

It was a quiet Sunday evening in the middle of a forest, where an empty library sat, shrouded in trees. The soft light was filtered through the large bay windows that jutted out from the panelled sides, and books spilled from shelves that reached up to the alcoves. A checking out desk stood near the door, a pane of sunlight catching the librarian in a beam. She looked kind, with a face lined with wrinkles like an autumn leaf. She herself was reading a book, a thick tome that rested on the sturdy desk, thin pages fanning out. The library was empty, the log on the desk blank. As the clock ticked by, the empty silence continued. The librarian looked up one last time, then started to pack up. She picked up her keys, and turned to the door when an old man rushed in.

"Sorry Lou, I almost forgot," he panted. In his hands was a book, bound in yellow with elegant letters. It was thick, with dog tags sticking out of some pages, scribbled notes in small copperplate. The librarian rolled her eyes with a smirk. She took the book, and walked towards the shelves. Each shelf had been stacked to the brim, thick books bound in different colours. Spines had titles like 'My 16th Birthday' and 'My Driver's License Failure'. The first book had a cover of blinding neon yellow, while the latter had a deep midnight blue. Each book had a date in the corner, ranging from 1950s to the 2010s. A long period of time. Lou turned to the nearest shelf, and slid the newest story into the shelf.

"You've been forgetting a lot recently, Charlie," she reprimanded, as she strode past the shelves. "You forgot two days last week, and three last month!". The old man winced, and sidestepped away. The librarian continued. "I checked your record, and you've checked out the same memory seven times! Are you alright?" She swiveled to face the sheepish old man, eyebrows raised. In her hand was the book in question. A cream coloured book, messy scrawl at the top reading "My average day,". It was dated around 55 years back, with dog eared corners and a shattered spine. She opened to a page and began to read. The ground around her spun away, and now she stood in a classroom, with twenty wooden desks, spaced evenly apart.

A little boy in a desk next to her raised his hand, his features remarkably alike to Charlie. He stood, walked to the front of the hazy room, and wrote some numbers on the board. An echoed voice at maximum volume bounced around the room. A childish lisp, reciting the times tables. Then, young Charlie wrote the answer on the blackboard, as the students around him clapped polite applause. Charlie returned to his desk blushing. The librarian turned a few pages forward. The same little boy, chatting to his friends as they tossed up a little round sack, laughing and chattering without a care. The librarian watched this with a sad smile on her face. Lou shut the book, and faced the old man. He stood, motionless, helpless tears streaming down his face. "I just wanted to relive it all," he whispered. "Because I've been forgetting,".

He turned, and walked through all the shelves, staring at the wondrous arrays of books, each a day from his life. At the end, he reached a small section, a flat red carpet on the ground. Three low shelves around a small armchair, pillows worn in just the right way. In the shelves, only a few books sat, thin and dusty, large gaps between. The few stories that remained were slim, and when Lou opened them, all she could see was a tiny baby, kicking and gurgling, shaking a wooden rattle in his tight fist. She shut the book quickly, tears in her eyes. "Does that mean..."

the books are leaving?" The floor began to shake, as plaster rained from the ceiling. Lou looked up, startled as the shelf around her sunk into the ground. Charlie lunged desperately at the books, only to encase a couple in his shaking arms. Then, with wild eyes, ran towards the door and out back into life. Lou sank to her knees, as another shelf sank into the ground. The dementia had hit at last. She knew it would happen sooner or later. She returned to her desk, defeated, and waited for the worst to come.