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Adventures in Librarianship: Here's the Pitch

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Adventures in Librarianship —
Here’s the Pitch

by Ned Kraft (Order Librarian, Ralph J. Bunche Library, U.S. Department of State)
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From: “Marty” (theman@flybynight.com)
To: “Sid” (sid_herman@shproductions.com)
Subject: Re: New show

Okay, so Doogie’s dead. You’ll never hear me bespeak the name again. Much better idea: daytime soap set in a small, local-history research library. Huh? Got ya thinkin’, right? Picture it. Regular cast of eight (we’ll save some production costs there). Ya got your elderly, prudish, Ivy-league director—snooty, but no M.L.S., which the rest of the professional staff resents like crazy. Secretly he’s in cahoots with the local mob boss. Doog-man goes crazy—baby-sitting bratty kids whose parents leave them at the library on weekends. DC has to break up a group of young rowdies who hang out in the Human Sexuality section. Hey! This stuff is too good to disregard! We shoot for a mini-series but we’ll accept movie of the week with options. Is Michael J. Fox still young enough to play DG? That kid would be great. But does he know anything about OCLC? Huh? Just kidding. So respond ASAP, cause who takes care of you? I do, baby. Remember that.

From: “Marty” (theman@flybynight.com)
To: “Sid” (sid_herman@shproductions.com)
Subject: Re: Re: New show

Sid, baby. You’re starting to give me the impersonation that you don’t like the library angle. Hey, it’s new, it’s fresh, it’s what the people want, Sid. I know these things.

We’ll forget about the daytime soap. Too lowbrow. Now I’m thinking art. I’m thinking low budget, black-and-white, hand-held-camera, clipped-dialogue, no ending, the whole boho film-school scene. Cinema verité, Sid. How about this ... we mount three cameras cut to Chicago, and sit in on a meeting of the ALCITS Board of Directors. Huh? We’ll get some long shots and wide angles—picture the War Room in “Stranglevore” —oversized conference table, tense, anxious members gathered around, the big soulless room echoing every shout. Then switch to extreme close-ups: furrowing brows, sweaty upper lips, a nervous pencil tapping on the now abandoned agenda. Someone makes a motion. No one seconds the motion—just eerie silence. It’s killer, Sid, I’m telling you. It’ll play every college campus, the midnight show. It’ll be the “Rocky Horror” of the new century. And with production costs under ten grand, we’ll make a mint.

We’ll call it “Strawberries and Sub-Committees,” or “How I Learned to Relax and Love Parliamentary Procedure.” It’s so weird it’s great! And when those checks come rollin’ in, Sid, who are you going to thank? Me.