Public Relations/Marketing Manager (38) Hispanic, wears pants suits and belongs at a tech startup.

CAMILA

On it. Email blast today. Fliers.  
 Posters. Bookmarks.

David Gallagher enters. The oldest and longest employee, Children's Librarian (74) consistently sweet to the point of unbearable.

DAVID  
(cheerful)  
Sorry I'm late. Forgot to set my  
alarm.

DOT  
(over it but used to it)  
It's fine. Last thing: Kevin.

Dot looks to her second in command, Kevin Lee, Assistant Branch Manager (39) Asian, a family man obsessed with golf, Dot has trained him well to run the library, if she ever lets him.

KEVIN  
It is my pleasure to introduce Trey  
Sanderson, our new Page.

Applause from the team for: Trey Sanderson (22) fresh out of college, always looks like he's about to go surfing.

TREY  
What's up?

DOT  
The Sandersons are a Gold  
Benefactor family so I know you'll  
welcome Trey to the team. Have a  
great first day of summer! Let's  
Read! Learn! And...

EVERYONE  
Inspire.

Everyone claps as they disperse. Above Dot, written in huge letters across a wall: "Read! Learn! Inspire!"

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY. MONTAGE.

The front doors slide open as Patrons enter. Information desk hums with activity: questions abound.

LADY WITH PURPLE HAIR  
Love In The Time Of Chocolate?

OLD MAN  
Where's the bathroom?

SHY SPINSTER  
Fifty Shades of Grey?

TEEN KID  
Fiction is true or false?

DOT  
I think you mean Love In The Time  
Of Cholera.

LADY WITH PURPLE HAIR  
Is that like chocolate?

END MONTAGE

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Dot walks with Trey beside her. Kevin trails. They pass the  
Gift Shop ("Treasures").

DOT  
We've been open two thousand eight  
hundred ninety-four consecutive  
days.

TREY  
Wow.

They pass the coffeeshop ("Jack's Beans"). A hurried,  
haphazardly dressed Woman approaches Dot.

JOAN  
Oh, Dot.

DOT  
(used to her)  
Hi, Joan.

JOAN  
I really enjoyed The Guest List.  
What else do you recommend?

DOT  
Try The Silent Patient or The  
Couple Next Door.

Joan rushes off to find those books. Dot continues the tour:  
they pass Bookworms, the children's area. A Storytime in full  
swing: David reads aloud from "Where The Wild Things Are" by  
Maurice Sendak.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Who first had the idea for a public  
library funded by the state?

A calm but wild-eyed Woman holds up a red onion in Dot's  
face.

WILD-EYED WOMAN

Do you have a knife to cut this?

DOT

No food allowed. And no weapons.

TREY

Thomas Jefferson?

DOT

Close. Petrarch. Fourteenth century. Italy.

A Teen Girl talks on her iPhone.

DOT (CONT'D)

Take it outside.

Teen Girl hangs up and exits in a huff.

Dot walks through History, Mystery, Romance...

DOT (CONT'D)

"The best reading for the greatest number at the least cost." Who said that?

TREY

Abraham Lincoln?

DOT

You really like presidents. Melvil Dewey. He gave us the Library Bureau, Library School--of which seventeen of the first twenty students were women, thank you very much.

TREY

You're welcome.

DOT

The ALA, and...

Dot stops in front of an ancient card catalog cabinet. She pulls open a drawer.

DOT (CONT'D)

Go on.

Trey pulls out a card. He's unsure what to do with it.

DOT (CONT'D)

Smell.

Trey sniffs the card. Dot points.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Shelfmark number.

TREY  
940.18 RUN.

Dot points to 940.

DOT  
Subject. 900 is History.

Dot points to 18.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Sub-section.

Dot points to RUN.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Author or editor.

TREY  
A History of the Crusades by Steven  
Runciman.

DOT  
Pretty cool, right? It's all  
computers now. We don't use the  
cards anymore.

TREY  
Why'd you become a librarian?

Dot thinks.

FLASHBACK

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. 29 YEARS EARLIER. DUSK.  
CHRISTMASTIME. FRONT ENTRANCE.

8 year old Dot pelted by a flurry of snowballs.

DOT  
I'll kill all you bitches!

A Man in a Santa Claus suit appears.

SANTA  
(angry)  
Enough!

A gaggle of Girls stand stunned.

SANTA (CONT'D)  
Go home, girls. Now!

The Girls run away.

SANTA (CONT'D)  
You all right?

DOT  
What's it to you, fat man?

SANTA  
(laughs)  
Come inside. Get a book and some  
hot cocoa.

DOT  
Books are for bitches.

SANTA  
Did you just call Santa a bitch?

DOT  
Sorry.

SANTA  
I'm thinking Ramona Quimby to  
start...

Santa ushers Young Dot inside.

END FLASHBACK

DOT  
(snaps out of it)  
I love to read.

Dot sees a Teen Boy sleeping, baseball cap over his eyes,  
open book across his chest.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Hey! Sleeping beauty, wake up.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Small AARP Crowd of Regulars mills about in front. A  
persistent 12 Year Old Girl stands out among them. An Old  
Man, Norm, checks his watch. The book pile has grown larger.  
Two more books dropped atop. An old beat up Jeep Grand  
Cherokee flies into the lot and parks in a reserved space.



Out falls Will Watterson (39) large, beer lover, couldn't do a pushup if he tried, thrown on clothes. Branch Manager Will holds a giant set of jangling keys as he passes the crew.

WILL  
Good morning. Hello, Misses  
McCluskey. Hey, Norm.

The patrons respond with smiles: "Hi, Will" "Good morning, Will" A fast hug with one of the women. Celia, the 12 Year Old Girl, immediately peppers him with thoughts.

CELIA  
Mister Watterson, I know it's  
sixteen, but I have a petition here  
for an exception, everybody's  
signed it--

WILL  
Good morning, Celia.

Will sees the book pile and winces.

CELIA  
Good morning, Mister--

WILL  
Will.

Will pulls the door: locked.

CELIA  
Mister Watterson--

Will unlocks the front door and holds it open.

WILL  
Come on in.

Regulars enter. Norm pops open a Dunkin' box.

NORM  
Donut?

WILL  
You're not supposed to--

NORM  
Great for hangovers.

WILL  
Thank you.

Will snags a Boston cream donut.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Will downs the donut as he enters the library. Lights are on, the daily bulletin board still reads "Thursday, June 19" Events: Needlers, 5th Grade Book Talks, Make a Graham Cracker House, Learn CPR. It is a letter-by-letter old fashioned push board. Celia continues making her point.

CELIA

There's two hundred here and I can  
get more--

WILL

I can't change the child labor  
laws, Celia. But I will happily  
look at this.

CELIA

Thank you, Mister Watterson.

Will takes Celia's petition paperwork as he walks up to the front desk. Rose O'Neill (75) widow, a little slow but beloved, she's worked at Bay forever but is now only part-time. Rose smiles and hands Will a mug of coffee.

ROSE

Good morning.

WILL

Thanks, Rose.

Will takes a long drink of coffee. Norm stands waiting.

NORM

Computers?

WILL

(to Rose)

I got it. Can you update the board.  
Unlock the book return.

Will walks to the Communal Computers area and turns on all the desktops and monitors to the delight of the old-timers. Will pushes in chairs, grabs books left on tables.

Mrs. Lattimore, an elderly regular, enters the ladies room.

MRS. LATTIMORE

Oh.

She sees Will, sleeves rolled up, plunging the toilet, sweating, miserable.

WILL  
It'll be just a moment, Misses  
Lattimore.

She smiles and leaves. Will plunges violently.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. INFORMATION DESK MONTAGE.

OLD MAN  
I'm looking for Don Quicks Oats.

OLD LADY  
What's the best window to look out  
of?

URGENT MAN  
Where's the bathroom?

TEEN GIRL  
Do you have any history books on  
vampires?

END MONTAGE

INT./EXT. CAR. DAY.

Dot casually drives her Mini Cooper on the highway. She  
listens to Lizzo.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Will walks past the front desk. Rose stops him.

ROSE  
This is Samantha.

SAM  
Sam.

Sam (Samantha) Ludlow (17) acts very dry and sarcastic but  
deep down cares. Will shakes her hand.

WILL  
Nice to meet you.

ROSE  
She's our new Page.

SAM  
That's a dumb name.

WILL  
I agree. Let me give you the ten  
cent tour.

Children's Area: Will waves to Caitlin Merrimore, Children's Librarian (31) many advanced degrees, overqualified, loves her job, they are lucky to have her. Caitlin leads a Storytime, she reads aloud from "The Giving Tree" by Shel Silverstein.

WILL (CONT'D)  
You know who Andrew Carnegie is?

SAM  
Steel. Carnegie Mellon.

WILL  
Exactly. Richest guy in the world.  
At one time. He built three  
thousand libraries across the  
country. We're one of them.

Will passes a Teen Boy talking on his smartphone.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Outside. Nineteen O six. Good  
bones. Terrible wiring.

Will walks Sam through Fiction, Nonfiction, Biographies.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Mature crowd. Lots of regulars.  
You'll be mostly--

SAM  
Shelving books, making copies,  
cleaning crap, trying not to kill  
anybody.

WILL  
Sounds about right.

SAM  
How long have you worked here?

Will thinks.

FLASHBACK

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. 35 YEARS EARLIER. FRONT  
DESK.

A Woman drops a stack of books down on the check out counter.  
The inside back cover due date card is stamped with the date.  
Stamp. Stamp. Stamp. Stamp. Books pushed forward.

4 YEAR OLD WILL  
Just a heads up, you owe three  
sixty in overdue fines.

WOMAN  
Can I pay it next time, Will?

4 YEAR OLD WILL  
Of course. No rush, dear.

END FLASHBACK

WILL  
(snaps out of it)  
Longer than you've been alive.

SAM  
(deadpan)  
I'm forty-three.

WILL  
My dad ran this place for a long  
time. Let's get you a badge.

SAM  
Do I get a gun?

Will finally arrives at his desk and plops down. Long exhale.  
Long drink of coffee. Eyes move to his big desk calendar:  
Spit-take of coffee.

WILL  
Shit!

EXT. DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND, OHIO. DAY.

Dot remote locks her Mini Cooper and the horn beeps twice.  
She walks into an imposing downtown building, the Main  
Library and Offices.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Will runs out carrying a Trapper Keeper and his keys. He runs past his best friend, Justin Chambers (39) local funeral director, family man, and first call if you're ever jailed. Justin carries a brown paper bag.

JUSTIN  
You all right?

WILL  
(as he runs by)  
Super late. I totally forgot.

Justin holds up an aluminum foil wrapped burrito.

JUSTIN  
I got Chipotle.

Will's hand grabs the burrito from Justin.

INT./EXT. CAR. DAY.

Will slams the Jeep Grand Cherokee door closed, inserts the key in the ignition, turns, and the engine fights to start. He turns the key again. The elderly engine struggles. He waits a moment. He turns the key again: same result. The engine won't start.

INT. MAIN LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM. DAY.

Dot enters a large conference room with tables arranged in a big square, a podium, and a projector screen. Dot nods to her colleagues, they return quick professional smiles. She keeps to herself and finds a seat at the table.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. DAY.

Will runs down the middle of an empty suburban side street, trapper keeper and burrito in hand. He runs up to a nice looking house and runs up the driveway. He runs in the backdoor.

INT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

Will snatches a set of keys from off a hook.

WILL  
(out of breath)  
My car won't start! I'm taking  
yours! Got a meeting downtown!

As he runs out the backdoor he hears,

WOMAN'S VOICE  
I have bingo at five!

INT./EXT. FORD FOCUS. DAY.

Will drives fast down a suburban road in a tiny Ford Focus. He is too big for the small car and the seat setup only makes it worse. He stops behind a garbage truck. He tries to pass the garbage truck but the road is busy with oncoming traffic.

WILL  
Come on! Come on! Come--

Will slams his hand against the steering wheel and accidentally honks the horn. Two Garbage Men, dumping trash cans into the back of their truck, turn and glare at him. Will holds up his hands in apology.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Sorry.

INT. MAIN LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM. DAY.

The Branch Manager's Meeting has begun. A Man talks. Charts. Numbers. Dot takes notes with her iPad and keyboard. Others use laptops and legal pads, some simply sit, one Branch Manager has already dozed off.

INT./EXT. FORD FOCUS. DAY.

Will speeds down the highway. He passes cars, weaving wildly. He swings around a bend, the sun blinds him. He slaps down the sun visor, squints, and realizes cars up ahead are stopped. At the last second Will swerves across two lanes - horns honk - to an exit ramp.

EXT. DOWNTOWN CLEVELAND. STREET. DAY.

Will double parks the Ford Focus, throws on the hazards, grabs his Trapper Keeper and burrito, and runs inside the Main Library Building.

INT. MAIN LIBRARY CONFERENCE ROOM. DAY.

Alan Jackson, Head of the Library System (55) African-American Man used to dealing with serious matters seriously, speaks from the podium.

ALAN  
It's been a tough year. Attendance  
is down. Circulation and  
programming--

Will bursts into the room through the big wooden doors. He sees the quiet meeting with Alan talking. Will gives a supplicant head nod to Alan and works to find an open seat.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
Down as well. Whenever this  
happens, a natural cause and effect  
occurs.

Will works his way to an empty seat. His colleagues smile and nod, some mouth, "Hi, Will." Will is well liked. He finds a seat directly across from Dot. She tries to ignore him and focus on Alan but finally looks in his direction and they make eye contact for a fast second.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
Our budget gets

Not thinking, Will opens his Trapper Keeper and the velcro rips loudly.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
cut. As a result, certain branches  
will be merging. Sometimes this job  
sucks and this is one of those  
times. Merging will be...Chagrin  
Falls and Orange...

Concerned reactions from Branch Managers and colleagues.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
Berea and Middleburg Heights...

Shocked reactions from Branch Managers and colleagues.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
Westlake...

DOT  
I'm sorry, what?

ALAN  
And Bay Village.



WILL  
(mouth full of burrito)  
Merge?

Conversations and gossip fill the room. Alan must say something to calm the ruckus.

ALAN  
All right: look. We say Merge. That will be the talking point for the Media. But it's really Close. One of you will Close. Who will be determined by a panel over the next six months based on attendance, events, items checked out. The final decision will be at our Holiday Wrap Up, which is when this year?

DOT  
(quick with the date)  
December fifteenth.

ALAN  
December fifteenth.

Dot sits and thinks about her next steps. Will sits exhausted, allowing his colleagues to comfort him.

INT. A LARGE LONG MARBLE HALLWAY. DAY.

Dot and Will walk out into the hallway, both shellshocked.

WILL  
That was, uh,

DOT  
Unexpected.

Alan walks up between them.

ALAN  
Sorry, guys. Nothing I could do.  
But on the bright side: one of you  
will survive.

DOT  
And thrive.

Dot's tone changes. She looks at Will. Will knows that look and what she is thinking: game on.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Better put on your Big Boy pants,  
William.

WILL  
Why don't you put on your Big Girl  
skirt.

DOT  
You know what rhymes with Bay?

WILL  
Beret? Buffet?

DOT  
Pray. As in you better pray. And  
you are also my prey.

Dot gets up in Will's grill. It takes Will a second to catch  
up. Alan is stuck between them.

DOT (CONT'D)  
It's a double meaning--

WILL  
Oh I get it.

DOT  
You need to trim your nose hairs.

WILL  
Your roots are showing.

DOT  
(turns to go)  
Lose some weight.

WILL  
Eat a dick--

Dot shoots him a look. Alan's eyes are wide as well.

WILL (CONT'D)  
--tionary.

DOT  
(as she goes)  
Say hi to your mom for me!

WILL  
(louder than he meant to  
say it)  
I said hi to your mom already!

Dot looks back: that was a dumb thing to say. She leaves.

WILL (CONT'D)  
(to Alan)  
Thanks a lot.

Will walks off.

ALAN  
Fucking suburbs...

EXT. A SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE. AFTERNOON.

INT. LIVING ROOM OF SMALL SUBURBAN HOUSE. AFTERNOON.

A wheeled whiteboard. Dot, in sweatpants and a robe, paces. She gnaws on a blue dry-erase marker. Her cat walks along the top of the couch. Dot stops and looks at the board: she pulls a red marker out of her hair, uncaps it, takes a long whiff, her eyes narrow, and she moves to write on the whiteboard.

INT. A CLOSET. AFTERNOON.

Will rummages, looking for his boots.

WILL  
(shouting)  
Camping! I'm going camping! Be back Sunday.

WOMAN'S VOICE (O.S.)  
(from another room)  
The Geiger's party is at two and I do not want to be late!

WILL  
(forgot, to himself)  
Shit.  
(shouts)  
You won't! I'll be back in time!

His Mother, Mrs. Mary Ellen Watterson (69) Catholic, bingo expert, set in her ways, pokes her head into the closet and scares the hell out of Will because seconds before her voice appeared on the other side of the house.

MRS. WATTERSON  
You better.

WILL  
(startled)  
Jesus.

She disappears.

MRS. WATTERSON (O.S.)  
Your boots are in the front closet.

A look from Will.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DARK. NIGHT.

Dot continues her brainstorming. She looks at the front lobby. She picks up a library card and examines it. She pulls out a Fourth of July bookmark. She sees the sign for maximum number of checked out items allowed. She stops at an AARP poster with a smiling senior citizen couple and has an idea.

EXT. WOODS. NIGHT.

A campfire by a lake. Will takes a long drink of beer.

WILL  
Bigger. Younger. Better tech. Dot.  
It's tough. What do you think?

Man (69) bearded, glasses, wearing a ball cap.

MAN  
You know what I think.

WILL  
I want to hear you say it.

MAN  
Hard things are hard for a reason.  
You can lead, follow, or get out of  
the way.

WILL  
How about move to Alaska?

MAN  
And when in doubt...

WILL & MAN (CONT'D)  
(together)  
Have a Book Sale.

MAN (CONT'D)  
People like to help people.

WILL  
I don't know if that's gonna be  
enough.

MAN  
It always is.

Will finishes his beer and crushes the can.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DOT'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

Dot's iPhone rings: she wakes with a start at her desk. A full whiteboard across from her. She checks her iPhone: it's her older sister, Meg Sanford (40) married with four kids ranging from 14 to 4. Dot answers.

DOT  
What are you doing up so early?

MEG  
Are you kidding? This is the only  
Me Time I get. Four-forty to five-  
thirty. Before the Madness. How  
goes the brainstorming?

Dot looks at her whiteboard.

DOT  
It's a process.

MEG  
I'll see you later.

DOT  
Why?

MEG  
Mom and dad's party? Hello?!

DOT  
(forgot)  
Ahhhhhhhhhh.

MEG  
Two o'clock. Don't be late. We're  
doing presents at four.

DOT  
(not listening)  
Four...

Quick phrases flash from the whiteboard:  
"Senior Strategy?" "IT Security" "Homeless Offensive!"

DOT (CONT'D)  
This could work.

MEG  
Don't go Zero Dark--

Dot hangs up on her.

DOT  
Forty-four. This can Definitely  
work!

She turns to her laptop and begins a PowerPoint Presentation.

INT./EXT. WILL'S JEEP. DAY.

Will drives his Jeep heading back. Man rides shotgun.

WILL  
Dammit, why'd you let me oversleep?

MAN  
It's your own fault.

WILL  
I know!

MAN  
Call your mother.

WILL  
No, we can make it.

MAN  
Call your--

WILL  
I can do this.

MAN  
Call--

WILL  
Fine!

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

MRS. WATTERSON  
(on her landline)  
I've already phoned a taxi.

WILL  
(on cellphone, driving)  
What?! No! I'm on the way.

MRS. WATTERSON  
I will not be held hostage by my  
own son.

WILL  
I'm almost home. Ten minutes.

MRS. WATTERSON  
(super sweet)  
It's fine. I have my bingo bucks  
for situations like this when my  
only son lets me down after I ask  
him to do one little thing.

WILL  
Five minutes. I'll be there in five  
minutes.

Mrs. Watterson looks out her kitchen window.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Oh, what's that? The cab is here my  
darling son. Don't worry, I'm sure  
the driver will escort me safely to  
the Geigers. And if you never hear  
from me again know that a mother's  
love is eternal. Tootle-oo.

WILL  
Wait! No! Mom!

She hangs up on him. Mrs. Watterson smirks to herself.

INT./EXT. WILL'S JEEP. DAY.

Will flies up the driveway, jumps out, runs into the house.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. DAY.

WILL  
Mom?! Mom?! Mom?!

Will runs from room to room, and finally stops in the dining  
room. He slowly turns and looks to the front living room they  
never use. There sits his Mother in the center of a couch,  
her purse on her lap, waiting patiently. She stands and  
crosses to Will.

MRS. WATTERSON  
I'll be in the car. Please bring  
this,

His Mother points to a wrapped gift sitting on an arm chair.

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)  
After you change your shirt.

She leaves. Will smells himself: she is correct.

EXT. GEIGER'S HOUSE. DAY.

Cars fill up the driveway and line the street.

INT. GEIGER'S HOUSE. DAY.

Party's in full swing.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Congratulations on forty-five years  
of wedded bliss!

MR. GEIGER  
Thank you, Mary Ellen.

They hug. Mr. Tom Geiger (71) and Mrs. Peggy Geiger (67),  
Dot's and Meg's mom and dad, they always look like they just  
came from a country club, which they often did.

MRS. GEIGER  
You know we were over at Bay a  
couple weeks ago--

MR. GEIGER  
And the place looks great.

MRS. WATTERSON  
It used to look better.

MRS. GEIGER  
Well, didn't we all?

DOT  
Misses Watterson, I love your  
broach.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Thank you, dear. I keep telling  
Will, poke your head over to your  
place. Pick up a thing or two.



DOT

Oh, well, thanks. I was taught by  
the best.

MRS. WATTERSON

Yes, you were.

MR. GEIGER

Let's try this one. From Mary Ellen  
and Will.

DOT

(to Will)

Do you know what it is?

WILL

I know yours is from Treasures.

DOT

Do you even have a plan or are you  
just gonna wing it?

MRS. GEIGER

A Vitamix!

MRS. WATTERSON

We got one for our fortieth and I  
use it every day.

DOT

You don't have the brains for this.

WILL

You don't have the nerves.

DOT

You really wanna be humiliated?

Will laughs and gets up from his seat.

WILL

I need a drink. Can I get you a  
glass of hwine? Or perhaps a bottle  
of kiss my ass.

Will turns to walk to the bar. Dot stands and points.

DOT

(too loud)

You're going down, Will Watterson!

Silence befalls the patio. Will's neck rotates and his wide  
eyes say to her, "What are you doing?"

MRS. WATTERSON  
Will, what did you do now?

Will's eyes say to Dot: "Don't"

DOT  
Nothing, Misses Watterson.

MEG  
(drunk)  
You two are fighting already?  
Jesus. It ain't 'til Christmas for  
Christ's sake!

MRS. WATTERSON  
What isn't 'til Christmas?

MEG  
The closing! One of them has to  
close.

Will's eyelids drop. Mrs. Watterson looks around the room.

MEG (CONT'D)  
Oops. Kevin, get Mommy some Rocky  
Road, Stat.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. DUSK.

Mrs. Watterson walks along the sidewalk.  
Will drives his Jeep slowly next to her. His window open.

WILL  
Mom, get in the car.

She walks on, ignoring him.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Please. Mom.

She walks.

WILL (CONT'D)  
You're being ridiculous.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Oh, I'm being ridiculous? You know  
what's actually ridiculous? Not  
telling your own mother that your  
library is closing. That would be  
nice to know.

WILL  
I was going to--

MRS. WATTERSON  
But oh no, I've got to learn from everyone else, like a Child. You made me look like an Idiot!

WILL  
Nobody thinks you're an idiot. I'm the idiot.

MRS. WATTERSON  
You got that right. Big idiot.

WILL  
Giant idiot.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Huge idiot...

She stops. Will stops the Jeep. Not looking at him, she gets in the car. Will waits. She puts on her seatbelt. Will slowly begins to drive.

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)  
We need milk.

WILL  
Okay.

The Jeep drives off.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MORNING.

Team All Hands. Staff assembled. Yawns. Long sips of coffee. It is early: 7AM. Dot has a large TV monitor on wheels setup with her PowerPoint Presentation queued. She holds a clicker.

DOT  
My Forty-Four Point Plan!

Music: the chorus of Lizzo's "Good As Hell".

Kevin hands out hefty 3-ring binders: to David, and to Chrissy Sherman (29) Web Librarian, a tattooed pierced hipster. The two librarians share a mutual look of concern.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Paper sign taped to front door:

"Open at Noon"

Norm squints to read it. Celia leaves in a huff.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Team All Hands. Staff gather at tables in the main reading room. Will stands before them. Marian Kenmore, Adult Librarian (62) dignified, hasn't smiled in decades, and knowledgeable about everything.

MARIAN

So we would all lose our jobs?

WILL

Most likely, yes.

A shriek/sob from Ken Halle, Adult Librarian (59) a drama queen who also directs local community theatre productions.

WILL (CONT'D)

Ken.

KEN

Sorry, I'll keep it together.

CAITLIN

What can we do to help?

WILL

Ways we can set ourselves apart. No idea's bad. We're spitballin'.

Carl raises his hand. Carl Schwartz, Inventory Manager (64) mentally a bit slow, holding on until retirement but he keeps messing stuff up.

WILL (CONT'D)

Carl.

CARL

What if we sell the books.

WILL

Book Sale. Good idea.

CARL

No. What if we sell All the books.

Carl motions everywhere. Will lets that one breath.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

A large disgruntled crowd out front - all senior citizens. They grumble about the library not opening until noon.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Diana Jensen (41) a local rich housewife who volunteers, her husband travels and she often seeks companionship. Diana starts in downward-facing dog pose...

DIANA  
As a certified Yoga instructor, I  
help men and women

Into upward-facing dog: cleavage ample. She smiles at Will.

DIANA (CONT'D)  
explore their bodies.

WILL  
(clears his throat)  
Thank you, Diana, adding it.

Will writes on his Yellow Pad list of ideas: "Yoga: Diana"

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

DOT  
Twenty-seven.

Everyone flips their binder page.

DAVID  
May I say something?

DOT  
I'll take questions at the end--

DAVID  
We need to get back to basics: a  
friendly greeting, gentle  
suggestion, escort them to their  
book. Little things.

DOT  
That's great and we're gonna do all  
that. Twenty-seven: VR Headsets for  
Senior Citizens.

Reaction shots: her team is not feeling inspired but they are also used to these elaborate ideas from Dot.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

SAM

It smells like my grandmother's house and the wifi's super slow and who even uses DVDs and these computers are gross and everybody's old...but maybe an Anime book club or something.

Marian: perplexed. Carl: slack-jawed. Rose: confused.

Loud knocking on the front doors. Will checks his watch:  
12:05PM.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

DOT

Forty-four? Come on, who wants Books For The Burn Ward? Don't be shy. It's mostly audiobooks.

No librarian dares volunteer so Trey raises his hand.

DOT (CONT'D)

Trey! Excellent. Way to jump right in. Let's attack this day, everybody! Read! Learn! And...

EVERYONE

Inspire.

Meeting breaks up. Dot and Kevin convene.

DOT

Vacation days. You have a trip planned for Scotland.

KEVIN

Saint Andrews. Eight days in August when we're dead.

DOT

I need you to push it to next year. Can't have my right hand stuck in a sand trap! You're too important. Let's do minutes in fifteen, I need a triple shot.

Kevin's face is not happy.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MEETING ROOM. DAY.

Justin finishes his presentation. The audience is all old people and Diana. Will leans against the wall.

JUSTIN  
We at Chambers Funeral Home are  
committed to making Your  
Goodbye...Great. Thank you very  
much.

Applause.

JUSTIN (CONT'D)  
Take a pamphlet. Here. Have two.

As attendees disperse, Will approaches Justin.

WILL  
You know your audience. How would  
you feel about doing one for a  
younger crowd?

JUSTIN  
Great. I'd love to talk to some  
fifty year olds.

WILL  
I was thinking more Millennials.  
Gen-Z.

JUSTIN  
You think they'd be into Green  
burial options?

WILL  
Absolutely. We'll get some pizzas.

JUSTIN  
(thinking)  
I'll have to rework some jokes. And  
statistics...But yeah, let's do it!

Justin leaves. Will looks around the room of old folks. His face says he's got his work cut out for him.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. FRONT PORCH/DOOR. DAY.

Dot walks up the front steps of a suburban house. She carries an iPad and a wad of library cards wrapped in a rubber band. She rings the doorbell.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. INFORMATION DESK MONTAGE.

VETERAN HUNTER IN CAMO  
I need help finding some books.  
It's a trilogy but I'm only looking  
for the first, second, and third  
one.

MIDDLE-AGED WAITRESS  
Where do you keep the tax evasion  
forms?

CLOSE TO DEATH OLD MAN  
(holding up a DVD of "Deuce  
Bigalow, European Gigolo")  
Has my wife seen this?

END MONTAGE

Will removes the paper sign in a clear acrylic display that  
says: "You May Check Out 15 Items". He slides in a new sign:  
20 items. Rose's face shows more surprise than is warranted  
for this small change.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT ATRIUM. DAY.

Dot changes the digital screen to: "Check Out Item Maximum  
Allowed: 25"

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DOORS. DAY.

Will teaches Rose, Diana, and Sam how to use the new manual  
hand clicker to track visitors. It's easy: you click it: the  
numbers increase. Rose's head bobs up and down as she looks  
at each patron and then the clicker. Diana's bedroom eyes  
focus on Will while she clicks. Sam clicks without looking up  
from her smartphone. An Old Lady rushes in.

OLD LADY  
Where's the--?

They all point to the bathroom, used to it.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT SLIDING DOORS. DAY.

Dot directs workers up on ladders installing new cameras.  
Michael, a disheveled middle-aged regular, enters carrying  
books and views the new cameras with more concern than  
necessary. Dot looks over the shoulder of a Technician  
sitting in front of a monitor.



The cameras capture people traffic - a number shows in the upper corner of the screen. Paul supervises.

TECHNICIAN

This is your count.

DOT

Cool. Can it do facial recognition?

TECHNICIAN

Uh, I don't think legally you can install that in a library.

DOT

Of course. I was just curious.

Dot slaps him on the back. Technician gives Paul a look like he doesn't trust her.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. CHILDREN'S ROOM. DAY.

It's Storytime with Caitlin. She reads aloud from "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" by Eric Carle.

CAITLIN

(reading)

...But he was still hungry.

Will stands off to the side observing. Kids are happy. Parents smile. Will smiles, he feels good.

CAITLIN (CONT'D)

On Saturday he ate through

Will's eyes do a double-take and then zero in.

CAITLIN (CONT'D)

One piece of chocolate cake,

An Old Man on a communal computer wears headphones. He watches something and secretively eats from a bag of Lays potato chips in his lap.

CAITLIN (CONT'D)

One ice cream cone,

Will moves across the room to see what the man is watching.

CAITLIN (CONT'D)

One pickle,

WILL  
(under his breath)  
Goddamnit.

The Old Man, Mr. Flemington, watches hardcore pornography.  
Will runs over and turns off the monitor.

MR. FLEMINGTON  
Hey!

Mr. Flemington pulls the headphones down from off his ears.

WILL  
Time to go, Mister Flemington.

MR. FLEMINGTON  
It's my Constitutional Right!

WILL  
This is not a first amendment  
issue.

Mr. Flemington folds his arms in defiance.

MR. FLEMINGTON  
I'm not going anywhere.

Will pulls the Lays bag out of his lap.

MR. FLEMINGTON (CONT'D)  
Aw, hell.

Will grabs his arm, pulls him up.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DOORS. DAY.

Will deposits Mr. Flemington outside the front doors.

WILL  
Have a nice day.

MR. FLEMINGTON  
(tossed over his shoulder)  
You're no Big Bill.

WILL  
(suddenly enraged)  
What was that?!

Will's adrenaline surges: heart pounds, ears steam, fists clenched. Mr. Flemington shuffles off. Will catches himself: slows his breathing, releases the tension. Closes his eyes a second, turns, opens his eyes and sees two Teens smoking.

WILL (CONT'D)  
No smoking. Take it elsewhere.

FLASHBACK. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. SAME SPOT. 23 YEARS EARLIER. DAY.

WILL'S DAD, BIG BILL (O.S.)  
I said, take it elsewhere.

16 Year Old Will reveals himself smoking with a buddy: he's caught.

BIG BILL (O.S.)  
Youth is wasted on the young.

END FLASHBACK

WILL  
(quietly, to himself)  
Youth is wasted on the young.  
(louder, to teens)  
Hey! You think I'm kidding?

The Teens saunter off, not scared, used to adult rebukes.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MEETING ROOM. DARK.

Dot watches a detailed video presentation on the tanks of World War II's Battle of the Bulge. A few old Veterans attend. Dot hears the booming tank blasts and has an idea.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

A long line of Men wait to check out items. At the end Will follows the snaking line to the front checkout. All Men in line, all holding one item - a book, CD, DVD. Will reaches the front of the line just as Diana slips a return receipt print-out in a book, smiles, then plants a Big Kiss on a Man's lips.

WILL  
Hey Hey Hey! What's going on?

Diana is confused.

DIANA  
What?

Diana hands the Man his book and library card.

MAN

Thanks, Princess.

DIANA

See you tomorrow, Lou. Next!

Next Man in line steps up: hands a book over with his library card, Diana scans it, prints out the return receipt, slips it in the book, hands the book to him, he moves in for the kiss: Will stops it.

WILL

Whoa. Hold up. What are you doing?

DIANA

"Check Out An Item, Get A Kiss!"

Will sees the sign he created next to the front checkout.

WILL

A Hershey's Kiss!

Will retrieves the bowl of Hershey's kisses that someone has misplaced.

DIANA

Ohhhh!

WILL

You're out. Rose!

Diana goes on break. Groan from the Line of Men. Rose holds a Hershey's kiss in front of her face.

ROSE

Kiss?

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. 4TH OF JULY. AFTER SUNDOWN.

A huge American flag on a flagpole. A Sherman Tank greets visitors in the parking lot. Trey sits atop in a military uniform waving an American flag.

INT./EXT. WILL'S JEEP. AFTER SUNDOWN.

Will thinks a moment before he gets out.

WILL

Jesus, she has tank.

MAN

A Sherman. Cool! You think she's gonna fire it?

WILL

Take it easy.

Will pops open his door. Boom! Fireworks display erupts.

On the lawn: families spread out on blankets and chairs. Illuminated faces stare up at the fireworks display. Will walks up to Dot who observes from the rear.

WILL (CONT'D)

We've got an aircraft carrier.

DOT

Oh yeah, where's that parked?

WILL

How's your circulation?

DOT

Wouldn't you like to know.

WILL

(motioning to the tank)  
A little desperate, don't you think?

DOT

I'm not the one giving out kisses.

WILL

That was a misunderstanding and a good idea and you know it.

DOT

Kinda reeks of desperation to me.

WILL

You really don't wanna wake up the Bear.

DOT

What is that, you? A sleeping bear?

WILL

A Big Bear. A Kodiak. Klondike.

DOT

You eat Klondike bars for breakfast.

WILL  
With big teeth, and huge claws. You  
better be careful, little girl.

DOT  
(goes into her purse)  
Well, hey, look here. Pepper spray.  
Whaddaya say now, bear?

She points the mace at Will. Will puts his hands up.

WILL  
All right, Dot, you don't wanna  
take this--

She sprays him in the face, a quick blast.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Ahhhhhhhhh!!!!

DOT  
(to patrons)  
He's fine, just allergies.  
(to Will)  
You come to my library and threaten  
me?! What do you think this is, a  
game? This is my life.  
(loud)  
Get home safe now!

Will stumbles back to his Jeep.

DOT (CONT'D)  
(to patrons, re: Will)  
Too many Jalapeno poppers, I think.  
(towards Will, waving,  
cheerful)  
Say hi to your mom for me!

Dot looks after him with a sly smirk.

INT./EXT. WILL'S JEEP. DUSK.

MAN  
Wow, she is not messing around.

WILL  
Ya think?!!

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. KITCHEN SINK. NIGHT.

Will sits in a chair, shoulders to the kitchen sink, head tilted back. Mrs. Watterson pours a gallon of whole milk over Will's eyes.

MRS. WATTERSON  
(trying not to laugh)  
She is not messing around.

WILL  
I know!

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. INFORMATION DESK MONTAGE.

TEEN BOY  
I need books on gynecology. I wanna  
get to know my ancestors.

RETIRED FIREMAN  
Can you help me print a YouTube  
video?

SIX YEAR OLD GIRL  
Do you have any books about how to  
make boys cry?

Librarian Chrissy thinks about how to answer that one.

END MONTAGE

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Will puts a new Check Out sign down: 40 items.

EXT. CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND. DAY.

Kids play. Dot approaches with an ice cream cone in each hand.

DOT  
Want some? Come on.

Kids follow her.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Kids check out stacks of children's books higher than their heads. Dot hands a Girl an ice cream cone but the Girl can't see so Dot places it in her hand.

Dot changes the Check Out items screen to: 50.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Dot walks through the library. Michael has open books, print-outs, newspaper clippings, handwritten pages laid out across two tables pulled together in a busy main reading room.

DOT

Michael.

MICHAEL

Oh, good, you're here. Those new cameras are made by an Israeli company contracted by the defense department and,

DOT

Michael, we've been through this before--

MICHAEL

Wait for it, Elon Musk's Neuralink brain implant company!

DOT

You can't take up two tables.

Dot continues her walk-thru. She passes a Homeless Man wearing no shoes, only socks. She lets it go. But she can't shake the image from her mind. Dot sees a Teen Couple making out in the stacks but they don't see her yet.

FLASHBACK. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. 22 YEARS EARLIER.

A Homeless Man sits in a lounge chair with plastic bags and luggage around him. Patrons flee to other areas or leave. 15 Year Old Dot makes out with a Boy in the stacks but watches through the bookshelves.

From behind, Big Bill walks up to the Homeless Man, puts his hand on the Homeless Man's shoulder. 15 Year Old Dot continues kissing but her attention remains on the Homeless Man. Big Bill hands the Homeless Man a Ziploc bag with a sandwich inside and a can of Diet Coke, obviously his own lunch. The Homeless Man at first refuses the kindness but Big Bill's coaxing won't take no for an answer.

HOMELESS MAN

Thank you.



BIG BILL (O.S.)  
Stay as long as you want.

15 Year Old Dot has stopped kissing the Boy.

BOY  
Less tongue?

END FLASHBACK. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Dot sees the Teen Couple making out.

DOT  
Take your hormones outside.

Dot walks up to the shoeless Homeless Man.

DOT (CONT'D)  
You're not in trouble. Can I get  
you some shoes? I think we have  
sneakers in Lost and Found.

HOMELESS MAN  
Yes, thank you.

Dot walks. Dot stops. She notices something across the room.  
It's Mr. Flemington on a communal computer wearing  
headphones, sneak drinking a Slurpee between his legs.

DOT  
(under her breath)  
Goddamn it.

Dot yanks the headphones off of Mr. Flemington's head.

MR. FLEMINGTON  
Hey!

But Dot also accidentally unplugs his headphones from the  
computer and the sound of hardcore Pornography erupts. Heads  
turn. Dot snags a book and places it over Mr. Flemington's  
monitor. But the lewd sounds continue.

MR. FLEMINGTON (CONT'D)  
This is my First Amendment Right!

DOT  
No it's not!

Dot's eyes dart for a solution. More heads turn. A Mother  
places her hands over her child's ears. Dot's got it: she  
kicks her toe under the table - once, twice, she's trying to  
hit the surge protector.

Her third toe tap knocks out the power. All the computer screens go dark. Groans from the computer users.

DOT (CONT'D)

Sorry.

MR. FLEMINGTON

Bitch.

Dot snags the Slurpee from between his legs and dumps it on his head.

DOT

Get Out!

EXT. A PAY PHONE BOOTH. DAY.

WILL

(phone to ear, hillbilly  
accent)

I'll tell you: I'ma gonna blow up  
that library with all dem people  
inside. Westlake Library. 'Specially  
that tiny terror who runs the  
place. Gonna blow her right up!

Will hangs up and laughs to himself. Then he gets paranoid and looks around. He walks off.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Dot, arms crossed, and her entire Team stand outside the library. Bomb Squad Members exit the building.

BOMB SQUAD MEMBER

All clear!

BOMB SQUAD LEADER

(to Dot)

False alarm, ma'am. Do you have any  
enemies?

Dot's eyes narrow.

DOT

No. None that I can think of.

CUT TO:

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MEETING ROOM. DAY.

Justin finishes his Millennial funeral talk titled: "How Will Gen-Z Say Goodbye?" Will watches through the windows. In attendance: A Millennial, Sam, and an Old Lady. Sam exits.

SAM

Best. Presentation. Ever.

Will's face, however, is not convinced. The Fire Alarm blares and flashes.

Will enters the Front Lobby. Dot stands: her fingers still holding the pulled Fire Alarm, her gaze not wavering from Will. A stare down. She releases the lever, backs away (continuing her lockdown stare), turns, and leaves.

Sam stands next to Will.

SAM (CONT'D)

Who is that badass?

WILL

An evil succubus we must destroy before she engulfs us all.

SAM

Dude, you have a dark side. I like it.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. FRONT PORCH/DOOR. DAY.

Doorbell rings.

DOT

(smiles)

Hello. My name is--

Door closes on Dot.

Same front door. Dot rings the doorbell again. The door opens. A Teenage Boy.

DOT (CONT'D)

Hey! That's not cool--

Door slammed in her face.

Same door. Dot knocks. And knocks. And knocks. Door opens.

MOTHER

What do you want?

DOT  
Do you have a library card?

MOTHER  
What? Yes.

DOT  
(points to her teen son)  
How 'bout him?

Mother looks to her Son. He nods Yes.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Any other kids?

MOTHER  
My daughter. Who are you?

DOT  
Husband?

MOTHER  
Yes. Why?

DOT  
They all have library cards?

MOTHER  
I think so. Why?

DOT  
I'm Dorothy Geiger, branch manager  
of Westlake Library. Thank you for  
your cooperation. Have a bookmark  
and Smarties.

Dot holds out a bookmark and Smarties.  
Mother opens her screen door and takes them.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Ma'am.  
(gives son the evil eye)  
Good day.

Dot leaves. Mother looks to her Son. They're both confused  
about what just happened. Son snatches the Smarties.

INT. DOT'S HOUSE. EVENING.

Exhausted, Dot plops down on the couch, immediately pulls out  
her laptop, opens it, and begins typing.

At the same time she kicks off her shoes, pulls the foot massager over, slides her feet inside and turns it on. She snags the remote and turns on the local TV news.

Her cat sleeps on the couch. Ding! of microwave. Dot pulls out a Lean Cuisine chicken burrito bowl. She removes the cellophane. She balances the microwave meal on her laptop, takes a bite. She attempts to answer emails, eat, watch TV, and get a foot massage all at the same time.

Dot toppled over on the couch, passed out. Her meal spills out over her shirt, laptop on her lap, feet still in the massager which runs loudly. Both Dot and her cat fast asleep.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. EVENING.

Dinner. Mrs. Watterson has cooked a delicious meal. They eat in silence.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Misses Lattimore said you're giving  
out kisses.

WILL  
Hershey's.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Your father never needed gimmicks.

WILL  
There was no internet. Dad had an  
AOL account.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Misses McCluskey said someone  
showed up at her door this  
afternoon. Guess who?

WILL  
The mailman?

MRS. WATTERSON  
Miss Dorothy Geiger. Making sure  
she had a library card.

WILL  
I have a plan. I am on it--

MRS. WATTERSON  
Thirty-six years your father ran  
that library. And in six months...

She motions: poof, it's gone.

WILL

I am aware of the history! What do you even care?

His Mother's face aghast.

WILL (CONT'D)

You won't step foot inside! Misses Lattimore, McCluskey, that's how you get all your intel, your little spies. Oh, don't think I don't know!

MRS. WATTERSON

Your father never would've whored the place out, I can tell you that!

WILL

How 'bout instead of standing on the sidelines and criticizing, you actually come in and help me!

MRS. WATTERSON

I Can't!

Will tosses down his napkin.

WILL

The spinach has too much garlic.

He stands and walks out of the room.

MRS. WATTERSON

Where are you going?

Will leaves out the back door. Screen door thwaks shut. She sits a moment, then quickly gets up, grabs the bowl of spinach off the table, marches into the kitchen towards the trash but sees her Vitamix: pops the top, tosses the spinach inside, flips the blender on, turns the dial to 10, and revs the pulse button to discharge her anger.

EXT. MOOSEHEAD SALOON. EVENING.

Will and Justin drink beers at a table.

WILL

What does she think I'm doing?  
Sitting on my ass twiddling my thumbs?

JUSTIN  
You know, if your mom ever wants to  
talk, I see--

WILL  
I'm trying things! I can't just  
magically get kids to come to the  
library.

JUSTIN  
I'll give you mine.

They drink beer.

WILL  
Dot's going door to door.

JUSTIN  
I know.

WILL  
How do you know?

Justin: self-evident look.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Man, she is everywhere.

JUSTIN  
She's tough. How are you gonna beat  
that?

WILL  
(annoyed)  
I'm working on it.

They drink beer.

WILL (CONT'D)  
What do you think of her?

JUSTIN  
Dot?

WILL  
Yeah.

JUSTIN  
She's like a little drill sergeant.  
But she is cute.

BRUCIE  
Cute? You don't want cute.

NADS  
Koalas are cute.

Nads and Brucie, two local talk radio DJ's razz Will and Justin as they pass.

WILL  
Hey, Nads. Brucie.

NADS  
You want crazy.

BRUCIE  
A girl that will saw you in half  
while shtoothing your brains out.

JUSTIN  
I don't know what that means.

BRUCIE  
Just think about it.

NADS  
Think about it.

BRUCIE  
(points to his brain)  
Think about it.

Nads and Brucie continue on to their table.

JUSTIN  
I would settle for "slightly  
different."

WILL  
I know what you mean.

Justin nods his head in agreement, then:

JUSTIN  
What? No you don't.

WILL  
The routine. Monotony.

JUSTIN  
You're single. Come back to me when  
you've been married fifteen years.

WILL  
Now why would I want to do that?



JUSTIN

Exactly.

Justin goes to get them two more beers. Will thinks and finishes his beer.

EXT. LOCAL AMERICAN LEGION HALL. DAY.

Dot at the bar surrounded by Veterans of many American wars. She is a popular visitor: drinking beers, downing shots, and making sure that they all have library cards.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. BOOK RETURN BIN. DAY.

Sam wears latex gloves to sift through returns.

Book. Book. Copy of "The Secret" by Rhonda Byrne with tons of colored Post-its marking important pages. Book. A toupee in a DVD of Major League II. Book. A Pop-Tart. Book. Sam smells the book. Her reaction says it is repulsive.

WILL

Cat urine.

SAM

What do I do with this?

WILL

Trash. There's no getting it out.  
Let me ask you a question: what are  
teens into?

SAM

Sex. Drugs. TikTok.

WILL

That doesn't help me. What about  
boys?

SAM

The stupid idiots at my school, all  
they do is fly drones, play video  
games, and play with them--Jesus!

A used condom bookmark falls out of a book.

WILL

One of your classmates?

Sam trashes the condom.

WILL (CONT'D)  
More common than you would think.  
(O.S.)  
You can keep any cash you find.

Sam's eyes light up, getting her second wind.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Will exits the bathroom. A timid older Woman stands in the lobby.

WILL  
Can I help you?

WOMAN  
I need a, uh, resume. Justin  
Chambers said I should come here. I  
haven't worked in thirty years.

WILL  
Absolutely.

Celia walks up to Will.

CELIA  
Mister Watterson, what if I were  
to--

WILL  
Not now, Celia--

CELIA  
Offer my services in a strictly  
non-legal--

WILL  
Go away, Celia!

Celia leaves, but not upset or deterred in the least.

WILL (CONT'D)  
Sorry. I'm Will.

WOMAN  
Oh! You're who he said I should ask  
for!

WILL  
It's kismet! I'd be happy to help  
you create a resume.

Will offers her his arm. She smiles, takes it, and they walk towards the communal computers.

WILL (O.S.) (CONT'D)  
Shoes.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. LAWN. DAY.

A local Trainer attempts to teach a fitness class. Four elderly couples try to keep up. Unfortunately the buff Trainer hasn't modified his normal class and the routines are too fast and too difficult with blaring techno music. An Old Man gives up and walks away. An Old Woman lays down on the grass.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Rose is on the phone.

ROSE  
I'm sorry. We don't lend furniture.

Will changes the Checked Out Item Sign to: 75.

ROSE (CONT'D)  
Even for a "kick-ass" party.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. FRONT PORCH/DOOR. DAY.

Dot knocks on a door.

DOT  
I know you're in there! The curtain moved.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. FRONT PORCH/DOOR. DAY.

Another house. Dot rings the doorbell.  
A Mother and Toddler boy.

DOT  
Okay. What about him?

EXT. LAKEWOOD COUNTRY CLUB. TENNIS COURTS. DAY.

Mr. and Mrs. Geiger play doubles against another couple. Suddenly their attention shifts: something is happening two courts down. Dot has stopped play and is making sure each player has a library card.

A tennis ball whizzes between the two Geigers. They look to each other. Embarrassed, they wave to their opponent couple.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DUSK.

The library is full of people dressed up in Harry Potter character outfits for a Harry Potter event Will hosts.

MARIAN

This is the lowest of the low.

KEN

We might as well be selling wands  
and broomsticks.

Will passes by.

WILL

Ooo, that's a good idea.

A costumed Potter fan stares at Marian.

MARIAN

Here.

She hands him a book.

MARIAN (CONT'D)

Read a real book.

Potter fan looks at the book: "Middlemarch" by George Eliot

POTTER FAN

George Eliot? Never heard of him.

Marian's eyes show violence. Ken walks her away.  
Suddenly in through the front doors runs a "Dobby".

DOBBY

You-know-who is coming!

A hush falls over the crowd.

WILL

Who?

DOBBY

He Who Must Not Be Named! He  
approaches!

WILL

Who is this?

DOBBY  
It's Voldemort!

"Ahhhhhhhhh!!!!" - All the Harry Potter characters run out the library's rear exit.

WILL  
No, don't use the--

But it's too late, they all run away. In slowly glides "Voldemort" - Dot dressed in a Voldemort costume with a skull cap, full makeup. Will and his Team remain. Will offers a slow clap of acknowledged praise/defeat.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MAIN READING ROOM. EVENING.

Special Event: "Senior Speed Dating". A hot August night. Dot rings a bell: seniors stand and slowly move to new pairings.

3 clear thermostat covers, a key placed in each lock, turned, plastic protector opened, "Up" arrow pressed. Temperature changed from 68...79,80,81...89,90. Covers replaced on all three.

Senior speed date over. Bell rings again. Senior brows sweat profusely, steps wobbly.

DOT  
(to Kevin)  
Why's it so hot in here?

Dot walks over and checks the thermostat with her iPhone flashlight. 90 degrees.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Jesus.

She pops the 3 covers and lowers the temperature to 68. Dot returns to the podium, rings the bell, music plays. 3 keys, 3 covers popped: back to 90 degrees. Seniors sweat horribly, swaying, confused, asking for water. Dot rings the bell. Changeover. Down falls a Senior Man. Down drops a Senior Woman. Kevin and Camila run to their aid. The room quickly clears, everyone goes outside. Ambulances await. Dot examines a thermostat: 90 degrees. She turns around.

A hand holds a tiny key high. A Little Old Lady rises. She removes her wig, glasses, and hat: it is Sam.

A hand holds a tiny key high. A Large Old Man stands. He whips off his wig, hat, ascot, pipe, and glasses: it is Will.

A hand holds a tiny key high. Rose stands. She doesn't need to do anything.

Dot's face acknowledges their Senior Speed Dating victory.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Kevin is on the phone.

KEVIN  
P - E - N -

Dot angrily changes the Checked Out Items Digital Sign to 100. Kevin thinks that's a lot.

KEVIN (CONT'D)  
I - S. Yes, that's how it's  
spelled...I'm sorry it doesn't look  
right.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DOT'S OFFICE. NIGHT.

Dot pours herself a huge glass of wine, gulps it down, and looks at her computer screen which displays a poster for:

"Back to School Bonanza"

EXT. ST. JOHN WESTSHORE HOSPITAL. DAY.

Dot stands next to a hospital bed with a Mother and newborn.

DOT  
She's beautiful.

Dot hands the Mother her baby girl's new library card.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Sign here.

The new Mother signs the back of the library card. Dot tries to hand the card to the Mother but her hands and focus remain on her new baby. Dot places the library card in the baby's tiny hand. Dot smiles. Dot wipes a tear away for her eye. Then her tone changes: back to business.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Nurse Guerrero, let's roll.

Dot exits the room. Nurse Guerrero rolls her eyes.

EXT. BACK OF JEEP. HATCH OPEN. LAKE. NIGHT.

Will sits. The Man next to him.

WILL  
She's planning something big for  
back to school.

MAN  
Have a Book Sale.

WILL  
That's your answer to everything.

MAN  
It works.

WILL  
It's not about books anymore. It's  
about everything else.

MAN  
Then have an Everything Else sale.

WILL  
I don't know what that means!

MAN  
Neither do I but it sounds good.

WILL  
No, I have to launch a pre-emptive  
counter offensive.

MAN  
Sounds complicated.

WILL  
I need a school bus.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. HER BEDROOM. DAY.

Mrs. Watterson has male shirts, pants, and suits laid out  
across her bed. Empty closet. Empty dresser drawers pulled  
open. Will enters.

WILL  
What are you doing?

MRS. WATTERSON  
Goodwill.

She closes the closet door and pushes in the open drawers.

WILL  
It's a big step.

Will takes her hand.

MRS. WATTERSON  
There's lots of needy people that  
can use a suit. For a job  
interview...

She squeezes Will's hand and then lets it go.

WILL  
I'm going over to the Back to  
School event at Westlake.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Finally heeding my advice. Maybe  
you can learn a thing or two. I  
hear she's kicking your behind.

WILL  
Is that so?

MRS. WATTERSON  
Poaching your regulars? Appealing  
to Boomers?

WILL  
Nobody's--...Who told you--...We'll  
see about that.

Will leaves the bedroom.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Dinner at six!

Mrs. Watterson smells Big Bill's favorite sweater.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. BACK TO SCHOOL BONANZA.  
AFTERNOON.

Carnival Rides in the parking lot: a small Ferris Wheel, Tea  
Cups, Games, Cotton Candy, Food Trucks. A drive-in movie  
style sign reads:

6pm - Singin' In The Rain  
8pm - Finding Nemo  
10pm - The Avengers

A huge Movie Screen on the lawn with families laid out on  
blankets and chairs. Cartoons show onscreen.



All the families, little kids, and Senior Citizens seem to be having a great time. But every single Teen onsite is bored out of their mind. Joan approaches Dot, hurried as always.

JOAN

Dot!

DOT

Hi, Joan.

JOAN

I really liked The Couple Next Door. What do you recommend?

DOT

Anything by Catherine McKenzie or Ruth...

Off in the distance the sound of Thumping Bass beats.

JOAN

Who? Ruth Who?!

DOT

Ware...Ruth Ware...

Dot and her Team are perplexed. Did they order something else they've forgotten? A School Bus rounds the corner: DJ music blasts out of open windows, Christmas lights strung everywhere, a sign on the side: "BAY LIBRARY BEATS MACHINE!"

The School Bus stops directly in front of Westlake. All Patrons turn and watch, curious. Out walks Will, dressed for a rave, with Sam and Diana dancing beside him.

WILL

(using a megaphone)

Hello, Westlake! I said, Hello, Westlake!?!

Cheers from the crowd.

WILL (CONT'D)

We are the Bay Library Beats Machine, here to take all you Teenagers over to Bay for our first ever

(reading off notecard)

"Call of Duty, Black Ops, Cold War" Video Game Tournament!

Will turns and speaks to Darryl Simpson, 24, Part-time IT Guy, who drives the bus.

WILL (CONT'D)

What does that even mean?

DARRYL

It's epic, Bro.

WILL

So who wants to join us and leave  
this lame

(he sees the movie titles)

Ooo, I love Finding Nemo

(returning to his message)

Super lame Back to School event and  
go Kick Some Ass!?! On a video  
screen.

Teens run up and get on the school bus. Dot approaches Will.  
It is an onslaught of Teens, especially boys.

WILL (CONT'D)

(to Dot)

I got room for one more.

DOT

You can have your prepubescent  
sausage-fest, but know this, Little  
Will Watterson: I'm gonna take All  
your tried and true, bread and  
butter, social security spendin'  
Senior Flippin' Citizens! And I'm  
gonna enjoy it!

WILL

Stay away from my regulars!

DOT

All of Them!

The School Bus drives off.

DOT (CONT'D)

Say hi to your mom for me!

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MEETING ROOMS. DAY.

Video game tournament in full swing in all meeting rooms.  
Packed with Teens. Will stands outside the biggest room. Will  
watches an extremely violent kill. He finds it severe. Crowd  
Applause. Old Lady Crew approaches Will holding their  
crocheting needles and yarn.

OLD LADY

Needlers?

WILL  
 (remembering)  
 Oh, crap. I'm sorry, Estelle. I forgot. We had to move it. You should've gotten an email.

Blank stares from the Old Lady Crew.

WILL (CONT'D)  
 Come on. Let me find you a space.

The Old Ladies follow Will but give him the wary eye.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Shot of Westlake with trees full of leaves. Jump forward. All the leaves fall to the ground. The sound of a leafblower. Enter a Groundskeeper with a leafblower.

Title: "Fall"

Groundskeeper discovers a book under leaves, picks it up, looks around, and stuffs it in his jacket.

INT. DOWNTOWN MAIN LIBRARY BUILDING. ALAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

Dot and Will sit across from Alan behind his desk.

ALAN  
 Anything we need to talk about?

DOT  
 No.

WILL  
 Don't think so.

ALAN  
 At the end of the day, we're all on the same team.

WILL  
 Of course.

DOT  
 Absolutely.

ALAN  
 (eyes them suspiciously)  
 I commend you both for your commitment.  
 (MORE)

ALAN (CONT'D)

Berea's branch manager took all her accumulated vacation days and moved to Costa Rica.

Dot and Will look to each other: that's an awesome option that never crossed either of their minds.  
Alan puts on his glasses, reads off his computer screen.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Numbers...Visitors, Check Outs, Event Attendance: All Westlake. Will, your Exit Polls and Survey Responses are better. "Bay might smell funny but there's nothing funny about the service. The librarian was courteous and helpful and I even got a kiss on the way out."

WILL

Hershey's kiss.

ALAN

You may want to consider fumigation.

WILL

Multiple times, carpets deep cleaned, the smell is--

ALAN

The books?

WILL

Yes.

ALAN

Committee is impressed. But now the real test begins. The kids are back. What are you gonna do?

DOT

Double down on Teen Tech activities, extra Storytimes, heightened security presence, after school programming that emphasizes inclusion and collaboration. Really get inside the heads--

ALAN

It was a rhetorical question.

Dot: eyebrows up. Will: holds back his smirk.

INT. MARBLE HALLWAY. DAY.

Dot and Will walk side by side down the hallway.

DOT  
Wipe that smile off your face,  
doofus. You think you know teens?

Will is about to answer.

DOT (CONT'D)  
I know teens. You've been stuck  
with your AARP crowd. I'm Woke.  
You're not even awake. You're half-  
asleep half the time.

WILL  
(egging her on)  
And the other half?

Will opens a door for her.

DOT  
The other half your head is stuck  
so far up--

Heads turn. They are now in the Main Reading Room.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Your own Ass--

Will "Shhhhhh's" her which aggravates her even more. They walk down the middle of the room with rows of tables on both sides of them. She is bursting at the seams to speak.

DOT (CONT'D)  
(tries to whisper/shout)  
You wouldn't know--

WILL  
Shhhhhhhhh.

They walk.

DOT  
(tries to whisper/shout)  
You don't know--

WILL  
Shhhhhhhhh.

They walk.

DOT  
(tries to whisper/shout)  
You aren't--

WILL  
(short blast)  
Shhh.

This infuriates her. Will moves to push open the big wooden door to exit but she's having none of his chivalry and she shoulders it open herself, which hurts.

INT. LOBBY AREA. DAY.

DOT  
Ow.

Will puts his hand on her shoulder.

WILL  
You all right?

DOT  
Don't touch me.

She slaps him away. They exit the building.

EXT. LIBRARY FRONT. STREET. PARKING LOT. DAY.

DOT  
So your surveys are better. So what? You think that matters? This is all about data. Big Data. You don't even track demographically!

Will and Dot cross the street and walk to their cars.

WILL  
You have the bedside manner of a drill sergeant.

They arrive at their cars which happen to be parked next to each other.

DOT  
Well, guess what? Drill sergeants get shit done. You don't get anything done.

A Homeless Man approaches them.

HOMELESS MAN  
Spare change? A quarter?

Will riffles through his pocket and finds change he hands to the Man without taking his focus off Dot.

WILL  
You make people uncomfortable.

DOT  
Typical man thing to say about--

HOMELESS MAN  
Spare change? Fifty cents?

Dot hands him her change but keeps her focus on Will.

DOT  
A strong woman--Well, you know what? You make people want to puke! Here's a thought: wear a different shirt!

HOMELESS MAN  
A dollar?

Will takes out his wallet, pulls out a dollar, hands it to the Homeless Man without looking at him.

WILL  
Some of us are more focused on People instead of Ferris Wheels and Artisanal Cotton Candy!

HOMELESS MAN  
Five dollars?

DOT  
Video games and bomb threats? What are you, twelve?!

Dot riffles through her purse and hands the Homeless Man a five dollar bill.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Everybody loved the Bonanza and You're just Jealous!

WILL  
Oh Yeah?!

DOT  
Yeah!!

HOMELESS MAN  
Twenty dollars?

They stand feet apart from each other with the Homeless Man between them. They each take out a twenty dollar bill and hand it to him without looking at the money or the Homeless Man. It's a stare down like two boxers before a bout. Will backpedals to his Jeep. But he keeps looking at her. Homeless Man shuffles off.

DOT  
That's what I thought. Walk away.  
You better walk away.

Will gets into his Jeep but continues staring at her. Will starts the car. He rolls down his window. Still staring at her. The Jeep backs out. Will tosses an empty thirty-two ounce Gatorade plastic bottle at her. She deflects it awkwardly. Will flicks her off as he pulls away.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Say hi to your mom for me!

Will's Jeep speeds off. Dot's adrenaline is sky high. She turns to her Mini Cooper and sees the Homeless Man peeing (back to her) against a chainlink fence.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Oh, Lord.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

The sound of motorcycles. Choppers. Hogs. Into Westlake walks a motorcycle gang of fifty Hell's Angels and/or Neo-Nazis.

GANG LEADER  
(looks terrifying, then  
cheerful)  
Good morning, we have a meeting  
room reserved for eleven-thirty, I  
believe.

Front desk: Kevin's eyes are enormous but he checks the calendar.

KEVIN  
Hell's Angels, Cleveland Chapter,  
Quarterly meeting?

GANG LEADER  
(dead straight)  
We're a poetry club.



Kevin is speechless. Joan, checking out a thriller, is terrified.

GANG LEADER (CONT'D)  
I'm just joshin' you! That's us.  
We're a little early so we'll be in  
the gift shop.

Dot arrives on scene.

GANG MEMBER  
I need a new dream journal. Mine's  
full.

The Hell's Angels take over Treasures Gift Shop, the information desk, main reading room (an especially brutal looking Hell's Angel sits down at Michael's table), children's storytime, the bathrooms. A mass exodus of patrons.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Dot walks outside and sees Will sitting atop a Harley. Will opens up the throttle and speeds off.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. FRONT PORCH/DOOR. DAY.

Dot bangs on a door. A middle-aged Man answers.

DOT  
You got a library card?! No?! Here!

Dot tosses a library card at him.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Sign this!

The Man signs.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Welcome to the public library  
system!

Dot leaves. The Man is unsure what just happened.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. COLUMBUS DAY. DAY.

Traditional Italian-American fare. Italian comfort foods, Italian cookbooks. A TV plays the movie "1492: Conquest of Paradise" with Gerard Depardieu's mug onscreen as Columbus.

WILL  
Benvenuto al Columbus Day! Enjoy  
fresh lasagna. Thank you, Stino.

An Italian-American Chef, Stino, bows.

STINO  
My pleasure!

WILL  
Learn about famous Italian-  
Americans.

Will motions to an area setup that showcases Frank Sinatra,  
Mother Cabrini, and Enrico Fermi.

WILL (CONT'D)  
And enjoy our infamous annual Bocce  
Tournament!

Will holds up two Bocce balls.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. COLUMBUS DAY. DAY.

DOT  
We return this day to its proper  
provenance: Indigenous People's  
Day!

Locals enter. Older folks are confused.

OLD MAN  
Where's Columbus?

DOT  
We do not celebrate the violent  
enslaver who propagated European  
colonization of our Native Peoples.  
Instead, we choose to highlight the  
many achievements of our local  
Cuyahoga Tribe, whether it's  
through basket weaving,

Dot motions to Kevin teaching a class in a corner.  
the fine art of bead embroidery,

Another class, led by Taylor.  
or traditional Buffalo stew,

Trey ladles a helping into a bowl.  
which the Cuyahoga Casino has been  
kind enough to sponsor.

OLD LADY  
(excited)  
Ooo, are there slot machines?

Dot's unhappy face.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. BOCCE COURT. AFTERNOON.

The Bocce final. Cheers. Pizza slices devoured. Peroni's and wine flow freely. A last roll: a bocce ball smacks the competition away. A champion is crowned. Will raises the winner's arm high. Backslaps, hugs, kisses.

FLASHBACK. 14 YEARS EARLIER.

Will turns and sees his Dad in the very same spot Will celebrates. Big Bill cheers the winner, drinks from a large glass jug of wine passed around. Big Bill hugs and is beloved by everyone, a role Will has inherited.

END FLASHBACK

Will is the same center of the celebration as his Dad.

EXT. ACROSS THE STREET FROM BAY VILLAGE LIBRARY. DAY.

Dot watches from her parked Mini Cooper. She is determined to defeat Will but also jealous of his relationship with patrons and staff.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Dot rummages through Paul's disgusting desk drawers: fast-food & M&M wrappers, everything's sticky, a cockroach crawls out. She's looking for something. She finally finds it: a USB Flashdrive labelled: "Westlake Virus, Summer 2019". Dot shuts the drawer. She holds the flashdrive in her hand and thinks.

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSES. DAY.

Halloween decorations go up in the neighborhood. Ghosts and spider webs, witches and pumpkins and goblins.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. DAY.

Will dumps bags of Mini Snickers and Mini Reese's peanut butter cups into plastic pumpkins. Mrs. Watterson plates the last candied apple on a baking sheet.

She now has three trays of a dozen each laid out on her kitchen table. She is dressed as a fairy godmother. Will's face is painted white, his hair black and slicked back, he wears all black with a white shirt. A black and red cape and collar slung over a chair, fangs in his pocket.

MRS. WATTERSON

I can make more.

WILL

This is fine. I might cut them up anyway.

MRS. WATTERSON

Don't you dare. They are perfect.

WILL

Why don't you come? It's warm.  
We'll be outside.

MRS. WATTERSON

And who is gonna hand out candy?

WILL

Just leave 'em on the porch. The kids can take what they want.

MRS. WATTERSON

Then we'll have squirrels and raccoons and birds and God knows what else.

WILL

Come for a little bit. Give out your apples.

Will takes two trays and carries one in each hand out the back door while his Mother carries the third tray.

MRS. WATTERSON

Halloween is for children and grandchildren.

WILL

Well that was blatant. Rose will be there. Misses McCluskey.

The Jeep hatchback is open. They lay the trays inside.

WILL (CONT'D)

You're really not coming?

MRS. WATTERSON

Nope.

She hands him his cape and collar.

WILL  
Fine. Suit yourself.

He kisses her on the cheek.  
Will starts the Jeep, out the window as he goes.

WILL (CONT'D)  
(pops in fangs, Dracula  
accent)  
I'll save a bloody apple just for  
you.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Bring back my baking sheets!

INT./EXT. WILL'S JEEP. DAY.

Will drives his Jeep.

WILL  
I'm running out of ideas.

MAN  
(seated next to him)  
Give her time.

WILL  
What are you supposed to be?

Man looks the same.

MAN  
(straight)  
I'm a ghost.

Will nods his head in agreement.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. HALLOWEEN. DUSK.

Sign: "Read No More"  
"a theatrical literary sensory experience"

Tables out front. Dot, Kevin, and Taylor wear costumes and check people in on iPads. Dot is dressed in all black with a bow and arrows. Three groups check in: Meg with husband Tim and their Kids, a group of Teens, and two Elderly Couples.

MEG  
This looks Amazing.

TIM  
How scary is it?

OLD MAN  
Like a haunted house?

DOT  
I'd say it's a haunted house--

TAYLOR  
On Steroids!

TEENS  
Cool!

DOT  
Enjoy. Candy corn? Candy corn? No?  
Nobody wants candy corn?

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DUSK.

The three groups enter the library.  
Meg is upbeat. Tim skeptical. Kids wide eyed.  
Elderly Couples are on alert, dubious.  
Teens are psyched, they run right in.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. HALLOWEEN. DUSK.

Tables out front: stations for apple bobbing, a makeshift bar  
with spooky drinks (Will bartends), a candyland area.  
Justin's family gets out of a hearse and approaches Will.

WILL  
(Dracula accent)  
The one day owning a hearse comes  
in handy.

JUSTIN  
I should rent it out. Could  
probably make a bundle.

WILL  
Don't forget to enter the costume  
contest. First prize is a hundred  
dollar gift certificate to  
Cheesecake Factory.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DUSK.

Justin's family enters the library. Not scared at all.  
Sign says: "Enter the Stacks of Terror if You Dare!"

They are all at ease, smiling. The Stacks of Terror are benign: walk down a row with bookshelves on both sides, spooky noises, books fall, a "Book-eating Creature" jumps out at the end but it doesn't scare anyone: clean wholesome fun.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. HALLOWEEN. DUSK.

Meg exits the building. Her kids wail. Tim comforts them.

MEG  
Thanks a lot, Dot.

DOT  
What? No good? Wasn't it fun?

MEG  
I don't think Brigid'll sleep for a week! A total blackout room! What are you insane?

DOT  
I'm sorry!

Meg leaves. Trey, in a black spandex bodysuit (only his face visible), pushes an Old Man in a wheelchair, his wife beside him, the other couple clutch each other, worn out.

OLD LADY  
Felix has a pacemaker.

DOT  
Oh, Felix, no. I'm sorry. Candy corn?

OTHER OLD LADY  
You're a stupid stupid woman.

They leave. Teens arrive, running up.

TEEN 1  
Can we go again?!

TEEN 2  
Can we?!

TEEN GIRL 3  
I peed my pants! This is fucking awesome!

DOT  
Hey, Language.

TEEN 4

I've never felt more alive!

The teens run back inside. Not thinking, Dot eats a candy corn and it's awful. She spits it out.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. HALLOWEEN. LATE NIGHT.

Staff sent home, Will cleans up. Dot walks inside.

DOT

How the hell do you do it?

WILL

What's that?

DOT

Be so genuine. Bring people together. It's bullshit.

WILL

I don't know. I guess I just picked it up from my Dad.

DOT

You suck!

WILL

(accent)

That's kinda the idea. I am Dracula.  
What are you supposed to be?

DOT

(annoyed he can't tell)

Katniss Everdeen.

Dot looks around to see if anyone is present.

DOT (CONT'D)

We alone?

WILL

Yes. Are you gonna use the arrows?

DOT

Maybe.



INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Will and Dot going at it - making out wildly. Her hands mess with his hair and beard. He hoists her up on the Information Desk and buries his face in her bosom.

WILL  
You like that?

DOT  
I like it but I hate you.

They careen into the stacks, devouring each other: books fall. They crash into another bookshelf: books drop. They spin into the Children's Area, about to land on a kiddie table but Dot stops it.

DOT (CONT'D)  
No kids.

WILL  
Agreed.

Books knocked off, they tumble onto a reading table. Dot lays back. Will struggles on his ascent. Dot snags a book and checks the title: "Kiss The Girls" by James Patterson. She discards it. She picks up another: "Dolores Claiborne" by Stephen King. She tosses it. Third book: "Wuthering Heights" by Emily Bronte. She's satisfied and good to go. Will gets on top of her.

DOT  
Read to me.

WILL  
Shut your filthy mouth.

DOT  
Don't tell me what to do!

WILL  
Turn over.

DOT  
Absolutely.

The Camera pans away to the empty library. We hear sounds of exertion - pleasure and pain - as Will reads to her:

WILL  
("Wuthering Heights")  
Be with me always - take any form -  
drive me mad!  
(MORE)

WILL (CONT'D)  
 Only do not leave me in this abyss,  
 where I cannot find you! Oh, God!  
 It is unutterable! I can not live  
 without my life! I can not live  
 without my soul!

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Post-coitus, Dot dresses. Will splayed out on the table, his Dracula cape covers him.

DOT  
 What are we doing?

WILL  
 You said that last time.

DOT  
 Don't remind me.

WILL  
 Kiss me.

She tries to fight the urge.

WILL (CONT'D)  
 Now!

She runs over and kisses him passionately. Then she walks away to leave.

DOT  
 Say hi to your mom for me.

WILL  
 That's just weird.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Will locks the front door and leaves.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. LADIES ROOM. NIGHT.

A pair of legs step down off a toilet. Dot pokes her head out of the Ladies Room. She walks over to the front desk computer, moves the mouse and the monitor lights up. Dot examines the "Westlake Virus, Summer 2019" flashdrive.

FLASHBACK. 8 YEARS EARLIER. FRONT DESK.

We see Big Bill fully for the first time.

BIG BILL  
This is Fantastic News!

He hugs Dot.

You'll be the youngest branch  
manager in history! I'm so proud of  
you. Will, isn't this great?

WILL  
Congratulations. You deserve it.

DOT  
Thanks. I don't know what to say.

BIG BILL  
Say you'll visit!

DOT  
I'll visit. Of course!

BIG BILL  
This makes me so happy. You have no  
idea.

DOT  
Me too.

END FLASHBACK

DOT (CONT'D)  
Forgive me.

She plugs the flashdrive into the computer.

Dot pushes on the main front doors: locked.  
Dot tries the backdoor: also locked.  
Side entrance: locked too.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Oh, come on.

She thinks. Dot opens a first floor window: too small to fit  
through. Second floor: same problem. Roof: Dot looks over the  
edge: no easy way down. Other side: not possible. The third  
side: a drain pipe. Dot shimmies down the drain pipe. The  
pipe snaps off the side of the building and bends. Dot holds  
on dangling. The pipe snaps. Dot falls.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Ow.

Dot lays flat on her back in a dumpster full of weeded out, discarded books being recycled.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MEETING ROOM. DAY.

Everyone applauds.

WILL  
Great job on Halloween, everybody!  
I'm sure it will lead to more  
visits, more check outs. Let's talk  
November plan: Thanksgiving. Rose--

Into the room walks Norm.

NORM  
I can't get on the internets.

Will sits at the front desk computer: squiggly lines onscreen. Will moves to the communal computers where Darryl already sits in front of one with all the annoyed Old Timer Regulars around him.

DARRYL  
Dude, I don't know what this is.

Will looks at the screen scrawling crazy lines. Will thinks. He flips through his iPhone contacts. Celia opens up a book to Will and shows him an uncooked piece of bacon.

CELIA  
I found this.

WILL  
(he takes the bacon)  
Thank you.

CELIA  
Mister Watterson--

WILL  
Not now, Celia.  
(into iPhone)  
Hey. I'm sorry to bother you. I  
could really use your help.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DOT'S OFFICE. DAY.

Dot sits in her office working. Kevin pokes his head inside.

KEVIN

Did you hear about Bay? Their whole system's down. Some virus.

DOT

(no emotion)

That's a shame.

KEVIN

We're fine. I just checked. Thought you'd want to know.

Kevin leaves. Dot thinks.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

ROSE

I'm sorry, Father, I can't check you out right now, my computer's down.

The Priest grabs the computer monitor in both hands.

PRIEST

The power of Christ compels you!  
The power of Christ compels you!

Information desk computer.

DARRYL

We're good! I'm in.

Communal computers.

WILL

(leaning over a monitor)  
You're a lifesaver. I really appreciate you getting here so fast.

Paul sits in front of a computer.

PAUL

Happy to help.

WILL

I hope this won't get you in any trouble.

PAUL

Bros before Hos.

DARRYL  
You know it.

Darryl walks past: he and Paul perform a fist bump/explosion handshake.

PAUL  
This is the same virus that  
attacked us a couple years back.

WILL  
(thinking)  
You don't say. Paul, how'd you like  
to make that Ho's head explode?

PAUL  
Nah, man, I'm a pacifist.

WILL  
(surprised)  
Oh.

PAUL  
Just kidding! Let's do it!

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DOT'S OFFICE. DAY.

DOT  
(on her desk phone, sweet  
old lady fake voice)  
I heard the library computers are  
down. Is that true?

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

ROSE  
(on the phone)  
Oh no! Not anymore. The wonderful  
Paul Gordon fixed everything!

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DOT'S OFFICE. DAY.

DOT  
(thru clenched teeth)  
Did he? Isn't that wonderful?

As Dot hangs up the phone, she hears:

ROSE  
 (cheerful)  
 Yes, you could say he was "on loan"  
 from Westlake!

Dot slams the phone into its cradle. Then she slams it again  
 and again and again and again as she lets out a,

DOT  
 Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!

Heads turn in the Westlake Library Offices. Patrons look up  
 towards Dot's office. Even two asleep teens wake up and look.  
 Kevin gently knocks and pokes his head in. Dot is face first  
 fetal position into her couch.

KEVIN  
 You okay, boss? Uh, not to make you  
 feel any worse but our website...

Dot sits up, Kevin shows her his laptop screen. Dot's eyes  
 grow large. It's a Gif of her smiling face on a busty  
 blonde's body but instead of wearing a bikini, bookmarks  
 cover her breasts, and "Moby Dick" covers her crotch. Audio  
 repeats: "Come check me out. Come check me out."

Dot's eyes blaze with rage.

INT. DOWNTOWN MAIN LIBRARY BUILDING. ALAN'S OFFICE. DAY.

ALAN  
 A computer virus! Website sabotage!  
 Neo-Nazis?!

WILL  
 Hell's Angels, actually.

Alan's eyes show fury.

ALAN  
 Do I have to separate you two?!  
 Like children? Knock it off!

DOT  
 I will when he does.

Dot stands and leaves. Alan is furious.

WILL  
 You see what I'm dealing with?

ALAN  
 Get out. Now!

Will quickly exits.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. INFORMATION DESK MONTAGE.

ROCKER CHICK

I need lyrics to a song. It goes  
like this: "La la la, la la,"

TEEN BOY

I want a biography of a dragon. No,  
an autobiography!

OLD MAN

How do I send a message out to  
everyone on the internet?

ROCKER CHICK

"La la la--"

YOUNG MOTHER

Can you hold my baby while I go to  
the bathroom?

Trey holds a baby girl.

END MONTAGE

EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. FRONT PORCH/DOOR. DAY.

A Greasy Middle-Aged Man in a wifebeater with a big belly and  
a beer in hand stands in his open front doorway.

GREASY MAN

Why sure, little lady, come on in.

Dot backs away.

DOT

Uh, you know what,

GREASY MAN

Get your butt in here.

Dot walks away.

DOT

I'll just mail it to you--

GREASY MAN

Whatever you're sellin', I'm  
buyin'!



EXT. SUBURBAN HOUSE. DAY.

Dot runs across a front lawn. A Dog chases after her.

EXT. BACK OF ANIMAL CONTROL TRUCK. DAY.

Dot hands an Animal Control Officer cash. Dot nods to the Officer.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Dot walks right into Bay, stops at the front desk.

DOT

Hi, Rose. You look very nice today.  
Sorry about this.

ROSE

Thank you?

Dot drops a cage down on the countertop and opens it: a Raccoon. Everyone runs screaming. Dot snags a Hershey's Kiss from the bowl, unwraps it, pops it in her mouth, and walks out.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. SUNRISE.

Dot walks up carrying her purse and tote bag. A huge chalk mural on the sidewalk in front of Westlake: (in beautiful calligraphy) "Westlake's Books Are Full of STDs".

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

A Mother holds a book up. Rose listens to her feedback.

MOTHER

(reading from book)

I don't believe The Cat In The Hat  
is supposed to say, "I know some  
new pricks. A lot of good pricks. I  
will show them to you. Your mother  
will not mind at all if I do."

Mother's disapproving face. Rose's embarrassed face.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Kevin to Dot.

KEVIN

It appears all of our Mysteries and  
Romances have had their dust  
jackets switched.

JOAN

This new Nora Roberts is confusing.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MAIN READING ROOM. DAY.

Kevin, inside Bay, hands out fliers to the Senior Citizen  
regulars. Fliers read: "Visit Westlake Library: Free Coffee  
for All Senior Citizens!" Kevin is not enjoying this task.

KEVIN

Sorry, Will.

WILL

It's okay, Kevin. But there's no  
soliciting, so...

Will tosses Kevin out the front door.

INT. MEETING ROOM. DAY.

Justin finishes giving his stock Chambers Funeral Home  
speech.

JUSTIN

Thank you very much.

A full crowd of Elderly Folks in attendance, and in the back  
of the room clapping and smiling is Dot. Justin gave his  
presentation at Westlake.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. OUTSIDE THE MEETING ROOM. DAY.

Justin and Dot speak while seniors exit the room.

JUSTIN

Maybe we'll just keep this between  
ourselves. He can get...

DOT

Absolutely. My lips are sealed.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. WILL'S OFFICE. DAY.

Will on the phone.

WILL  
He did What?!

Will stomps out of his office, past the front desk.  
Rose scans a book.

ROSE  
This book is nineteen years  
overdue.

ELDERLY MAN  
I'm a slow reader.

Rose stands, watching Will with concern. Will marches out the library front doors.

INT. CHAMBERS FUNERAL HOME. DAY.

Justin consoles and consults with a grieving family, walking them through casket choices. Will bursts in.

WILL  
Westlake?! You went to Her  
library!? You've got to be kidding  
me!

JUSTIN  
(to griever)  
I'm sorry. Will you excuse me for a  
moment? Thank you.

One of Justin's Assistants takes over as he ushers Will out the back door.

EXT. FUNERAL HOME. REAR ENTRANCE. A DUMPSTER. DAY.

Justin is mad. Justin never gets mad. Justin pushes Will outside.

JUSTIN  
Have you lost your mind?!

WILL  
Her Library?! Westlake!

JUSTIN  
Yes, Will! I went and spoke to  
people about End-of-Life Plans  
because that's What I Do! Have you  
noticed?! I talk to people at  
rotary clubs and nursing homes,  
hospitals, and yes, Libraries!

WILL  
My Library! Not Hers!

JUSTIN  
It's not a competition! What I do!  
What you do! You're so wrapped up  
in Winning! It's a Library! You're  
not LeBron James. And don't ever  
walk in like this again.

Justin buttons his suit, composes himself, and walks back inside. Will remains next to the dumpster. He kicks the dumpster. And it really hurts. He limps off.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MAIN READING ROOM. DAY.

A Woman tries to get up: she's stuck to her chair. Michael tries: stuck. All patrons in the room try. Patrons are able to stand but the chairs stick to their bottoms. Trey walks up to Dot with a chair stuck to his butt.

EXT. WILL'S JEEP. RAILROAD TRACKS. NIGHT.

Jeep windows fogged. Jeep shakes. Sounds of exertion.

DOT (O.S.)  
I'm faking all of this!

WILL (O.S.)  
Me too!

A freight train flies by.

INT. DOT'S HOUSE. LATE NIGHT.

Dot sits on her couch, eats soup and watches the local news.

WEATHERMAN  
Early deep freeze tonight.  
Temperatures dipping down to the  
teens!

Dot has an idea.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. EARLY MORNING.

Will's Jeep pulls into his parking spot. Will gets out and immediately falls down. He grabs the Jeep, pulls himself up, loses his footing and falls again. Rose's car pulls into the parking lot and immediately spins out across the lot.

A Man with his dog on a leash (same as earlier) tries to keep his balance as the dog pulls but then loses all his books, falls face first onto the ice rink as the dog keeps pulling him across the parking lot. Will army crawls to the front door, pulls himself up, and as he digs out his jumble of keys, loses his balance, and falls flat on his back.

EXT. CEMETERY. DAY.

Mrs. Watterson stands in front of a grave. She places a basket of chocolate chip cookies down. Justin walks up.

MRS. WATTERSON

I know it's wasteful and frowned upon, but he loved my chocolate chip cookies.

JUSTIN

I once saw a woman leave an entire cooked Honeybaked Ham, so you're fine. Where's Will?

MRS. WATTERSON

Engaged in some nonsense, no doubt.

JUSTIN

Yeah, he came after me the other day.

MRS. WATTERSON

I hope you punched him in the nose.

JUSTIN

(laughs)

May I say something? I don't want to overstep myself.

MRS. WATTERSON

Please, Justin. I've known you practically your whole life.

JUSTIN

I know you've been avoiding Bay. And that's fine, I get it. But at a certain point, if you dwell too long, you can get stuck. And what you're avoiding becomes what you are. It's a building. An old falling apart building. Don't let it own you.

Justin walks away. Mrs. Watterson thinks about Justin's advice.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Sign reads: "Tonight! Senior Fashion Gala"

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

The main reading room setup with banquet tables and chairs. Dot and her team all nicely dressed. Senior Guests begin to arrive, decked out in their finest attire.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

A car pulls in but before it can go to the parking lot, Will greets a Senior Couple.

WILL  
Complimentary valet parking?

SENIOR MAN  
Oh, how nice.

Will takes his car keys. The Senior Couple walks towards Westlake. Will hands the keys to one of his "video games" Teen Boys.

WILL  
You know what to do.

Teen Boy speeds off in the car.  
Another car arrives. Same drill but with Sam wearing a schoolboy cap greeting the elderly couple.

SAM  
Valet service.

ELDERLY WOMAN  
So fancy.

Elderly couple walks to Westlake. Sam drops the keys into a Teen Boy's hand.

SAM  
Wipe that smile off your face.

TEEN BOY  
Yes, ma'am.

Car speeds off. Cars arrive. Senior couples get out. Keys exchange hands. Cars speed off.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Kevin looks up at the wall slogan.

KEVIN  
(to Camila)  
What does this have to do with  
Read, Learn, Inspire?

CAMILA  
Beats me.

DOT  
(at the podium)  
Five minute warning, people. Our  
first item up for auction will be  
an evening with Trey Sanderson.

Trey, onstage, smiles, twirls, and shows off the goods.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Don't have a grandson? No problem,  
bid on Trey. Grandkids far away?  
Bid on Trey. If you need to use the  
bathroom, now's the time.

A platoon of Old Men make a bee-line for the men's room. An  
Old Man to Dot as he passes:

OLD MAN  
Great job. Valet parking: nice  
touch, especially when you've had a  
hip replacement.

Old Man heads for the bathroom.

DOT  
Kevin! Tell me you hired valet  
parkers.

KEVIN  
No, why would I do that--

Dot takes off running. Through the crowd, out the front  
doors, she runs to the parking lot: no cars, empty. Suddenly  
she faintly hears Frank Sinatra singing, "Come fly with me,  
let's fly, let's fly away." Dot turns and sees a large wooden  
"Lost & Found" box playing Sinatra. She walks up to it and  
looks inside: full of sets of car keys. A speaker plays the  
Sinatra. A Note:

WILL (V.O.)  
 "Have a Great Gala! Don't worry,  
 longterm airport parking is  
 perfectly safe."

Dot also now sees all the "Parking Stubs" underneath the car keys. Sinatra: "Pack up, let's fly awaaaaaaaaaaaaaay!"  
 Dot is stunned, impressed, turned on, and enraged.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

A really good-looking tan muscular Young Man walks up to the front desk. He wears a backpack and holds a C-stand.

YOUNG MAN  
 Excuse me, where is the Mark Twain  
 Room?

ROSE  
 (pointing)  
 Oh, it's right down there.

YOUNG MAN  
 Thank you.

He walks on. Rose turns and sees a busty tan blond Young Woman carrying a purse and wheeling luggage.

YOUNG WOMAN  
 I'm with him.

Rose watches her go: high heels clack, a tiny skirt shows a G-string. Before Rose knows what hit her a whole crew walks by: Guys push cases, carry lights, microphones, cameras, Gals with makeup bags and rolling racks of wardrobe - everything you need for a film shoot. Finally, a Producer/Director passes last: an older Gentleman, very tan, donning sunglasses indoors.

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR  
 (to Rose)  
 You're beautiful, sweetheart.

ROSE  
 (blushing)  
 Oh, thank you.

Will sits at his desk. Caitlin stands beside him.

WILL  
 Hey, what's up?



CAITLIN

I'm pretty sure they're shooting a  
Porno in the library.

WILL

What?!

Will runs into the Main Reading Room: the full crew stands ready, actors at their marks, the director/producer about to call "Action".

WILL (CONT'D)

Whoa! Stop! What the hell is this?!

Norm and all the Male Senior Citizen Regulars stand off to the side, a quiet receptive audience.

PRODUCER/DIRECTOR

Library Sluts 3: Long Overdue. Ari  
Finkelstein, producer. Who are you?

WILL

This is My library! Who told you  
you could shoot a Porno here?!

ARI

Adult feature, please. A lovely  
broad, Dorothy. Here's my permit,  
contract, certificate of insurance.

WILL

Get out!

ARI

You breath on me...I sue.

Will smiles, but not a happy smile.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Will, furious, physically tosses Ari out. His cast and crew follow him. Will, pissed, gets in his Jeep and speeds off.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DESK. DAY.

Will, more determined and angry than he's ever been his entire life, walks through the double sliding doors. He walks up to the Information Desk and Kevin:

KEVIN

(cheerful)

Oh, hi, Will.

WILL  
(seething)  
Where is she?

KEVIN  
Are you looking for Dot?

Will grabs Kevin by his lapels and pulls him along.

WILL  
(at the top of his lungs)  
Dorothy!!

Heads turn throughout the library. Everyone suddenly aware something is happening. Will tosses Kevin down to the carpet in the Main Reading Room. Dot appears.

DOT  
Get out of here, you Neanderthal!  
This is a place of Learning and  
Knowledge!

WILL  
You sent a Porno Crew to my  
library!

Kevin and other librarians and patrons gather.

DOT  
You're off your Meds! He obviously-

WILL  
A Porno! Where Children read!  
Adults find jobs! A Safe Space!

Will walks slowly at Dot.

DOT  
So what?! You Stole Cars!  
Superglued Chairs! Sabotaged  
Books!! It's true! He did.

Will picks up a book from off a shelf, a small thin paperback, and flicks it at Dot. She avoids getting hit. Dot pauses and absorbs what this escalation means. She casually picks up a paperback...and tosses it at Will. He easily moves out of the way. The stare down between the two says: it's on.

KEVIN  
Oh, shit.

Will picks up a small hardcover and fires it at Dot: shoulder hit. Dot snatches a medium paperback and rifles it at Will: thigh hit.

Will flings biography after biography at Dot: hits and misses. Dot escapes the onslaught, grabs an oversized book and uses it as a shield.

Will rapid fires lightweight romance paperbacks at her. Dot retreats and flicks DVDs cases at Will like frisbees. Will takes hit after hit as he snatches a giant world atlas to use as cover. He notices the huge reference dictionaries and has an idea: massive six-inch thick dictionary mortars rain down on Dot as Will launches them high in the air.

Dot evades hits but the effort exhausts her. The librarian audience is now concerned. Taylor, Camila, and David move to break it up but Kevin stops them.

KEVIN (CONT'D)  
Stay out of it! It's between the  
Librarians!

Dot dives over a table and resurfaces wielding a wood rod newspaper stick. She twirls the newspaper tight around the stick, lets out a scream, and jousts towards Will. Will grabs a large leather bound book and holds it against his chest as Dot's rod strikes him. Down goes Will.

Dot kneels over him and raises the stick high like Excalibur. At the last second, Will's outstretched hand snags the leather book and he strikes Dot across the face, knocking her out. The crowd falls silent.

Will stands. He sees Dot laid out unconscious on the carpet. Will: what have I done? Will looks to the leather book he holds: "War and Peace" by Leo Tolstoy. Will feels librarian eyes on him. He holds out "War and Peace" as a weapon: a decision dawns on him. Kevin realizes it first.

KEVIN (CONT'D)  
No!

Will holds "War and Peace" in both hands and with a swift upercut under his own chin, knocks himself out, his body flies skyward and lands on the carpet, beside Dot. Librarians rush to tend to their fallen colleagues.

FADE TO BLACK.

Will's asleep face. He slowly wakes and rolls over.

WILL  
Where am I?

INT. PRISON CELL. DAY.

DOT  
Library jail.

Will looks to the cell next to him: Dot.

WILL  
There's no such thing as library  
jail. That's an urban myth--

A heavy door shuts. Alan enters.

ALAN  
No eating. No sleeping. No  
Fighting! What would Big Bill say?  
Trusted. Respected. Beloved. And to  
the best of my knowledge, trained  
you two bozos...One more thing, and  
I mean One...  
(he motions "Gone/Dead")  
Happy Thanksgiving.

WILL  
Happy Thanksgiving.

DOT  
Happy Thanksgiving, Alan.

Alan exits. Enter Mrs. Watterson.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. DINING ROOM. DAY.

Dining room table laid out with traditional Thanksgiving fare. Mrs. Watterson sits at the head. Instead of Will at the other head, Mrs. Watterson seats Will and Dot in the center facing each other. Dot and Will await Mrs. Watterson's blessing to serve the food. Mrs. Watterson nods "Yes". Dot grabs the stuffing, Will snags the mashed potatoes. They fill their plates, and pass foods to Mrs. Watterson, but neither Will nor Dot will hand an item to the other. They place the bowl or plate on the table and force the other to pick it up. Mrs. Watterson takes notice.

MRS. WATTERSON  
(to Will)  
I'd like dark, please.

Will picks up the carved turkey tray, walks over, and serves his mother. Will serves himself only light pieces. He places the tray back down on the table. Dot stands to reach across.

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)  
 William...

Her look requires no further words. Will rises, picks up the tray, Dot sits. Will walks around the table, beside Dot.

WILL  
 Light or dark?

DOT  
 Both. Please.

Dot and Will make eye contact and the shared hatred begins to recede. Will gives her both light and dark pieces of turkey.

WILL  
 Gravy?

DOT  
 Yes. Thank you.

Will spreads gravy over her turkey, stuffing, and mashed potatoes. Mrs. Watterson smiles. The three eat in silence but no longer uncomfortably.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

Dishes being done. Dot rinses in the sink. She hands plates to Will and he lines them up in the dishwasher. Mrs. Watterson puts items away in cupboards and the pantry. Finished, Mrs. Watterson wipes her hands on a dish towel.

MRS. WATTERSON  
 Come with me.

EXT./INT. MRS. WATTERSON'S FORD FOCUS. DUSK.

Mrs. Watterson drives. Will and Dot sit in the backseat like children.

EXT. CEMETERY. DUSK.

Mrs. Watterson stands in front of Big Bill's headstone:

"William Watterson"  
 1950-2019  
 Beloved Husband, Father & Librarian

Dot and Will stand on each side of Mrs. Watterson.

MRS. WATTERSON  
 Your father used a lot of sports  
 sayings that I never cared  
 for...But one sticks in my mind  
 which you two might find useful.

Mrs. Watterson turns and faces them.

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)  
 It's not whether you win or lose,  
 but how you play the game.

Mrs. Watterson walks away, leaving them. Dot and Will stand  
 in silence looking at the headstone. Finally,

DOT  
 I owe your dad everything.

WILL  
 Me too...Truce?

Will looks at Dot. Dot holds out her hand. Will shakes it.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

A foot of snow dumped on the ground:

"Winter"

It's a frigid morning as Will walks inside.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Rose sits behind the front desk wearing her winter coat, hat,  
 scarf, and mittens. She is on the phone.

ROSE  
 No, I'm sorry, we don't get  
 squirrels out of people's houses.  
 Try animal control.

WILL  
 No heat?

ROSE  
 Oh, I don't know. I thought I was  
 just cold.

Will talks to Jim Allen, his HVAC guy who wears a uniform.

JIM  
 Toast.

WILL  
What do you mean Toast?

Celia walks right up and interrupts them.

CELIA  
Mister Watterson, you can't stop me  
from--

WILL  
Not now, Celia.

CELIA  
Volunteering, it comes from the  
Latin--

WILL  
Celia! Go away.

Celia leaves, but undeterred.

JIM  
You need a new boiler. The thing's  
ancient.

WILL  
Just so happens to die now? Right  
before Christmas?

JIM  
Your dad was patching and finessing  
it for years.

WILL  
Something's fishy.

JIM  
What, you think I sabotaged it?

WILL  
Not you.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DOT'S OFFICE. DAY.

Kevin pops his head inside.

KEVIN  
Bay has no heat. Their boiler's  
shot. Probably have to close for at  
least a week.

DOT  
That's, uh, too bad.

KEVIN

I mean it sucks for them. Great for us. The tree just arrived.

DOT

(mind elsewhere)

I'll be right there.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Will talking to the whole library.

WILL

You must leave. We have no heat.

NORM

What about a generator?

CAT LADY REGULAR

I've got a space heater.

OLD LADY REGULAR

We can build a fire!

WILL

The chimneys are sealed shut.

OLD MAN REGULAR

Open a window! Burn some books!

WILL

I'm not even gonna dignify that.  
But I do have an idea. I need all  
your help.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Folding tables opened and legs kicked into place.  
Carts full of books pushed outside.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. WILL'S OFFICE. DAY.

Will types vigorously on his computer. He hits print.

Will hands a stack of print outs to Rose as he flips through  
his iPhone contacts.

WILL

Email everybody. Put these up.  
Facebook, Instagram, Twitter,  
LinkedIn.



ROSE  
(overwhelmed)  
Oh my.

WILL  
Sam, help her.

SAM  
Let's start with TikTok.

ROSE  
Like the clock?

KEN  
Will, where are you going?

WILL  
To spread the word.

A Six Year Old Boy places a picture book on the check out counter: "Cloudy With A Chance of Meatballs" by Judi & Ron Barrett.

BOY  
I've read it before. I just keep finding new stuff every time. It's got so many layers.

INT./EXT. WILL'S JEEP. DAY.

DAD  
Are we doing it?! Is it happening?!

WILL  
You always said, when in doubt.

DAD  
This is gonna be fun.

WILL  
Hang on.

Will's Jeep skids through a corner.

INT. RADIO STATION. DAY.

Will on air with Brucie & The Nads, two talk radio DJs.

WILL  
Come down to Bay Library. We need you. Bring books. Bring cash.  
(MORE)

WILL (CONT'D)  
Please. Without you we can't  
survive. Thank you!

BRUCIE  
That's Today, Bay Library. Big Book  
Sale! Bring books, bring cash,  
bring Yo Momma! Let's get this  
library Some Heat!

Commercial break.

WILL  
I owe you guys. Beers on me.

NADS  
No problem, man. I love that  
library. First place I felt tittay!

WILL  
I'll add that to our testimonials.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. DAY.

Will runs in the backdoor and runs upstairs.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Hello?

WILL  
(as he runs upstairs)  
Be right down.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. DAD'S OFFICE/STUDY. DAY.

Will runs inside. Full bookshelves. Will focuses on the books above the mantle. They wear plastic sleeves. He runs his fingers across the spines: Dubliners, To Kill A Mockingbird, The Sound And The Fury, The Old Man And The Sea, The Great Gatsby, Harry Potter And The Philosopher's Stone. All first editions. Will snags an empty box, pushes books together off the mantle and carefully puts them in a box. Will picks up the box. His Mom appears in the doorway.

MRS. WATTERSON  
What are you doing?

WILL  
What Dad would've wanted.

Will runs out of the room and down the stairs. Mrs. Watterson turns and watches him go, a proud smile across her face.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Will runs up with his box. The front area has been shoveled, tables setup, books organized by category, signs put out - they've done this many times before but with one caveat.

WILL  
Marian! Ken!

Will hands the box to them.  
My Dad's first editions. I trust  
you to figure out their worth.

KEVIN  
You're selling these?

MARIAN  
(concerned)  
Will?

WILL  
It's fine. Really.  
(to everybody)  
Listen up! We need to raise twenty  
thousand dollars for a new boiler.  
Books are gonna be coming in,  
money's gonna be coming in. Let's  
work together, stay warm - Carl,  
how about some hot chocolate?

CARL  
You got it, Will.

WILL  
And most of all, let's have fun!

Will sees his Dad, arms folded, leaning against a corner of the building, a sly smile of pride.

MONTAGE. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY.

Everybody gets to work. Putting out books. Customers peruse. Cash exchanges hands. Marian and Ken price the first editions. More people arrive.

Justin's family shows up. Will sees them. Will runs inside. He runs back out, approaches Justin, holds up a six-pack of Christmas Ale in one hand and a children's book in the other: "Sorry (Really Sorry)" by Cotler & Bliss with a pig and dog, best friends, on the cover. Will points to the pig.

WILL  
That's me.

JUSTIN  
You got that right.

Justin smiles. They hug, fight forgiven.  
Cash exchanges hands. Will drinks hot cocoa. People show up  
with armloads full of books. Marian and Ken price them. Sun  
goes down. Car headlights turn on.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DUSK.

Out front a big tree a la Rockefeller Center's Christmas  
tree. A Man on an articulated lift places the star atop. Dot  
supervises. A Worker flicks a switch. The Tree lights up.  
Everyone Oooo's. The Star lights up. Everyone Ahhhh's.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT ATRIUM. DUSK.

Dot enters the front lobby. Kiosks for Hanukkah, Kwanzaa,  
Winter Solstice, and Las Posadas.

OLD MAN  
What the hell is Las Posadas?

DOT  
Excellent question. Happy Holidays.  
It's a nine-day novena celebrated  
by our southern neighbors which  
commemorates the nine month  
pregnancy of Mary.

OLD MAN  
This is America. Why don't you put  
up a goddamn Nativity? And it's  
Merry Christmas!

He keeps walking.

DOT  
Appreciate the feedback!

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Still going strong in the darkness. Ken holds up a first  
edition.

KEN  
Will! Cha-Ching!

WILL  
Great Job!

Will sees Rose shivering.

WILL (CONT'D)

Why don't you go inside and warm up?

ROSE

I'm fine. This is too much fun.  
I've got hand warmers.

Christmas music plays.

Carl and Sam handle money. She helps him count.

Diana flirts. She sells four romance paperbacks to a Guy.

Suddenly Caitlin produces Hot Toddys to keep the festivities humming. Books are donated. Books are bought. Cash exchanges hands. Laughter. Drinks. Will the center of it all.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FROM ACROSS THE STREET.  
NIGHT.

Through her Mini Cooper window, Dot observes. She's not angry. She's not competitive. She simply watches: a little sad and a lot jealous. She starts her Mini Cooper and drives off, passing Mrs. Watterson who emerges from behind a tree. Dot doesn't see her. Mrs. Watterson wants to walk over and join the fun but she still can't bring herself to visit the library. But damn, it looks like a blast.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. LATE NIGHT.

Bay staff. The final money count. Everyone's exhausted. Caitlin finishes the tally.

CAITLIN

Twenty-one thousand five hundred  
sixty-seven dollars.

WILL

Amazing! I'm calling Jim right now.

KEN

It's three o'clock in the morning.

WILL

Let's get this puppy installed  
Today! Everybody, go home, get some  
rest, come back tomorrow and we'll  
get some heat, put up the Christmas  
decorations, deck the halls and  
holly everybody's jolly!

Will moves to leave, flings his scarf over his shoulder.

CAITLIN  
What about all this cash?

Will does a quick spin around a column.

WILL  
I better take that.

Will scoops up the cash. Carl passed out in a kiddie beanbag chair.

HOLIDAY MONTAGE. BAY & WESTLAKE. BACK AND FORTH.

Westlake - Crowds enter through the front doors, Dot's camera tracking software numbers increase.

Bay - Will holds his hands over a radiator as if a fire and smiles: Heat! Will shakes Jim's hand - Crowds enter - Rose tries to keep up with her manual clicker - Books checked out.

Dot - Going door to door - she signs up a family but isn't as motivated as usual.

Westlake - Items checked out - "Deck the Stacks" Event.

Bay - "How to Make a Gingerbread House" - Items checked out.

Dot's House - in pajamas, she sits on her couch, sips tea, pets her cat, and watches "A Charlie Brown Christmas" on TV.

Will's Mom's House - Evening. Doorbell rings. Carolers sing on the front porch. Will opens the door, he smiles and nods his head politely. He starts to close the door but Mrs. Watterson's foot stops him. Will opens the door wide and they enjoy the Carolers. Will and his Mom applaud. Will riffles through his pockets. Mrs. Watterson rolls her eyes.

Kitchen - Mrs. Watterson, her purse and pocketbook open, gives Will single dollar bills. He nods, "Keep going." She stops at seven. He snatches a ten dollar bill, gives her a quick kiss on the cheek and runs out. She huffs in protest but smiles.

Westlake - Foot traffic - First Menorah candle lit - Holiday Movie Night: "Home Alone"

Bay - Setting up the Nativity Scene outside, perfectly positioning and lighting the Baby Jesus - Items checked out.

Westlake - Items checked out - Kwanzaa Event - Toy Drive - Dot catches Mr. Flemington on a computer again and chases him out with a donated Nerf baseball bat.

Bay - Handbell Choir.

Westlake - Dreidel Games - Holiday Movie Night: "The Polar Express" - Dot giving Joan more recommendations.

Dot's House - she's almost completed a giant jigsaw puzzle of the Great Library of Alexandria on her dining room table. Her cat walks across it.

Will's Mom's House - Kitchen. Mrs. Watterson bakes Christmas cookies. Will fakes putting them in a basket but one-by-one either gives them to Justin's kids, Justin, Maureen, or eats them himself. His Mom acts mad but she's loving every second of it, having energy in the house.

Bay - Cookie Swap Event - Foot traffic - Canned Food Drive - Books checked out. Celia following Will.

Westlake - Holiday Magic Show: Winter Magic - Las Posadas Event - Menorah: third candle lit.

Bay - Coat Drive - Will sees Mr. Flemington on a computer. Will snatches a coat and places it over his monitor.

Dot - Going door to door: a family signs up and gives her a cookie. She bites into it. Mmm, good. The front door closes and she spits out the bland cookie.

Westlake - An Evening with The Grinch - Holiday Movie: "Elf"

Bay - People checking out books - A Christmas Carol reading.

Int. Dot's House - Dot places a present under her Christmas tree to join the dozen others. Labels show they're all for her cat: Monsieur Poirot, who sniffs them curiously.

Westlake - foot traffic - Items checked out - VR Sleigh Ride - Jingle Bell Rocks! Concert.

Bay - 'Twas The Night Before Christmas - Family Storytime - Books checked out.

Westlake - Foot traffic.

Bay - Foot traffic.

Westlake - Santa - Dot's professionally hired Santa with a gingerbread house, sleigh, elves. A happy child sits on his lap. Santa smiles, the kid smiles.

Bay - Santa - it's Will dressed up as Santa. No house, no elves, just Will and a decorated throne of twinkly lights. But the kids are happy and Will camps it up in character.

Westlake - Dot watches everyone leave as the library closes for the night.

Bay - Will waves goodnight to the last stragglers. Rose helps him get out of the Santa suit.

ROSE

For a minute there I almost thought  
you were Big Bill.

WILL

This was his favorite day.

Westlake - Dot drives home, she's done everything she possibly can.

Int. Will's Mom's House - In the family room, a fire crackles in the fireplace, TV shows "It's A Wonderful Life". Will passed out asleep in his Dad's recliner. His Mom drapes one of her knitted blankets over him. She sits on her couch, sips her tea, and takes a bite of one of her cookies. From the TV: Zuzu Bailey: "Look, Daddy, teacher says, every time a bell rings, an angel gets his wings." George Bailey: "That's right. That's right. Thatta boy, Clarence." For Auld Lang Syne sung.

FADE TO BLACK.

The banging of what sounds like a gavel...

INT. DOWNTOWN MAIN LIBRARY BUILDING. MEETING ROOM. DAY.

...but is actually a wooden bookend.  
The big table, podium, screen. Same as earlier.

ALAN

Thank you for the hard work these  
past six months. There are no  
winners and losers, only  
librarians. Now, the winners  
are...Chagrin Falls...

Joy and disappointment. Smiles and hugs.

ALAN (CONT'D)

Berea...

Relief and sadness. Smiles and hugs.

ALAN (CONT'D)

And...



Colleagues hug Will. Colleagues shake Dot's hand. It's unclear who won and who lost.

INT. MAIN LIBRARY. MARBLE HALLWAY. DAY.

WILL  
Congratulations.

Will puts out his hand. Dot accepts and shakes it.

DOT  
Thank you.

Colleagues mingle, consoling the losers and congratulating the winners. Alan walks up between Will and Dot.

ALAN  
(to Will)  
Your testimonials were inspiring.  
(reading)  
"Helped me get a job." "Taught me  
Zoom." "Made me feel special."  
(to Dot)  
But numbers don't lie, and yours  
were impressive.

DOT  
Numbers.

ALAN  
(reading)  
Four hundred thousand patron  
visits. Million items checked out.  
A thousand events. And the big one:  
every single man, woman, child, and  
newborn in Westlake, Ohio has a  
library card.

Dot's face accepts the compliment but it doesn't elicit the joy she expected.

ALAN (CONT'D)  
I don't know how that's even  
possible. Great Job!

Alan pats Dot on the arm. Colleagues continue to console Will. Dot stands in the middle of the hallway alone.

INT./EXT. DOT'S MINI COOPER. DAY.

Dot drives home alone. No celebratory music. No phone calls from family and friends.

EXT. MEG'S HOUSE. DUSK.

Dot's Mini Cooper stops across the street from Meg's house. Dot looks through her car window in the front windows of the house: big beautiful Christmas Tree lit up, kids running around, Tim, Meg, Mr. and Mrs. Geiger laughing. All happy.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. EVENING.

Parked across the street from Bay Library in her Mini Cooper, Dot watches through her car window. Out front Carolers sing as Patrons, Librarians, Staff, and Friends hug Will and wish each other a Merry Christmas. Coats and canned food are donated. Dot is upset.

A knock on her driver's side window. It startles her. She sees Mrs. Watterson. Dot quickly wipes her eyes and rolls down the window.

MRS. WATTERSON  
You all right, dear?

DOT  
Yes, hi, Misses Watterson. I'm fine. Good. Thanks.

MRS. WATTERSON  
You know, you won.

DOT  
(laughing to herself)  
Yeah, that's what they tell me.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Why don't you come over for some tea?

DOT  
Oh, thank you, really, I think I'm just gonna go home--

MRS. WATTERSON  
And Christmas cookies. I make the best Christmas cookies.

DOT  
I'm sure you do. Thank you. Really. Some other time?

Dot finally looks up and makes eye contact with Mrs. Watterson.

MRS. WATTERSON  
I'd like that.

Dot starts her Mini Cooper and drives off. Mrs. Watterson watches her go, then turns her attention to her Son.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. NIGHT.

Dot enters the dark closed library. She sees the Kwanzaa booth, Hanukkah, Las Posadas, Winter Solstice, the Toy Drive toys. She passes Treasures, Jack's Beans, and Bookworms. She walks the stacks. She views the movie room setup, VR headsets. She sees one cool thing after another but, as awesome as it all is, there is no warmth, no personality, no human touch, no love. She looks up at "Read! Learn! Inspire!" on the wall. Dot stops in front of her favorite thing: a whiteboard, filled with events and ideas, street maps to canvas - her whole plan laid out. She picks up an eraser, eyes the board, and smiles.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. LATE NIGHT.

Will, drunk, stumbles up the stairs to his Dad's Office/Study. He plops in an armchair and swigs from a beer.

WILL  
Thirty-six years: Poof! All that  
work...for Nothing!

Big Bill sits behind his desk.

DAD  
(joking)  
I created a monster.

WILL  
That's true.

DAD  
Dorothy is a force.

WILL  
She kicked our Ass!

Mrs. Watterson enters.

MRS. WATTERSON  
What are you doing? Who are you  
talking to?

WILL  
(drunk)  
Who are You talking to?

MRS. WATTERSON  
What? Go to bed! You lost. Stop  
being a baby.

WILL  
You're a baby.

MRS. WATTERSON  
Bed. Now. Let's go.

Will sways getting up. He stumbles to his room down the hall.

WILL  
You're a baby, baby.

Will face plants into his bed. Mrs. Watterson watches to make sure he's all right. She's seen him drunk many times. Arms crossed, she leans against the doorway and lets out a long sigh. Will snores.

INT. DOWNTOWN MAIN LIBRARY BUILDING. HALLWAY. DAY.

Dot sits on a wooden bench in the hallway. She sees Alan exit an office and pounces, at his side walking with him.

DOT  
Alan! There's been a mistake. I  
want a recount or reconsider.

ALAN  
What are you talking about?

DOT  
I shouldn't have won. I cheated. I  
knocked out their heat. It was me.

ALAN  
(busy)  
I don't believe you. And I don't  
care. What's done is done. You won.  
Enjoy it. Take your staff to Chuck  
E Cheese or Applebees or whatever  
you do in the suburbs. It's over.  
Goodbye.

Alan enters an office and shuts the door.

DOT  
But, Alan, please--

Alan pops his head back out.

ALAN  
It's over.

Alan disappears into the office. Dot thinks a moment.

INT. MOOSEHEAD SALOON. DAY.

Will sits at the bar. Two Drunks in the corner. The Bartender. Dot enters, goes straight to Will.

WILL  
(drunk)  
Hello, Dorothy.

DOT  
(to bartender)  
How long's he been here?

BARTENDER  
What are you, his mother?

DOT  
Will, I've thought about this and  
you should've won. Not me. You.

WILL  
Ha! Don't be a sore winnerer.

DOT  
(loud)  
Will You Listen To Me!

BARTENDER  
Hey! If you're gonna shout, take it  
outside. It's still Hangover Hour.

REGULAR  
Damn straight.

Regular downs a shot. Dot's face is appalled.

EXT. BEHIND THE MOOSEHEAD SALOON. DAY.

Empty parking lot.

WILL  
Did you sabotage my boiler? Did  
you?!

DOT  
No! I didn't break your boiler.

WILL  
Swear on my dad's grave?

DOT  
I swear on Big Bill's grave.

Will's eyes are huge.

WILL  
Doesn't matter. You won.

DOT  
I haven't won anything.

WILL  
(drunk)  
You won.

DOT  
No, you won.

WILL  
You won.

DOT  
You won--

WILL  
You won--

DOT  
Stop it! This is pathetic. I love  
you but you're acting like a loser.  
And you're not a loser. You're a  
winner.

Dot walks off.

WILL  
Hey! Where are you going?

DOT  
(over her shoulder)  
To say hi to your Mom!

Will's drunk confused face.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. DINING ROOM. DAY.

Mrs. Watterson and Dot sit at opposite heads of the dining room table. A tea set between them: tea cups and saucers.

DOT

I love your son but he's gotta get out of this house. Live his own life.

MRS. WATTERSON

(pause, then)

I agree.

Dot is surprised.

DOT

How long have you known?

MRS. WATTERSON

A mother knows.

Sit up straight, dear. Posture begets power.

Dot adjusts her shoulders, neck, and head.

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)

My husband thought you were the finest librarian he'd ever seen.

DOT

Thank you.

MRS. WATTERSON

Are you ready to prove it?

DOT

Yes, ma'am. But I need your help.

MRS. WATTERSON

I'm listening...

Mrs. Watterson drinks her tea.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MORNING.

Dot pulls her whiteboard out of her office and wheels it to the front atrium. Her Team assembled.

DOT

Good morning. Thank you for your hard work. We won. Yay.

Applause.

DOT (CONT'D)  
It was challenging. And I know that  
I've been a...  
(searching for the right  
word)

TAYLOR  
Bitch.

DOT  
Okay. And--

CAMILA  
An asshole.

DOT  
That's fair. And I'm--

KEVIN  
A cunt!

Dot's eyes grow large.

DOT  
Kevin!

KEVIN  
Too much?

DOT  
I would think so. The point is I've  
been wrong, and I'm sorry.

CHRISSY  
But we won.

DOT  
Did we? We killed a library. Fired  
our fellow librarians. Instead of  
working together. Helping each  
other. Isn't that what we do?

Dot looks to David. He nods in agreement.

DOT (CONT'D)  
I want to make it right. But I  
can't do it alone. I need all of  
you. I'm asking you to trust me,  
this one time. I'm begging you to  
listen to your own...  
(hand over her heart)  
(MORE)



DOT (CONT'D)  
There's only one item on the agenda  
today.

Dot flips the whiteboard. Faces take in what she's written:  
Kevin, Taylor, David, Chrissy, Camila, Paul, Trey.  
Dot hands Kevin a sign.

DOT (CONT'D)  
Put it up.

Kevin smiles approval.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. WILL'S OFFICE. DAY.

Will, head down, hungover, sleeps at his desk. Rose places a  
mug of coffee next to his head.

ROSE  
Morning, Will.

Will makes a noise.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. MORNING.

Mrs. Watterson bakes. Baking sheets go into the oven as she  
preps more dough.

INT./EXT. SCHOOL BUS. DAY.

Dot's entire Team rides on a school bus. Dot stands in front  
and directs the driver.

DOT  
(to her team)  
Isn't this fun?!

Camila and David are not enjoying the bumpy ride.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

As Mrs. Watterson bakes she is also on the phone.

MRS. WATTERSON  
(phone on her ear)  
What's it called, a scoop? Well,  
that dear, is what I'm giving you.

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)  
 (phone on her other ear)  
 You might want to check it out,  
 that's all I'm saying. Who am I?

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)  
 (phone on the original ear)  
 Just a concerned citizen. Aren't  
 you?

INT./EXT. SCHOOL BUS. DAY.

Dot exits the school bus with her team following behind her.  
 She strides confidently forward.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

Mrs. Watterson pulls a tray of freshly baked cookies out of  
 the oven.

MRS. WATTERSON  
 (on the phone)  
 You're a human being, correct?  
 Well, this is a human interest  
 story, so get on it!

MRS. WATTERSON (CONT'D)  
 (phone on other ear,  
 laughing)  
 You two are terrible! I'll see you  
 in a bit. Thanks, boys.

She hangs up and crosses another name off her grocery pad  
 list: ~~Channel 2~~, ~~Channel 4~~, ~~Channel 5~~, ~~Channel 7~~, ~~Radio Boys~~.

EXT./INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Head held high, Dot walks into Bay, her entire Westlake team  
 with her.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. FRONT DOORS. DAY.

Michael tries to enter but the sliding motion sensor doors  
 don't open. Then he sees a sign taped to the doors:

"We're Closed - Go to Bay"

Further inside, Dot's Whiteboard: "Save Bay"

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Will hears commotion and lifts his head off his desk to better listen. He decides to investigate.

Will enters the front lobby and sees Dot and her team.

DOT

Where do you want us?

WILL

What's going on?

DOT

We...

(motions to everyone)

Closed Westlake. We're here to help. Isn't that what we do?

Everyone waits on Will's response. He looks around the room. Every face, whether Westlake or Bay, shows a commitment to doing the right thing.

WILL

Okay. Rose could use help at the front desk. Children are with Caitlin. Ken and Marian...

DOT

Meet Chrissy.

CELIA

I'd like to help...

WILL

Dot, meet Mini-Dot.

Celia's eyes grow enormous with joy. Dot is unsure what Will just got her into. Hubbub of everyone meeting counterparts: handshakes, introductions, assignments.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Media arrives. Vans, trucks, satellite dishes, cameras setup on tripods, lights, microphones.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

More Patrons arrive and see the signs. Joan decides to go check it out.

INT. WILL'S MOM'S HOUSE. KITCHEN. DAY.

Mrs. Watterson puts the final touches on her Christmas cookies.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

FEMALE REPORTER  
We're outside Bay Village Library  
where something strange is  
happening...

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Dot walks towards the front doors.

WILL  
What are you gonna do?

DOT  
Pick a fight.

Dot pushes the doors open and walks outside.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Dot walks up to the cameras and microphones.

DOT  
Thank you all for joining us. My  
name is Dorothy Geiger, branch  
manager of Westlake Library. As you  
can see, this is not Westlake but  
Bay, an original Carnegie library.

Will watches through the front doors.

EXT. SUBURBAN STREET. DAY.

Mrs. Watterson, in her best coat and hat, walks down snowy shoveled sidewalks. She carries a large basket under her arm. Head held high, a small smile graces her lips.

DOT (V.O.)  
Bay Library is set to close at the  
end of the month. And my Westlake  
Library will survive. You can blame  
budget cuts. You can blame  
bureaucracy. But no: blame me. It's  
my fault. And I'm sorry.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Will walks out the front doors.

DOT

Westlake has the coolest gadgets,  
newest technology, best systems  
money can buy. But you can't buy  
warmth. You can't purchase  
personality. And you can't make a  
heart beat. It has to come from  
within.

Mrs. Watterson walks up the sidewalk with her basket. Will  
sees her.

WILL

Holy shit.

DOT

Bay is the Heart of our library  
system. Big Bill Watterson led this  
branch for thirty-six years.  
Tragically, two years ago, we lost  
him. But it's people like Big Bill.  
And his wife, Mary Ellen,

MRS. WATTERSON

Hello.

Snow begins to fall.

DOT

And his son, Will, the current  
branch manager, that bring the  
warmth from within.

(speaking about herself)

Not all of us think we have it. But  
I promise you, if you take the time  
to look, you'll find it. It's been  
there all along.

MRS. WATTERSON

Cookie?

Mrs. Watterson reveals her incredible bouquet of Christmas  
cookies. Oooh's and Ahhhh's.

Both teams - Bay and Westlake - exit the library. Reporters  
and Cameramen take cookies and join the celebration. Even  
Nads and Brucie enjoy cookies, on their best behavior around  
Mrs. Watterson.

A line of cars arrives from Westlake, Michael and Joan included. Horns honk in solidarity and annoyance because the media trucks and vans are blocking all the parking.

INT. DOWNTOWN MAIN LIBRARY BUILDING. AN OFFICE. DAY.

Alan watches on TV from his office, beyond annoyed. Sound of an ambulance passing in the background.

ALAN  
Fucking suburbs.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. MAGIC HOUR.

WILL  
(to Dot)  
You think this'll work?

DOT  
No idea. But it feels good!

WILL  
Mom, you ready?

MRS. WATTERSON  
Come on, Dot. I'll show you my  
favorite spot.

Arm in arm, Dot and Mrs. Watterson enter Bay Library together.

Will watches them walk inside. Will turns and notices someone snowblowing the front sidewalk by the Bay Library sign. Snow blown in Will's direction. Who is that? The Snowblower stops and Will sees: it's his Dad.

Dad smiles. Will smiles. Dad falls backwards onto the snow and makes a snow angel. Pure joy. Will laughs. Dad fades away and disappears. Will smiles through tears. Will turns and sees a group of kids carrying books. Will holds open the library door for them. The line of kids enter.

WILL  
Merry Christmas.

A Little Girl stops.

LITTLE GIRL  
Do you have the Grinch book?

WILL  
You betcha. I can show you where.

Little Girl's face lights up. She takes Will's hand and leads him into the library.

WILL (CONT'D)  
It's a classic.

FADE TO BLACK.

EXT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. LAWN IN FRONT. SIGN. SUNRISE.

Spring. Green. Flowers. Sunshine. Birds chirp.

INT. WESTLAKE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Front Desk: Rose coaches Trey and Sam on how to engage with patrons. Trey stares at Sam, enraptured. Sam acts like she's ignoring Trey but likes him too. Enter Michael.

ROSE  
Good morning, Michael.

MICHAEL  
Morning, Rose.

Bookworms: David and Camila lead a Storytime, reading aloud from "Make Way For Ducklings" by Robert McCloskey.

Chrissy and Ken assist patrons at the Information desk.

OLD GUY  
Do you have any large print audiobooks?

4 YEAR OLD GIRL  
Mommy, what do librarians do when the library is closed?

MOTHER  
They become real people.

Dot exits Westlake.

INT./EXT. DOT'S MINI COOPER. DAY.

Dot drives her Mini Cooper. Lizzo music plays. She smiles, enjoying it. Perhaps she sings along.

EXT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Mrs. Watterson, Mr. & Mrs. Geiger, Meg, Tom, Justin, Maureen and all their kids enjoy a picnic on the grass in the sunshine. Dot smiles and waves as she walks inside Bay.

INT. BAY VILLAGE PUBLIC LIBRARY. DAY.

Darryl and Paul install a new camera system.  
Front desk: Kevin teaches Diana and Marian the new software.  
Caitlin and Taylor lead a Storytime, reading aloud from "The Little Engine That Could" by Watty Piper.  
Will hangs a framed photograph of his Dad on the wall.  
Dot walks up to him. They kiss.

WILL  
How's Rose doing?

DOT  
She is a treasure.

Dot can't help herself, she straightens the picture frame.

DOT (CONT'D)  
How go the tutorials?

WILL  
Slow and steady. It's a steep  
learning curve but we'll get there.  
The new computers look great.

Will and Dot turn and see Mr. Flemington, headphones on, using one of the new communal computers.  
Will's and Dot's eyes grow wide.  
Slow motion: They both take off running towards Mr. Flemington.

DOT & WILL (CONT'D)  
Noooooooooooooooooooooooooo!!

CUT TO BLACK.

The sound of Mr. Flemington tackled by Dot and Will.

MR. FLEMINGTON (O.S.)  
It's my Constitutional Right!

THE END.