

Bookmarks

Act One, Scene One

(A bed is on stage in front of the curtain. A young girl lies beneath the covers. The light shines on her and she cries out.)

Daughter: Mom! Mom! Mom!

Mother: *(Mom rushes to bedside from off stage.)* Sweetie, are you okay? What is it?

Daughter: I don't think I'm alone in my room!

Mother: Of course you're not alone, honey. *(She lifts up each stuffed animal or action figure as she mentions them.)* Mr. Lumpy is here. And your Teddy Bear. And here's Snuggles the Bunny. And your Hercules action figure with the really nice abs. They're all here with you.

Daughter: No, not just them, Mom. I swear that people are moving out there, coughing and sneezing. I even heard one say, "When is this crazy play my kid forced me to go to going to start so I can get home and watch the game?" I'm very afraid, Mom.

Mother: Would you like me to read you a story, hon?

Daughter: Yes. Can you read the book we got today from the library?

Mother: Sure. You mean this one: Hot Summer Nights on the Jersey Shore?

Daughter: No, Mom. Not your Book Club book. That one right there.

Mother: Oh, okay. It's called Bookmarks. *(She picks it up.)* Should I read it to you in my sugary sweet voice, lambkins?

Daughter: Mom! I'm not 4 years old.

Mother: Sorry my little Pookie. *(The daughter rolls her eyes and sighs. The mother begins to read the book.)* Chapter one. Another Quiet Night in the Library. The Sunnydale library had seen better days. Miss Read, the librarian, loved her job. She loved books and she loved kids who loved to read books but the problem was there weren't enough kids reading books and once again.....it was another quiet night in the library.

(The bed is wheeled off the stage and the curtain opens up to a library. Miss Read is at a desk. Only one person, a child, is at the tables in the library. A janitor is cleaning up. He comes across the stage with a broom.)

Stan the Janitor: Another quiet night, hey Miss Read?

Miss Read: I'm afraid so, Stan. On nights like these I wish the books could talk so I'd have someone to shush. *(She shushes.)* Oh, how I miss shushing.

Stan the Janitor: You hardly have to shush that one. *(He points to Rebecca, the girl who is reading quietly at a table.)* That girl sure loves to read.

Miss Read: There used to be a time when the library was filled with Rebeccas, girls and boys who knew that books were the road to adventure and learning and fun.

Stan the Janitor: Hey, you ought to think about being a librarian.

Miss Read: Well, Stan, the problem is that I'm now actually thinking about getting some other job. And being a librarian is all I ever wanted to be since, well, when I was a little girl like Rebecca.

Stan the Janitor: Hang in there, Miss Read. You never know, there might just be a happy ending.

Miss Read: I hope so, Stan. I truly hope so. Meanwhile, library hours are ending and I'm sure Miss Rebecca's parents are waiting for her in the parking lot.

Stan the Janitor: I've got to get home too. But I want you to know, Miss Read, that you **have** reached someone. I checked out 4 more books today. And my little girl can't get to sleep unless I read one of them to her at bedtime. She's hooked on books and it's all thanks to you.

Miss Read: Thank you, Stan. That's very nice to hear. Why don't you go along though so you can start one of those books for your little girl? I'll lock up the library.

Stan the Janitor: Why thank you, Miss Read. I'm thinking that she might like The Velveteen Rabbit.

Miss Read: That's an excellent choice. Good night, Stan.

Stan the Janitor: Good night, Miss Read. *(Stan leaves. A car horn honks.)*

Miss Read: And what about you, Becky? *(The horn honks again.)* I think that bell tolls for you.

Rebecca: Can I read one more page, Miss Read? This book is just so good; I don't think I can put it down. Can't I keep reading it?

Miss Read: Sure you can, Rebecca, but it will have to be at your home. You mustn't keep your parents waiting.

Rebecca: Bye, Miss Read. I had a great night! Thank you for everything. *(Rebecca gathers her books into her back pack. The pack is enormous and when she slips it on it pulls her over onto her back. Miss Read needs to help Becky to her feet.)*

Miss Read: Wow! You must be planning on doing more than just a little light reading, girl.

Rebecca: Thank you Miss Read. Good night.

(Miss Read is alone in the library. She looks around the empty room and sings.)

Another Quiet Night in the Library

Once upon a time

Kids loved to read

Open books and happy children

At every seat

Now the room is empty

The books are closed

The final chapter's coming

A sad ending I suppose

On this quiet night

Such a quiet night

Another quiet night

In the library.

(She turns off the lights and goes to the door.)

Miss Read: Good night, Tom Sawyer.

(She leaves. The light changes. The books step from the shadows and begin a slow dance on stage. An instrumental version of Miss Read's song is played. The "books" are: Peter Pan; Alice in Wonderland; The Wonderful World of Oz; Cinderella; Robin Hood; The Adventures of Tom Sawyer; The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes; The Hunchback of Notre Dame; The Legend of Sleepy Hollow; The Three Musketeers; Dracula; Oliver Twist; Little Women; Treasure Island; Pinocchio. Each book is also a character from the book.)

Tom Sawyer: Did you hear that? She said "Good night, Tom Sawyer!" Me, Tom Sawyer. That is so bully!

Sherlock Holmes: Haven't you detected, lad, that the good librarian says goodnight to some one of us fictional characters each and every night?

Count Dracula: She's never said, "Good night, Count Dracula."

Pinocchio: What do you mean, fictional characters? I'm a real boy!

Sherlock Holmes: Statements like that one could make your nose grow, lad.

Hunchback of Notre Dame: The good librarian seemed so very low.

Cinderella: Just the way I felt when I had to clean the entire cottage for my evil stepmother. Oh, I wish she had a fairy godmother.

Dorothy: Perhaps she should go with me to Emerald City to see the Wizard of Oz.

Long John Silver: Or find adventure with me on the seven seas. I could introduce her to Johnny Depp playing Jack Sparrow.

Tom Sawyer: I could show her my sore toe.

Josephine March: I could offer her a cup of tea.

Robin Hood: I think she might prefer a mug of Friar Tuck's special brew.

Alice: Maybe she was just late for a very special date.

Ichabod Crane: I think not. She was pale as if she had just seen a terrifying specter.

Peter Pan: Perhaps she is like most women and just afraid to grow old.

Josephine March: I am very worried about her.

Dracula: If the rest of you would pardon me, I think I'll go and finish reading the Twilight series.

(A light appears on stage. It is Tinker Bell. A tinkle noise comes from it.)

Peter Pan: What's that, Tink? You think someone is coming!

(The books freeze and listen for some other noise. After a short spell, they begin to sing.)

Another Quiet Night in the Library

Sherlock Holmes: *I detect that there's no one*

Dracula: *I can sense that there's no sun*

Peter Pan: *Fly with me and we'll stay young*

Pinocchio: *We are real*

Tom Sawyer and Robin Hood: *Let's have real fun*

All: *Tonight!*

Hunchback of Notre Dame: *Ring the bell and stand up tall*

Cinderella: *Find your shoes, go to the ball*

Long John Silver: *Set the sails for adventure's call*

Three Musketeers: *All for one and one for all*

All: *Tonight!*

On this very quiet night.

It's such a quiet night.

Just another quiet night in the library.

Dorothy: *Click your heels*

Josephine March: *And sip some tea*

Alice: *Go down the rabbit hole with me*

Robin Hood: *Rob the rich*

Ichabod Crane: *Give it to me*

Oliver Twist: *We've become like family*

All: *Tonight!*

On this very quiet night

It's such a quiet night

Just another quiet night

In the library.

On this very quiet night

It's such a quiet night

Just another quiet night

In the library.

Tonight

We'll read between the lines

Tonight

We'll spend the late fee fines

Tonight

We'll turn the pages fast

Tonight

And make the story last

Tonight!

On this very quiet night

It's such a quiet night

Just another quiet night

In the library

On this very quiet night

It's such a quiet night

Just another quiet night

In the library.

(Tinker Bell lights up and tinkles.)

Peter Pan: Tinker Bell says that now someone is really coming!

Long John Silver: Clear the deck, mateys, and head for the bookcases. Shiver me timbers!

Josephine March: What did he say?

Dorothy and Alice: Run!

(The books scramble back to the stacks and safety. Miss Read enters and looks around. She spots her purse on her desk and picks it up. She sings.)

Another Quiet Night in the Library

Now the room is empty

And the books are closed

The final chapter's coming

A sad ending I suppose

On this quiet night

Such a quiet night

Another quiet night

In the library.

Miss Read: Good night, Count Dracula!

Count Dracula: Yes!

(The curtain closes on scene one.)

