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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) <KraftNO@state.gov>

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 thinking, 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 resent. Secretly he's in cahoots with the local cahoots. Sub-plot potentiality: visiting scholar from her PDF. Sub-plot potentiality: visiting scholar from her PDF. So she's seen a few things, let me tell you. 

The library pays for her portable life-support 'cause they're liars. But don't forget Billy, the custodian, who's in love with the serials cataloger who leads him on only so she can pilfer from the library's ever-shrinking budget. And don't forget Sid, the custodian, who's in love with the serials cataloger who leads him on only so she can pilfer from the library's ever-shrinking budget. And don't forget Billy, the custodian, who's in love with the serials cataloger who leads him on only so she can pilfer from the library's ever-shrinking budget. And don't forget... 

Anyway, you get the idea. Terrific, huh? Maybe call it "All My Periodicals," or "General Reference," or "The Young and Restful." Let me know when we start. And don't forget that I cut you in on this goldmine. You owe me.

From: “Marty” (theman@flybynight.com)  
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Okay, so I went a little off the deep end. That's because I'm a passionate person. I get upset. We've known each other how long? And you don't accept that about me? I'm a little disenfranchised in you, Sid. And just because the ALCTS idea was ga-ga doesn't mean we should toss the library angle altogether. How about this: "New York Public," a weekly drama set in the most dramatic library in the most dramatic city in the world. Huh? I'm thinking Steven Bochco. I'm thinking viewer discretion advisations for language and sexual content. I'm thinking car chases, book mold outbreaks, damaged spines, plagiarism, teenage web-surfing, the works. I've got your awareness now, don't I Sid? Huh?

From: “Marty” (theman@flybynight.com)  
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Okay, so "Doogie" lacked a little something in the arena of verisimilitude. Kinda slim for a weekly. But I'm not ready to dump the idea altogether. How about HBO Movie of the Week? Maybe Hallmark? You gotta admit, some serious possibilities for comedic interactivity. The Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss. Doogster tries to collect overdue fines from local mob boss.

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

Sid, baby. You're startin' to give me the impression 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 thinkin' art. I'm thinkin' low budget, black-and-white, hand-held-camera, clipped-dialogue, no ending, the whole bobo film-school scene. Cinema verity, Sid. How about this... we haul three cameras cut to Chicago, and sit in on a meeting of the ALCTS Board of Directors. Huh? We'll get some long shots and wide angles——picture the War Room in "Stranglelove"—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.