

The Atomic Library - Happy Trails
Season 1, Episode 8 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. 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.... I DON'T HAVE TIME FOR THIS TODAY!

Narrator **(sarcastic)** pardon me. Wait.... What's going on!?!

Narrator **(dramatic and hurried)** Step inside The Atomic Library.

HAZEL I THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER SHUT UP!

[Atomic Library theme music - upbeat acoustic guitar]

SCENE 1 - OUTSIDE - LOBBY

SFX: Bulldozer idling, background voices

Hazel is lying in the courtyard in front of a bulldozer, yelling back and forth with the City Manager.

HAZEL I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE.

CM **(through a bullhorn)** I COULD FIRE YOU, YOU KNOW!

HAZEL **(sarcasm)** Oh, OKAY. SURE.

CM YOU'RE RIGHT. NO ONE WOULD WANT YOUR PATHETIC JOB ANYWAY!

(Crowd gasps)

HAZEL SURE THEY WOULD! THIS IS A BEAUTIFUL, INCREDIBLE, LOVELY PLACE TO WORK IN SPITE OF YOU BEING AN ABSOLUTE MADMAN OF A MANAGER!

CM **(sarcastic)** OOOH. THAT HURTS MY FEELINGS...

MARJORIE PLEASE STOP FIGHTING! YOU'RE TEARING US APART!

CM YES, PLEASE- grrr! **[SFX: sound of feedback as he throws aside the bullhorn] (regular voice)** Yes, please do. You're not going to win anyway. This city needs more bike trails AND I brought my very large ribbon cutting scissors for cutting ribbon and I WILL be using them to cut ribbon. TODAY.

HAZEL Have you ever tried to use those scissors? They're just a big silly prop. You have to cut the ribbon with regular scissors first...it's not even worth it!

CM I have my golden shovel too SO I CAN CEREMONIOUSLY BREAK THE GROUND ON THIS PROJECT! **(seething whisper)** let me have this, Secretary.

HAZEL Sir. You KNOW, I can't get up until you promise that you aren't going to break through that wall!

[SFX: children singing and walking/skipping. Shushing]

Karen arrives with a group of children, all of whom are at the verge of attacking the CM. She makes a sweet shushing sound and they all start to quiet down, save a howl or two from the back.

KAREN Leslie -- We've known each other for such a long time. It wasn't so long ago I was reading stories to your children. They loved this Library. They

loved coming here with you. You can't just burst through that memory... It won't make the pain any less.

CM (through gritted teeth) This... has... NOTHING... to do with...my children.

[Transition music]

[SFX: Idling bulldozer]

STARLA Is this amount of chaos normal around here?

BRITTLE **(laughing to himself)** What is going on down here?

CONST **(sharing in his glee)** The Secretary thinks that she can just lie in front of that bulldozer... like that's going to stop him from getting what he wants!

STARLA I can't believe she is actually doing it!

BRITTLE Wait... She's going to get hurt... I've got to get up there!

CONST Oh Come ON! Benji! Where are you going!!! You aren't actually going to leave me back here to go help the secretary, are you?!

BRITTLE HOT COFFEE, FOLKS. OUT OF MY WAY - HOT COFFEE!

[SFX: crowd being jostled]

CONST **(yelling over the crowd)** You don't even LIKE her that much! What about me!

BRITTLE I don't DISlike her, and damn it... I LOVE this Library.

CONST (still yelling) BUT WHAT ABOUT ME?!

[Transition music]

BRITTLE Secretary! What are you up to this time?! **(takes a sip of his coffee)**

HAZEL If you've come here to tease me about my choices today, Brittle.... Today is NOT the day. AND I AM NOT A bomb-DAMN SECRETARY. I am the Library Operations Specialist and... and... THIS COMMUNITY NEEDS ME.

BRITTLE **(bends down groaning and then lays on the ground beside her)** You may not be a Secretary, but I AM a damn Doctor. M-kay?

HAZEL **(stunned silence and then insane laughter)** are you really going to lay in the dirt with me?! **(still laughing)**

MARJORIE **(a small grumble comes from her)** You can't expect me to just sit here and stare into his.... Piercingly silver...**(pulls herself out of it)** I'm in! I'm not lying down though. **(she makes a lot of noise getting down on the ground)** I'll just.. Oof... I'll sit... let me lean on you for a second

BRITTLE ow!

MARJORIE Ok, almost there, oh bombs, So inflexible now. Whew! Ok. Got it. Hmph. There!

SCENE 2 -- THE GHOST'S BATHROOM

[Transition music - distorted and a little eerie]

GHOST Something is making more racket than I do. It makes me want to grind my teeth in irritation! Has that ever happened to you? Are you so frustrated by the modern world you have gritted and ground your teeth to nubs?

Or, did you, like many of us after - you know - find that they all just fell out one day? Well friend, let me introduce you to Defcon Dentures! That's right - Defcon Dentures! You may have seen our ads in ... places. They are easy to order - just scrawl your address and the code "DefconGhost" on the nearest dirty van window.

In one to 8 weeks your free impression kit - a pack of gum - will arrive. Chew all the gum and press it to your upper and lower teeth. No teeth at all? No problem! Let us know and we will send you ABC brand pre-chewed gum!

Let the impressions dry, place them in our handy order bag along with whatever passes for money at that time, and tape it to another dirty van window. In about 6 months your Defcon Dentures will arrive ready to be taken for a spin! Chew again with Defcon Dentures!

STARLA I still don't understand what's going on here!

[Protesters in background: 2, 4, 6 8 Libraries are great... places!]

BRITTLE HE'S A MADMAN!

HAZEL **(shrieking)** Please! Please sir!

MARJORIE **(crying)** and to think I LOVED YOU!

A loud rumbling is heard as the bulldozer takes out the corner of a wall just to the left of the sitting and laying employees. The Ghost can hear the shouting from far off.

GHOST Oh my SHRAPNEL. What are they doing down there?!

The GHOST begins digging through what sounds like a chest of random things.

GHOST **(whispering)** where did I put them!?

[SFX: Sorting papers]

GHOST If you're like me and are always losing the most important things at incredibly pivotal times in the story-line, then you need The Crappy Planner. With a Crappy Planner, not only can you plan your whole day - you can write down exactly where you stashed those oh-so-important items...

GHOST AH! I REMEMBER NOW -- Thanks to my Crappy Planner. Get yours today at wherever you buy toilet paper. Now... to the Lobby.

[SFX

Scene 3 - LOBBY AND OUTSIDE COURTYARD

CHILD

PATRONS: Let us read and use the lab!
Some of us...it's all we have.

HAZEL I am not going to move, Sir! There has to be another way!

KAREN **(children are now surrounding the bulldozer and kicking it)** GET IT, CHILDREN! Kick that mean old Bulldozer!

The children are chanting (over and over), as they kick the equipment:

Children **(chanting)**
Clyde McBride, he took a ride
And never did return
Take away our H thru K and
Then it's YOU we'll burn

CM **(exasperated)** WHAT ARE YOU DOING?! STOP KICKING MY EQUIPMENT!

BRITTLE **(Laughing maniacally)**

HAZEL **(Bursts into shared laughter)**

MARJ There was a time I would have done anything for you... you and your handsome ... perfect... NO. No longer! **(dramatic)** You have broken my heart, Leslie. And part of the wall. To think I once believed...

CM Wh...What are you talking about, Mardie?

MARJ First of all, my name is MARJORIE. MAR-JOR-IE. Second of all --- HAZEL -- YOU DIDN'T DELIVER MY LETTER?

HAZEL I mean.... I uhh... I've been really busy -- can we maybe talk about this later?

MARJ You never do anything I ask you to do! I really thought we were friends, Hazel.

HAZEL Marjorie... we are friends... I just know that this was... this wasn't a matter worth pursuing. Trust me.

STARLA Now, Hazel... You can't make those big decisions FOR Marjorie. You can only be there to support her when they fail!

H/M SHUT UP!

Starla wanders off

STARLA **(mumbles)** Boy, Texans aren't nearly as friendly as I was told...

MARJORIE AND! How would you even know? You never let me figure things out for myself. And, I'm older than you!

HAZEL Because I am your FRIEND Marjorie! I can't stand to see you pining after someone who can't even bother to learn your name!

CM This exchange is beautiful and all, but I am renting this bulldozer by the hour and time is, unfortunately ticking.

Crowd Chanting in Background: What do we want? An intact children's department! When do we want it? Well, we have it right now, we just want to keep it the way it is, really!

HAZEL Did you actually put a bulldozer rental into your supplemental budget this year?! How long have you been planning this?!

GHOST MISS HAZEL! THE BLUEPRINTS! THE BLUEPRINTS!

CONST **(grabs the blueprints from his hands and throws him down)** Sorry, Buddy! Looks like it's my time to shine!

Constance goes running toward the commotion, blueprints in hands.

CONST **(yelling)** MISS HAZEL, MISS HAZEL! I'VE FOUND THE BLUEPRINTS TO THE BUILDING!

HAZEL. **(gasps)** for once, Constance, you have done something right! I could almost kiss you!

BRITTLE **(surprised)** Constance actually did something right? She didn't ruin everything?!

MARJORIE There is absolutely no way Constance pulled that off on her own.

CONST **(angry)** AND WHY NOT? MISS - MISS - NO-MLS-NOBODY!

BRITTLE Constance! Give the blueprints to Hazel and stop belittling Marjorie. Sure she doesn't have a master's degree, but she's not completely useless!

MARJ. **(Shock)** Was that a compliment!?

HAZEL Where did you find these? Half of these have been missing for who knows how long!

CONST. I dunno. The ghost told me where to find them.

HAZEL. Right... okay... anyway. Sir, you need to look at this.

CM What am I looking at, Miss Adams?

[Transition music - distorted and a little eerie]

GHOST Ever have your incredible ideas stolen at the last minute? Ever spend tireless weeks rummaging through the Secretary's office, looking for things to pawn for Straws, only to have someone run in at the last minute to steal your hard work? Well look no further. You need... who am I kidding. I don't have a product for that. I should have just let them build the trail through the library. I should have just let them see how much this ghost really does around here. Ever feel unappreciated? Feel like maybe you need a hug or at least a cheap card of appreciation every now and then? Yeah, me too, buddy. Me too.

SCENE 5 - LOBBY COURTYARD OUTSKIRTS

HAZEL SO, you see — there is a tunnel already built UNDER the building. I think it's part of the unfinished subway system, but it would make a great bike trail. We could line the roof with glass and then riders can see everything in the library above them!

MARJORIE That doesn't fix our problem of people passing the library up completely.

HAZEL I thought about that, too! What if we turn that old bus stop right outside into a tunnel entrance and then people have the choice to stop or not!

CM It's not a terrible idea, Ms Adams.

HAZEL Please reconsider this madness, sir! There is another, better... cheaper... way.

CM It would save us some straws in the general fund if we used an already existing structure...

HAZEL Imagine, sir! We could all get exactly what we need here!

CM I will consider it on one condition. The Library will hold bike riding lessons and double... no, triple it's current resources about bikes and biking.

MARJORIE Triple it?! (**Groans**)

HAZEL (**to Marjorie in a whisper**) Hush! If we triple our holdings you will be adding... three books, tops!

MARJORIE (**whispers**) oh... yeah! You're right!

HAZEL Sir, I BELIEVE we have come to an agreement.

CM AND - I want ten bikes available for citizens to check out with their Library cards.

HAZEL [**ear piece beeps**] The Director has informed me they think this is perfectly acceptable. BUT - they want AT LEAST this portion of the trail to be.... (**pauses to listen**)... wide enough for wheelchairs. (listening again) And, they want you to fund wheelchairs for check out as well.

CM I suppose this is where we would shake on it, is it not, Ms. Adams?

HAZEL Yes! Yes it is, Sir!

KAREN **(overcome with happiness)** Look! Children! They have reached a compromise! This is a great learning experience for all of us!

BRITTLE Can you please move your equipment off of my roses now?! I know they don't look like much but...

CONST Yeah! Benji works hard to keep this place looking so nice and you come up here with a BULLDOZER! Shame on you, City Manager Man!

CM And... you are?

CONST **(nervous)** Constance, Sir. My name is Constance!

CM Hmm. **(gets closer to her and whispers)** Where did you really find those blue prints, young lady?

CONST The homeless dude that has been living in the second floor bathroom for the last five years -- yeah, he's not a ghost I guess he found them in the Secretary's office. When I saw him waving them for her to see -- well... I took the credit myself.

CM Has anyone ever told you that you would make a great politician, Ms. Constance?

CONST (nervous laugh)

[SFX: The sound of a "mech suit" coming nearer and nearer.]

SHELDON **(using a voice modulator)** PATRONS, PLEASE MOVE BACK.
DANGER. DANGER.

Patrons are running and screaming.

SHELDON I SEE A THREAT IN THE COURTYARD. THREAT IN THE COURTYARD.
THREAT IN THE COURTYARD.

KAREN (yelling) NO! SHELDON, EVERYTHING IS OKAY! WE'VE GOT THIS
HANDLED!!!

SHELDON **(regular voice)** Hey there, Ms. Hazel! I...uh...unfortunately, cannot get the
suit to.... THREAT IN THE COURTYARD. THREAT ASSESSED. You
see, the suit is kind of just... **(nervous laughs)** it's doing its own thing.

MARJORIE There aren't any real weapons on that suit are there? ARE WE IN ANY
DANGER, SHELDON?

SHELDON **(modulated voice)** TARGETS LOCKED. **(normal voice)** I mean.... I
wanted the suit to be authentic....

HAZEL ARE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND?!

**A winding up sound starts to come from Sheldon's suit. It starts as a simple
whirring and continues to grow louder and louder....**

MARJORIE I AM THE SAFETY LIAISON AND I SAY..... EVERYBODY RUN!!!!

KAREN Sheldon!

**SUDDENLY -- a massive blast is released from Sheldon's suit, blowing a hole in
the wall, sending glass, rubble, and debris everywhere. People are screaming and
running. Many remark that they can't believe that the library had actual security.**

A moment or so passes and finally a silence falls upon the crowd.

HAZEL **(soft)** is anyone hurt? Is...is everyone safe?

MARJORIE **(shaken)** I think everyone got out in time. I think everyone is okay...

HAZEL What.... Just... happened....

CM **(chuckling)** It looks like I have some ribbon to cut.

HAZEL **(nervous laughter)** remember how we asked for an extra emergency exit two years ago? And you said no? I think we just got one!

OUTRO

DIRECTOR Hazel! I need you to type up an incident report NOW!

Subject: Season 1 of The Atomic Library, written and produced by Chriss Chaney and Lara Tabri

List the people involved:

Marjorie Slump is Lara

Hazel Adams and Sheldon is Chriss

Benjamin Brittle **(BRITTLE IN BACKGROUND YELLS “C’MON!”)** is Aleya Stone

Constance The Temp is Rebecca Hale

Starlandria Norwood is Alia Q Pappas

The City Manager is Ashley Taylor

The Ghost is Alisha Skelton-Donnelly

I, The Director, am Catherine Kelso

Various combinations of the above-named individuals provided extra voices where needed.

Also, Voiceover narration provided by Veronica Escamilla-Brady (you HAVE checked out her podcast Cthulhu and Friends by now, right?) and music was composed and performed by Jarren Chaney.

Describe the incident:

The Atomic Library was recorded at The Innovation Pipeline.

You can follow us on Instagram [@TheAtomicLibrary](#), and communicate with staff by email at TheAtomicLibrary@gmail.com or [@AtomicLib](#) on Twitter. We would really appreciate a nice review on iTunes. Or, tell a friend!

The staff of the OWCL thanks you and reminds you to always - USE YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY.

A few moments of silence

GHOST **(clicking away on a keyboard)** Well... I guess I could always run the Library's Social Media pages. **[SFX power surge]** Or Not.