

## The Atomic Library - A Visit From the City Manager Season 1, Episode 2 Transcript

**[SFX: Civil defense siren in the distance]**

**(V.O.)** It has been five years. A warming climate lashed the earth with storms. Melting permafrost awakened ancient disease and dormant terrors. Panicked nations unleashed their arsenals, which drew extraterrestrial attention and ... you get the picture. It was a really bad day, okay? Don't overthink it.

Where do you go when it all goes wrong? Where can you start to make sense of a world turned inside out? If you answered "the library" you are a cunning survivor indeed. **(in the background Hazel is walking and faintly humming a tune)** These are the stories of the small but determined staff of The Orson Welles Community Library of Haven Hollow, Texas. Opening its doors each morning is loyal secretary Hazel -- **(humming stops abruptly)**

HAZEL **(off)** I'M NOT A DAMNED SECRETARY!

Narrator: **(sighs)**... **(sarcastic)** *pardon me.* Library Operations Specialist Hazel Adams.

Narrator: **(Dramatic)** Step inside **(beat)** The Atomic Library.

**[Atomic Library theme music - upbeat acoustic guitar]**

**[SFX: Music fades to hollow interior sound with faint drips]**

MARJORIE Would you like me to open up today?

**[SFX: Heavy door/gate groaning and squealing open]**

HAZEL **(obviously struggling)** No, it is my job to ensure that the Library is opened on time, and with the proper morning greeting.

MARJORIE I mean you already have a LOT to do today, with the City Manager coming in...

HAZEL Please... don't remind me. Can you believe that absurd man wants to route a bike trail through the Library?

MARJORIE Yes. I believe it. (**sounding somewhat faroff and lusty**) That man loves his bike trails.

**[SFX: Patron chatter and general library sounds - scanners beeping, books being stamped]**

HAZEL Good Morning! Morning! Morning! **[SFX: people are passing through the Bernice...** can Sid stay out of the Library for the day? We are expecting the City Manager at any time.

MARJORIE (**breathless**) Yes... the City Manager ... so handsome...

**[SFX: llama bellows]**

HAZEL Marjorie!

MARJORIE (**snaps out of it**) What? I mean ... so ... annoying. With his dumb ideas. And his... cybernetic eye... so silvery ... it's like he can see into your soul...

HAZEL Oh boy (**sounds like she is rolling her eyes**). Anyway, Can you two maybe hang at the abandoned roller rink for the day? ... maybe? Just today?

**[SFX: llama bellows]**

BERNICE Sid and I have had a long talk and he has promised that he will stay out of the microfilm and he won't eat any more policies. (her voice is trailing away as she and Sid walk into the Library anyway)

HAZEL Bernice wait! (**under breath**) Ohhhhhhh not today!

MARJORIE (**still dreamy voiced**) sooooo silvery...

**[Transition music]**

CONST **(loud whisper)** Marjorie!

MARJORIE **(startled)** Constance! How do you do that?

CONST Do what?

MARJORIE Just... APPEAR!

CONST I don't ... at least I don't think I do? I am pretty sure I am always here. You don't think I'm dead, do you? **(gasp)** But yes... it all makes sense now... I'm still a temp because I DIED when -

MARJORIE You *aren't* dead.

CONST I'm not?

MARJORIE No. You aren't dead. You aren't fired and no one told you, you aren't invisible, microscopic, or flickering in and out of a parallel universe... you are the victim of nothing more nefarious than a terrible budget. And let's be honest - if that's the worst thing to happen to you...?

CONST I am going to ask him.

MARJORIE What ask? Who him?

CONST The city manger him! I have my work portfolio and I am going to introduce myself and he will be so impressed that he will say **(in businessman bluster)** "why in the world are you still a temp after 6 years? Someone draw up employment papers for this woman immediately!"

MARJORIE Constance don't you DARE! Hazel will lose her mind! We need the city manager FOCUSED today. We need him thinking about all the repairs we need, and our budget, and we need to convince him to NOT route that bike trail through the building! We do NOT need him spending his whole visit listening to "Constance: Poor Pitiful Me - The Ten-Point TED Talk."

CONST But...

MARJORIE NO. Not today.

CONST Not even...

MARJORIE *Constance*. No. No no no. No. Ah buh buh buh buh! ...No. Now please go back to whatever you were doing, and make a good impression.

CONST **(takes a breath as though to speak)**

MARJORIE **(firmly)** NO. *Quietly*.

**[SFX: Books being stamped in background]**

HAZEL Hey Marge.

MARJORIE **(sighs and says quietly to self)** How? How does no one get my name right? The thought of correcting you one more time makes me wanna -

HAZEL What was that?

MARJORIE Nothing, nothing. What do you need? Is everything ready?

HAZEL As ready as it's gonna be. Oh! Before I forget. We have a few authors visiting in the coming months. The Director wants you to make sure their works are added to the collection.

MARJORIE **(frustrated)** Ugh! Don't you remember the last time we had "author visits"?

HAZEL Of course...

MARJORIE I had to hand copy hand-copied copies of really terrible titles like "The Girl in the Dog-Skin Yoga Pants," or "How to Start Your Own Band of Roving Roller Derby Street Pirates," and "50 Shades of Grey..."

**(upbeat whistling in the background getting closer)**

HAZEL You did learn a lot from that last one...

MARJORIE Don't test me, Secretary

HAZEL I am...

MARJORIE I think I hear the City Manager! **(excited, girlish)** I ... I have to go!  
**(whistling stops)**

CITY MGR Good Morning! Lovely day! Put 'er there!

HAZEL **(forcedly chipper)** Good morning, sir! Unfortunately the Director won't be coming with us for our walk through... for... obvious reasons.

CM Yeeesssss. Fine, fine! Lead the way.

**[SFX: Sound of feet hurrying over]**

CONST **(off)** Sir? Oh sir? Back here!

MARJORIE **(under breath)** oh no you don't!

**[SFX: A crash as Marjorie tackles Constance and they topple]**

CM What's that? Ah! Maggie!

MARJORIE **(out of breath)** Marjorie, sir

CM Of course. Forgive me, Margarine. Good to see you! Good to see you!

MARJORIE Yes sir! It's me, Margarine!

CM **(sternly)** You really shouldn't just pile books and chairs and ... heaps of clothing? **(Constance groans)** ... in the middle of the floor, Margo. It isn't safe.

HAZEL You are absolutely correct, sir. We will take care of that immediately.

MARJORIE **(hissing whisper, In background)** what were you thinking, Constance?

CONST: **(loud whisper in background)** It was my chance!

CM Now - how bout you take me on that little tour, Ms. Adams? It's been such a long time, and I have some ideas that will brighten this place up!

HAZEL **(overly positive)** Oh good! The Director just *loves* to hear your ideas. I brought my notebook so I can write them all down.

CM Very smart. They always forget my ideas and nothing gets done. This way you can be the Director's memory!

HAZEL **(false enthusiasm)** That sounds just... SUPER, sir!

**[Transition music]**

**[SFX: In the background, patrons can be heard chattering. Typical Library sounds are heard]**

CM **(vague disgust)** It's so much more...lively... than I remember.

HAZEL Yes, sir. It seems as though our patronage has increased since -

CM No need. So, how large is your staff now? 25? 30?

HAZEL Uhm...no. We have a strong staff of...generally... around 15? **(sounds unsure)** We... we have a lot of turnover. Our current staff is really... really healthy... though. No plague or leprosy to speak of.

CM mmhm, mmhm. Where is Ms. Crystal?

HAZEL She left - after she was bitten by the former Director. It was a real pity, honestly, she had a beautiful singing voice and her extermination skills were on point.

CM Oh, yes, how could I forget. Did you ever find her glass eye?

HAZEL No, unfortunately not. Though there has been talk of a strange looking marble in the children's room. I've been too...

MARJORIE **(off)** CHICKEN! **(makes chicken sounds)** *Bock bock bock bock...*

HAZEL BUSY... to go and look for myself.

CM What about Clyde? He loves the bike trails...

HAZEL Yes, and the last time we saw him, he was going for a “quick ride” on his lunch break. That was about four weeks ago or so...

CM **(ignoring what Hazel just said)** Where is the new Reference Librarian? I would love to meet them...get their opinion on bike trails...

HAZEL Um, we don't have one, sir.

CM **(gasps)** You what?! But -

HAZEL The Director...

CM The Director doesn't have a choice. See? This is what I mean. I tell the director my ideas and then... NOTHING.

HAZEL It's just, the employment pool of accredited librarians is reeeally small since-

CM Nonsense! You just need a body! What about her?

CONST **(off) (gasps)** Me?!?! Oh sir I don't know what to -

**[SFX: running feet]**

CONST - OOF!

**[SFX: Marjorie tackles her again]**

CM **(oblivious to what just happened)** -or poach someone from another library!

HAZEL Ohhhh no, the Director won't like that.

CM Director be damned! Last I checked they work for me. How are our citizens going to find the necessary information for survival in this

apocalyptic wonderland? How will they pass their exams on interstellar bacterium? How will they know how to find the newest bike trails? Hire a new Reference Librarian.

HAZEL        Have you thought that maybe not everyone likes to ride bikes? A lot of our patrons cannot even physically ride a bike anymore... with all of the extra limbs...and tentacles. But our patrons do have some real pressing needs that the Library is well-positioned to address if -

CM            **(serious and somewhat angry)** I knew you were funny, Miss Adams, but I didn't realize you did stand up comedy. EVERYONE loves riding bikes.

HAZEL        Yes, of course... I'm being silly.

**[SFX: clanging and ghostly sounds from the second floor]**

***The ghostly sounds can be heard louder***

CM            What is that?

HAZEL        Hmm? What's what?

CM            Secretary, please don't treat me like I'm stupid. What is THAT?

HAZEL        **(whispers)** Library Operations Specialist.... Sir.

CM            **(sharply)** I don't care what you call it -- you shuffle the paperwork, you give the tours, you make the Director's tea. You are a secretary. Now, WHAT is that sound?

HAZEL        **(silent)**

CM            Marigold, what is that sound coming from the second floor?

MARJORIE    Oh, goodness, that? **(laughs in a flighty, flirty way)** The second floor bathroom is very, very haunted.

HAZEL I don't know that it needs two "verys"...

MARJORIE: Oh it does need two "verys"! It was a few months after ... everything ... and a staff member - remember Mrs. Melillo? She was such a sweet lady - anyway, she was clearing debris on the second floor. She needed to use the bathroom and - BOO!

CM "Boo?"

MARJORIE: Actually, we don't know what she saw or heard but she ran screaming out of the building and we haven't seen her since. Now whenever someone tries to go near the bathroom there is moaning and racket - we just put an "out of order" sign on the door and that's that!

CM Haunted, hm? **(tsk)** Well just have the new reference librarian research ghost hunters. Oh! Or maybe the new Reference Librarian could BE a ghost hunter! How handy would that be!?

**[Transition music - distorted and a little eerie]**

Ghost: **(whispering)** Something big must be happening downstairs. I can see the City Manager walking around with the Library's Secretary -- all thanks to my St. Germain's X-Ray Specs. My St. Germain's X-Ray Specs help ensure that I can always shake, rattle, and roll out my ghostly charm, which means that I will never get caught living in the 2nd floor Bathroom.

St. Germain's X-Ray Specs come in so many amazing colors -- I personally love my pair of Bathory Red St. Germain's X-Ray Specs, but you can also get them in Fang White, Atomic Orange, and Silhouette Black. I put on my St. Germain's X-Ray Specs whenever I need to frighten staff and fellow patrons away from my little hovel.

Get your own pair of St. Germain's X-Ray Specs for half off when you steal the coupon out of this month's issue of "Survival"

**[Ghost's music ends. Replaced with library background sounds]**

CONST: **(on the phone with a patron)** Yes sir, your books were due... it looks like...Ah there it is -- your books were due 4 years, 9 months, and 3 days ago... **[SFX: Angry patron over phone line. Continues through conversation]** Mhm... Yes, I understand that you needed those books to hold the roof of your house up... I agree -- that was an ingenious idea. Unfortunately, we are unable to let you check out more materials until you pay for those...

Well, I don't know that *your* tax dollars paid for *those* books. Let me check nope! Those books were purchased with a different patron's tax dollars. **[SFX: more angry patron]** No, I WILL not - and CAN not - tell you who! If I tell you which ones you paid for, are you going to come steal them? **[SFX: patron sound like "maybe?"]** then no. I won't tell you. **[SFX: more angry patron]**

Now listen um ... I...I uh can't hear you! You're breaking up... **(Constance makes a really obvious interference sounds and slams down receiver)**

**(sarcastic)** Ohhhh that's unfortunate!

**[SFX: feet running upstairs, sneakers squeak]**

**(Background male voice on staircase says "Hey get over here - you want my number?" Constance keeps going ignoring the voice)**

CONST So, as I was saying before the phone interrupted, I'm *going* to talk to the City Manager today. I just know he is going to love me so much. I've earned a permanent position here.

GHOST **(muffled from behind a door)** Can you please leave me alone? I'm just trying to haunt this bathroom in peace.

CONST You're such a good friend, Library Ghost.

PATRON Excuse me miss, do you work here?

CONST I don't know! Do I? DO I?! Nobody else seems to think so, so you tell me! DO I WORK HERE???!

PATRON     **(nervous)** Never mind...

GHOST       **(low)** Jeez lady, you're scarier than me...

**[Transition music]**

**[SFX: background library noises, three tones play over the public address system]**

MARJORIE   **(over intercom)** Good Morning Orson Welles Community Library Patrons! This is the Library's Safety Liaison, and Collections Development Specialist, Marjorie Slump. Here is your safety tip of the day: To ensure that Plague is not spread in your home, ensure that you wash your hands frequently and keep the rodent population living in your abode to a minimum. Always remember, the best number of rats to have is none! This has been a message from your Orson Welles Community Library Safety Liaison, Marjorie Slump. Good Bye!

**[SFX: three tones play over the public address system]**

**[Transition music]**

**[SFX: walking]**

HAZEL       Karen has been seeing some great numbers in her Feral.... In her Story Hour. It seems as though attendance is back to, well, it's getting closer to what we used to see.

CM           **(ignoring Hazel)** What about here? We could put the entrance to this part of the bike trail right here. Imagine it - a great glass tube that comes right through that wall and pops the rider out of the other side!

HAZEL       But... they will never come IN the Library if we are just routing them through a tube!

CM           But they can SEE the library and make a note to come back another time!

HAZEL Plus it would go right through picture books!

CM Only H through K!

HAZEL AND our display of Great Women who Survived the...

CM Why not?

HAZEL **(huffing)** Think about the CHILDREN, sir! Don't you think they need to be reminded of the strong women who helped us get here?

CM I'm sure the children won't even think about it.

HAZEL We have a veteran on staff!

CM They will be having far too much fun riding their bikes from one end of the city to the other.

HAZEL Please just explain to me one more time - I just don't understand *why* we can't route the bike trail AROUND the building instead of through it....

CM Why? Just think on it, Miss Adams. I'm sure you all will come to see the benefis.

HAZEL **(dumbfounded)** I don't know that I will, sir...

CM Here, I brought you back something from my meetings last week in East of Edom. **[SFX: Sound of rummaging]** I seem to remember you have these all over your desk.

**[SFX: snowglobe being shaken and a few notes of music box music plays]**

HAZEL **(a little sad)** A snowglobe. **(pause)** Thank you sir.

**[Transition music]**

**[SFX: Marjorie in her office rustling through papers, scribbling and stapling]**

MARJORIE **(frustrated muttering)** You would think after working here for 12 years, people would at *least* get my name right. You would think the City Manager...with those...silver cybernetic eyes and oh... that tail... **(stops herself, regaining composure)** And here I am, the only person in this building responsible for developing the entire collection, yet I am constantly having to play babysitter or assistant to a ...a glorified secretary....

**[SFX: a knock on a door]**

HAZEL **(softly)** Hey Marjorie?

MARJORIE **(deep breath/sigh)** Yes?

**[SFX: Office door creaks open]**

HAZEL **(downcast)** Thanks for your help today. I don't know if I could have handled that without you. I'll see you tomorrow.

MARJORIE: **(pause)** It's all right Hazel. Come on, sit down. What have you got there?

HAZEL **(sad)** A snowglobe. The city manager brought it. Probably trying to bribe me to talk up his ideas to the Director.

MARJORIE: ahhhh. So, where is this one from?

HAZEL Just East of Edom. Nowhere exotic. **(laughs a little)** It's funny because we don't get a lot of snow here in Texas...

MARJORIE: Right? They should make "Ashglobes" instead.

HAZEL We used to go to the fair every year in East of Edom. Diana loved to see the crowning of that year's Edom Termite Queen...

MARJORIE: **(dreamily)** yeah... they don't build everything out of brick in Edom for nothing... Look, do you want to come over? I found a whole closet I didn't even know existed. We can drink expired wine and play rich lady dress up!

HAZEL Are you still squatting in that mansion?

MARJORIE: Oh yes. I pay some local kids to keep it secure while I work. Whenever I feel down I try on all this lady's jewels and furs and ... you know. Imagine.

HAZEL Ok. That sounds fun.

MARJORIE: Yeah?

HAZEL Yeah.

MARJORIE: All right then. Let me close up here, we'll go put that globe with your collection and we'll head out. Together.

**[SFX: Office door closes and they retreat down the hall]**

HAZEL **(off)** How much do you pay them...?

**[Closing Music]**

**[SFX: three tones of intercom system turning on]**

DIRECTOR: **(through intercom)** Attention patrons of The Orson Welles Community Library:

You have been listening to The Atomic Library, an original audio drama podcast created, written, and produced by Chriss Chaney and Lara Tabri.

The following patrons are BANNED for one week for pretending to be other people:

Lara a.k.a. Marjorie Slump

Chriss a.k.a. Hazel Adams

Alia Q. Pappas a.k.a. Batty Bernice

Rebecca Hale a.k.a. Constance The Temp

Ashley Taylor a.k.a. The City Manager

Alisha Skelton-Donnelly a.k.a. The Ghost

And Catherine Kelso a.k.a. The Director **(quiet, to self)** wait, what?

Some of the above were also impersonating assorted patrons

A note has been added to the accounts of Veronica Escamilla-Brady for her voiceover narration (you can also find her impersonating a Game Master on her podcast Cthulhu and Friends), and Jarren Chaney for composing and performing the music. I have my eye on you both....

The Atomic Library was recorded at The Innovation Pipeline.

Follow us on Instagram @TheAtomicLibrary, communicate with staff by email at [TheAtomicLibrary@gmail.com](mailto:TheAtomicLibrary@gmail.com) or @AtomicLib on Twitter. That is, if the internet is working that day and you are between power surges and solar flares. Also, we would really appreciate a nice review on iTunes. Or, tell a friend to check us out! Heh, get it? Check us out? **(clears throat)**

The staff of the OWCL thanks you and reminds you to USE YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY. But not right now. We are closing. Get your crap checked out and go home already.