The Carnegie 10

By Nicola Baldwin

NT Connections

Final draft: June 2026

Characters

Characters can be any gender. Names are not gender specific.

KEL	Work experience
MO	Work experience
SAZ	Student
LEE	Student
TONI	Student
TYSON	Student
LEAFY	Uniformed Public Service Trainee
SCOTTY	Library visitor
LOLLY	Library visitor
BERNIE	Library visitor
JUDE	Library visitor

CHORUS – voices from your community

Setting

THE CARNEGIE 10 is set in a library near you. Action should be as fluid as possible. Scenes begin and end around your characters' dialogue, movements or actions. For your set, a few chairs might be enough and if your performance space is limited, the kids' area, computer area, street, can be in the same place. We do not see either KIDS or ADULTS in the play; any action with them is offstage.

About

THE CARNEGIE 10 is set now. It is inspired by the 2016 Carnegie Library Occupation at my local library to prevent its closure by the council, which included young people and small children and lasted 9 days. I am grateful to the 2016 occupiers who shared their recollections for this play. Although inspired by these events and people, this play does not recreate them. Except in spirit. 'The Buzz' is an online newspaper based on The Brixton Buzz. Feel free to change the name to your local paper/site. Andrew Carnegie's surname is pronounced: **kaa**·nuh·gee. Depending on where you live, if you have a local Carnegie Library people may say it differently: use your local pronunciation for the library until they learn about Andrew Carnegie in Scene 11.

Living with Machines

The Industrial Revolution accident reports are from the Living With Machines research project. A radical collaboration between The Alan Turing Institute, British Library, Universities of Cambridge, East Anglia, Exeter, Queen Mary University of London, and King's College London, involving historians, data scientists, geographers, computational linguists, librarians, curators, digital fellows (including me) and the public. Focussing on the nineteenth century (c.1780-1920), it combined massive digitised historical collections and computational analytical tools to see how technology altered human existence. For me, it was a way to 'hear' the words of young workers in mills and factories. To find out more, Mia Ridge, the British Library's Digital Curator for Western Heritage has compiled info on the accidents database I used here. You can read the book on the project here.

Favourite books

Throughout the play, we see the characters with books or reading. Unless a title is specified, think about what books your character likes, or discovers, to choose their favourites.

Play text layout

All playwrights have their own ways to express what we imagine being said or done in each scene. For me, in this play, you will see the following:

Scenes / shifts / settings

Days of the Occupation are numbered for your information, as you set your scenes for the audience.

Day 1 – Thursday Morning

Each numbered scene indicates a break in time and space from what has gone before.

0. Street outside the CARNEGIE LIBRARY

I like to number the first scene as '**0**' if it is short – because nothing happens before this and it's OK if the audience have no idea what's happening or will happen next. In fact, I like that feeling.

If there is a break in time or space but not both, you'll see something like:

ACTION MOVES AROUND LIBRARY...

Computer area

This means different things are happening with different people in the same sequence of action.

After Scene Headings, there is often a description of the place or action. 99% of any text in *Italics* is a message to you, about what the audience should be seeing or what's happening.

If a stage direction indicating action in *italics* happens while a character is speaking, it will be inside brackets, either in – or between – lines of dialogue, like this:

MO arrives to find KEL sitting at Reception.

KEL Hello.

MO *(looking around)* Hello...

If italics appear in a line of dialogue without brackets, it is because the character emphasises that word, or occasionally to reference a book title. You can see both these, and a stage direction here:

LEE OK, did you know, *Frankenstein* – about a *man-made monster* – came out in *(checks phone)* 1818; when all this industry started? (*SAZ glares at LEE)* What?

Named characters / Chorus

When a line is assigned to a named character, that actor should speak that line.

Each Chorus dialogue line is indicated by a (–) dash, eg:

– Mother and baby Happy Yoga class, Thursdays 10AM.

To me, every single voice in the chorus has a distinct personality, but because they also do a lot of scene setting and crowd scenes and I don't know how many actors are in your group, you decide who's who.

You'll also see that CHORUS lines pop up on the other side of the page. I use this a lot in my plays when I want to create a 'stereo' effect. It means that CHORUS characters don't have to 'wait in line' to follow on with their speech after the named characters, you can plot them to go over, or

alongside what else is happening in the scene. Mostly this is to create a sense of 'meanwhile': of two events or dialogues happening among different groups, at the same time. It's something you can't do in film (split screen breaks the visual space) but you can in music or theatre and the audience can tune into a complex experience, within a unified space and time.
At the end of the play, you'll see the named CHARACTER line and CHORUS line happen on the same 'line'; still at opposite sides of the page but speaking together:

SAZ We are not machines! / - We are not machines!

LEE Or monsters... / - Or monsters...

This is because, finally, CHARACTERS and CHORUS have come together in their community, and the CHORUS is now part of a wider group of siblings, friends and neighbours, so any line at the end labelled 'ALL' can be spoken or shouted by everybody. You've earned it!

Chorus as 'Noticeboard'

The play is divided into 3 Acts, each of which begins with the CHORUS 'acting' the Noticeboard outside the library. On one level this is a visual joke for the audience: they troop on, 'act' a notice board and read the 'notices'... But these NOTICEBOARD moments also mark a new day and the start of a new phase of the occupation; displaying first routine library events and notices, then chaotic stickers and slogans by the occupiers and their supporters, to finally the young people inside becoming organised and making their voice heard through online events or garden activities.
Thus, the NOTICEBOARD marks the play's three-act structure: Beginning, Middle, End; Thesis, Antithesis, Synthesis... or crisis, conflict, resolution. How you do this is up to you and can be as silly as you like: carrying a board or boards, miming a noticeboard, covering yourselves in signs, stickers.
In the first NOTICEBOARD section, this line:

– Drum kit for sale. One ~~carful –~~ careful – owner. Needs new skins.

...is a joke, that the 'careful' owner misspelled their sign, and couldn't be bothered to change it. The idea is that the actor deliberately mis-speaks. If that doesn't work for you, just read the line.

(Oh, and I also use.... (three full stops) to suggest a speech tailing off, or the speaker being unsure. And a slash / when a character interrupts or is interrupted by another character as both speak)

Pronunciation of names and unfamiliar words

I have tried to include a phonetic or literal spelling after any word that looks hard to pronounce. In some cases, depending on which character, they can mispronounce words. Your director will decide if they do that, and why (they don't know; don't care; or they learn / change during the play?)

Finally

Every word, punctuation mark or style is there for a reason. If it seems confusing, just try saying the words aloud to discover what the stage directions and layout are trying to do. Have fun doing this and you will make it your own. A play text is like sheet music. How you orchestrate the notes to create your own virtuoso performance is up to you.

Nicola Baldwin, *June 2026*

Act 1

Day 1 – Thursday Morning

0. Street outside the CARNEGIE LIBRARY

CHORUS *stands, acting 'Noticeboard' at one side. MO enters other side, crosses the stage, and at a certain point, starts walking on the spot. CHORUS / NOTICEBOARD shuffle sideways, as if MO is walking, then stops to read notices...*

– Mother and baby Happy Yoga class, Thursdays 10AM.

– Stop smoking with a trained hypnotherapist, testimonials available.

– Had an Accident and Wasn't your fault? Contact Bracket and Poole Injury lawyers.

– Rubbish. Removals. Call Alan. The Man with a van.

– Submit your comments on the council library proposals.

– What is the meaning of life? Read my explosive new book, 'Riddles to the Secrets of Time'.

– Drum kit for sale. One ~~carful –~~ careful – owner. Needs new skins.

– Building work. Tarmac clearance. Own van.

– Sign our Library petition!

– Any joke adverts on this noticeboard will be removed.

- Have you seen our poisonous snake? Answers to the name Fang!

1. **Library Reception, main entrance**

MO arrives to find KEL sitting at Reception.

KEL Hello.

MO *(looking around)* Hello...

KEL Can I help you?

MO I'm supposed to see the librarians...

KEL Are you Mo?

MO Er yes.

KEL You're here for work experience, right?

MO Yes. My school said I have to get this form signed by someone in charge first….

KEL takes the form.

KEL *(signs form)* The librarians are in a meeting. I can't interrupt them. I'm Kel. Been volunteering here since I was 13.

MO I'm only here today.

KEL I know. The library is closed tomorrow anyway. So, a bit of history before you start your one day volunteering?

MO No, I'm good / to start now –

KEL (*begins guided tour anyway)* / The 1850 Public Libraries Act gave local boroughs power to establish public libraries if they raised their own money for construction. The council applied to Andrew Carnegie, one of the richest-ever Americans, who funded libraries for working people. Carnegie donated twelve thousand pounds – a lot of money in those days – to build this library. It serves two wards, with five schools...

MO Right.

KEL *(points)* Main library here, computer area there – busy with students this time of year.

MO Okay.

KEL This is the first place I ever came on my own. We lived over the road.

MO Do you want to be a librarian?

LEAFY arrives, in work-clothes.

KEL *(to MO)* Yes... Don't you?

MO No! I like writing though.

KEL You better not be writing in our books.
(to LEAFY) You can't come in here wearing muddy work boots.

LEAFY ...I'm supposed to ask the librarians for garden tools.

MO (*helpful)* They're in a meeting / –

KEL shoots MO a 'look'.

KEL *(to Leafy)* They're busy. Here's the maintenance room key; entrance round the side.

LEAFY takes key, goes.

(KEL) *(lowers voice, to MO)* It's an early morning meeting for Librarians and Friends. Like I said, the library is closing tomorrow. For a "refit", supposedly. I can't say any more.

MO They just need to sign a form to say I came.

CHORUS *('Librarians Meeting')*:

– It's not just us, it's happening everywhere!

– We mustn't make it worse.

– Or lose our jobs.

– None of us are safe.

– My point exactly.

– But we have to stand up for ourselves.

– Let's write another strongly worded letter.

– Why? They've made up their minds.

– But we're so full. Every day. All kinds of people.

– I can't lose this job.

– We have to do something!

– Don't shout at me!

2. **Computer area**

SAZ and LEE try to revise.

SAZ I wish they'd SHUT UP -

LEE *(watching)* It's a meeting. They're upset...

SAZ Librarians should shut them up.

LEE *(watching)* They *are* librarians. *(points)* That one with the hair-do is crying.

SAZ Seriously? Lee! Stop distracting me! We're supposed to be revising the Industrial Revolution. The library's closed this weekend.

LEE OK, did you know, *Frankenstein* – about a *man-made monster* – came out in *(checks phone)* 1818; when all this industry started? (*SAZ glares at LEE)* What?

SAZ *Frankenstein* is English, not history! I made flashcards, see *(flips cards)*: Background to Industrial Revolution, Consequences of Industrial Revolution, Industrial Revolution in our area...

LEE Did you read those Living With Machines newspaper reports of industrial accidents 1780-1920?

SAZ They're not important, I just put them into ChatGPT.

LEE I think they're relevant -/

SAZ /We can just learn the bullet points.

LEE /they're relevant, because it's real people's words.

SAZ I'll tell you what's relevant. Maintaining good grades.

TONI creeps in, slumps on a desk...

LEE Hey Toni.

SAZ *(frowns at Lee)* Sshh – no –

LEE It's me, Lee. From School. Me and Saz are revising history.

TONI History? Everybody dies.

TONI pulls their hood over their head and flops on the desk. TYSON arrives looking fresh.

TYSON Alright my people...

LEE Hello Tyson.

SAZ We're revising.

TYSON People doing their thing, is what I like to see. Hello Toni. Always a pleasure to see your smiling face.

TYSON heads to another computer, logs on.

SAZ (*whispers)* Do you think Tyson's revising?

LEE It's hard to imagine Tyson doing anything except being Tyson.

SAZ and LEE giggle.

SAZ So, Industrial Revolution... 5 facts...

LEE It began in Britain.

TYSON starts recording their vlog.

TYSON Hello people, today I'm thinking about what it means to say, 'I'm a creator' –
(Stops, adjusts seat)
I'm not talking video content or socials. Being a creator for me is about making change. Like switching up to 100% breathable tee shirts like this I'm wearing from Callum Vee.
Thirsty? Swap boring tea for Rankin's Power Water.
(stops recording)
– though a cup of tea would be nice –
Wait, I need to think about this.

LEE *(to SAZ)* Some of the newspaper reports of Industrial Accidents are from around here.

SAZ So?

LEE 200 years ago, before computers, workers read those newspaper reports and they had meetings about kids dying in factories.

CHORUS appear, acting a meeting in the 1800s, with e.g. top hat \ cane \ false moustaches…

– On Wednesday a most shocking accident occurred at Openshaw's mill.

– Isaac Hartley, thirteen, was preparing the bobbins, when the strap of a machine came off the pulley –

– To replace it, the lad mounted the cross beam of one of the looms. The strap caught the sleeve of his shirt -

– The shaft was spinning at SEVENTY revolutions a minute –

– With that dreadful velocity was Isaac carried round.

(CHORUS gasp, horrified)

– There was no one who could render assistance at the moment of the accident.

– Poor Isaac was some time trapped on the shaft before the engine could be stopped.

3. **Library Reception, main entrance**

MO carries books. KEL folds a sleeping bag.

MO Where do I put returned children's books? Hey, you going camping?

KEL What? No. *(Points)* Kids' section down there. Then have lunch.

*MO carries books to **Kids' section** where LOLLY, BERNIE and SCOTTY sit on...*

MO Bean bags!

LOLLY Lie down, they're comfy.

BERNIE We're watching the kids' Bear Hunt.

LOLLY *(calling to running KIDS)* Look out!

SCOTTY *(calls out)* Alex! Mind the baby. (*to Lolly*) What's your little brother called?

LOLLY Rocky. He's my son. I'm Lolly, this is-

BERNIE Bernie. Hiya.

SCOTTY I'm Scotty, that 6-year-old gladiator is Alex.

LOLLY Rocky and me come here every day. *(Calls out)* Don't we Rocky? Yay!

SCOTTY Alex's usually at school. Not today. I guess from your bags and stuff on the pushchair, you're here for the... *(whispers)* occupation?

BERNIE *(loud)* The what?

MO Occupation?

LOLLY Here?

SCOTTY I thought you knew. Forget it.

BERNIE You have to tell us now.

SCOTTY The Library's closing today.

MO For a refit over the weekend.

SCOTTY No! The Council says that, but it won't open for at least 6 months, and then there'll be one librarian for 2 hours a day instead of 3 full-time, fewer books...

LOLLY Six months? Where are we supposed to go?

SCOTTY Really, the council wants to close it permanently to sell it off.

MO They can't do that, can they?

BERNIE Libraries are like... forever.

KEL *(arriving)* Excuse me. No running in the library. Oh, hi Scotty.

LOLLY *(Calls out)* Hear that, kids? Hop instead! Jumping bunnies hunting bears!

MO The library's closing *down*?

SCOTTY Sorry Kel, I thought they were in on it

BERNIE We are now.

MO *(to Kel)* That's what the meeting was about!?

KEL When the library closes at 7 some of us are staying.

MO Who?

KEL Library regulars and 'Friends'.

MO The council's letting you stay?

BERNIE ‘Occupation’ means Just Do It! You don’t ask before you break into a squat, do you?

LOLLY Right!

KEL We’re not squatters. I love this library.

SCOTTY Kel wants it on the news.

LOLLY Excellent, we can get into that, right Bernie?

KEL You’re not members.

LOLLY I’ll join now, we both will, won’t we?

BERNIE Yeah go on. It’s free, right?

KEL For local residents.

LOLLY Perfect, cos we’ll be living here, won’t we? For the foreseeable.
(Shouts out) Rocky? How d’you fancy living at Magic Book Palace? Yay!!

SCOTTY My mum and dad are librarians; they can’t protest.

MO Why not?

SCOTTY They’ll lose their jobs.

LOLLY That’s like someone punching your arm and saying if you cry, I’ll punch your face.

BERNIE You have to tell everyone.

KEL No! It’s super-secret.

BERNIE It’s a protest. You need to make a noise.

KEL Not until we do it at 7. We don’t want the council finding out.

LOLLY An occupation would suit me and Rocky. We’re staying on Bernie’s floor and living out of that pushchair. So we’re well prepared. *(to Kel, sincerely)* What’s your names?

KEL ...Kel.

MO I’m Mo.

LOLLY Kel, Mo, Scotty, this place means the world to me and my Rocky. We can't lose it.

4. **Library garden,** Later

TYSON watches 'LEAFY' pruning a small tree.

TYSON Just admiring your work. It looks better. Now you've – er – cut bits off.

LEAFY Pruned? Yeah. It was overgrown and potentially dangerous for people's eyes.

TYSON You want some Rankin's Power water?

LEAFY *(takes bottle, drinks)* Alright, cheers.

TYSON I'm selling it on my YouTube channel.

LEAFY *(spits out, gropes pocket)* Er how much?

TYSON It's yours. Normally people have to pay.

LEAFY What's your channel?

TYSON "@createstronger".

LEAFY About gardening?

TYSON About how making something new, makes us stronger. I'm doing a presentation for Young Entrepreneurs funding on Tuesday.

LEAFY I'm doing a Uniformed Public Service Diploma with a council placement.

TYSON A Uni-what?

LEAFY A work-study foundation course for the uniformed services.

TYSON Like... the police?

LEAFY Army, police, ambulance, fire service, security. We learn human behaviour, leadership, communication. I'm here doing trainee security, but I spotted a health and safety issue with that tree and took initiative pruning it. Yeah, I do feel stronger.

TYSON Hey, what time is it?

LEAFY *(checks)* Seven! Thanks for the drink but I need to lock up.

TYSON I need to babysit my sisters!

TYSON leaves, LEAFY heads inside.

5. **Library Reception, entrance**

KEL and SCOTTY prepare for announcement.

SCOTTY Sure about this?

KEL I've been coming here since I was little with my dad. I have to save it.

SCOTTY The Librarians are notifying the Council. Then they'll leave.

KEL Right.

JUDE rushes in.

JUDE Have you got any books on fitness?

KEL Aerobics, yoga, running, Tai Chi? Bookshelf in the corner.

JUDE That's amazing. I thought you might be shut.

KEL Not tonight. *(Phoning)* Hi Mum. I'm at the library. We're doing the occupation. *(Mum fusses)* I will... I promise. Bye.

SCOTTY *(checks message)* The Council are calling the police.

KEL Mum says she'll pick me up any time if there's trouble. *(Excited)* You ready?

SCOTTY steps forward.

SCOTTY Excuse me! Ladies and gentlemen, I have an announcement-

BERNIE *(SHOUTS)* It's an OCCUPATION!

LOLLY This library's OURS!

MO The Librarians were supposed to sign my work experience before I leave.

LOLLY So? Stay!

KEL *(uneasy)* Hang on a minute-

LEE and SAZ pass with school bags. Followed by TONI.

LEE *(polite)* Bye, thanks.

SAZ What's happening?

SCOTTY Er well...

LOLLY We've taken over the library to stop it closing.

LEE So, it's open tomorrow?

KEL Er...

BERNIE Yes!

SAZ What about tonight?

SCOTTY We're all staying.

SAZ *(To Lee)* Carry on revising?

LEE Yes!

TONI What's going on?

LEE Library's open all night.

TONI *(happy)* We can stay? For real?

LEAFY arrives in high-vis vest.

LEAFY I'm a Uniformed Public Service Diploma trainee and I'm here to observe.

KEL I'm a trainee librarian so I'm in charge.

LEAFY Then I need you to write down the names of everyone who's staying.

KEL When I've worked out where they'll all sleep.

ACTION MOVES AROUND LIBRARY...
Computer area

SAZ *(on phone)* ...yes, alright then. See you tomorrow, bye.
(to LEE) All set. I told them I was staying at yours.

LEE *(panics)* I said the same to my dad...!

SAZ So? Don't look so worried!

LEE You know what they're like... If they find out.

SAZ They won't. Relax.

LEE Easy for you to say, your whole family is relaxed. Mine wrote the rule book.

SAZ It'll be fine. What's that howling?

LEE The grown-ups are singing in the kitchen!

SAZ Let's get ourselves sorted.

LEE and SAZ start revising. KEL enters with clipboard.

KEL Families are in the kids' section: adult singles in main library. You can sleep here.

LEE We're not sleeping.

Kids' section

LOLLY Hey Mo, I saved you a bean bag.

BERNIE *(eating chips)* That union woman Mickey bought everyone fish and chips.

SCOTTY Everything feels... organised, right?

LOLLY *(shouts to kids)* Pick your books to read and make a den with the bean bags.

In the garden...
TONI phones home.

TONI *(phone)* Mum? Where are you? It's after midnight.
Don't drink too much. Don't drink any more...
Don't use the gas rings when you get home. You might forget to turn it off.

There's vegetarian lasagne in the fridge to microwave.
Listen, the council want to shut the library Mum, so I'm taking part in a protest! With people from *(Mum interrupts)* Oh, right. Bye. *(Mum hangs up)* Love you.

LEE *(arrives)* We're camping in the computer room, Toni.

TONI *(wipes eyes)* ...ringing my mum.

LEE Did you tell her the truth?

TONI What? The universe is spinning toward oblivion? Said I'm occupying the library.

LEE I couldn't tell my parents either of those things.

TONI I do remember you.

LEE Why don't you come to school anymore?

TONI I SAID I REMEMBER YOU. THAT DOESN'T MAKE US FRIENDS.

Kid's section
Lights suddenly go out.

LOLLY WAAAGH!

SCOTTY The light's on a timer. Nightlights come on soon...

LOLLY Spooky...

MO Who's that?

BERNIE *(creeping in)* Meeee! Feel like I'm in a slasher movie.

LOLLY *(creepy whisper)* The Library Killers...

Sudden light (JUDE'S headlamp). All scream.

JUDE So many great fitness books. *(They laugh. JUDE pleased)* And everyone's so friendly.

LOLLY This is FUN.

MO What's the plan, Scotty?

SCOTTY So, if we can occupy for 2 days, the Council has to meet us, right? We'll demand a proper public consultation, during which the library stays open part-time, with librarians. *(gloomy)* ...Or, we get arrested, fined. Mum and Dad get sacked.

LOLLY No. You're doing the right thing. We make miracles when we support each other.

SCOTTY I hope so.

They fall asleep. MO gets out notebook and starts to write.

Act 2

Day 2 – Friday Morning

CHORUS/ NOTICEBOARD sidles on outside the library, now covered with protest stickers.

– Mother and baby Happy Yoga... WE LOVE BOOKS!

– Smoking cessation with trained KIDS NEED LIBRARIES!

– SAVE OUR LIBRARY!

– HANDS OFF OUR BOOKS!

– Sign our Library petition.

CHORUS snap out of being the Noticeboard, turn to each other as gossiping Local Residents:

– Have you seen the community noticeboard!?

– There's police outside the library.

– Must be a break-in overnight.

– Teenagers, vandalising the place.

– I heard *('whispers')* it's been squatted by illegal migrants.

– Should kick them all out!

6. **Library Reception, main entrance**

KEL claps for attention.

KEL Hello, LISTEN to me! The library has 4 toilets but no bathroom. So, it's stand-up washes in tiny sinks. *(all groan)* Breakfast in the kitchen but please tidy up.

LOLLY Breakfast? Cool.

SCOTTY We've got toast, cereals, spreads. Mickey and Library Friends are scrambling eggs and there are towels if you need one.

KEL *(to Scotty)* There's three times more people staying than we expected.

SCOTTY *(delighted)* Brilliant so many people care.

KEL Do they though? We don't know them, or why they're here.

JUDE (*announces)* I have a spare towel too! I'm Jude by the way.

KEL *(louder)* If you need towels, give Scotty your name.

MO We can all share, Kel. You don't need a list.

KEL You still here?

MO What do you mean?

KEL You did your ONE day's library work experience. Go home and write.

MO Why are you being weird?

KEL Sorry. *This* feels weird, all these new people. ...It's good you stayed.

BERNIE Feds are outside. We need another exit in case they lock us in.

KEL Why would the police do that?

BERNIE Kettle us together, then pick us off to arrest, like at demos. I can't miss another night at my hostel. I'll lose my room.

LOLLY You go, Bernie. I'm staying.

BERNIE Do you need anything?

LOLLY Nappies. A phone voucher, Rocky's shampoo.

BERNIE I'll bring them later. Keep the faith!

7. **Front entrance** outside steps

BERNIE leaves, TYSON arrives. LEAFY stands guard.

LEAFY Hey Tyson! I watched your YouTube videos.

TYSON Hi Leafy.

LEAFY That's not my name but we're told not to give names in uniform.

TYSON What's happening?

LEAFY I informed those officers I'm doing a Uniformed Public Service Diploma. They told me to F-off. So I'm working independently. *(Realises)* Oh, yeah, they occupied the building last night.

TYSON Who did?

LEAFY *(shows phone)* School kids and older users refused to leave.

TYSON So it's open? I need the computer.

LEAFY Sure, but listen - when council security arrives, they'll lock this gate; if you leave, you can't get back in.

TYSON What if I'm inside? *(Spooling phone)*

LEAFY Stay 'til you get kicked out, I guess.

8. **Computer room**

TONI writes. SAZ shows LEE their revision schedule as TYSON arrives, logs on.

SAZ We're doing different subjects, so these topics we can revise together, plus time to work on our own.

TYSON *(rehearsing)* Hello people! Today I want to talk about creation in all its forms – not just things you buy. Unless its Rankin's Power Water, of course...

SAZ Excuse me, we're trying to work.

TYSON Yeah, hashtag #MeToo.

LEE We can't concentrate with you playing 'Influencers'.

TYSON I have been nothing but polite to you. *(Starts recording)* We're surrounded by change-makers – people who cut trees when they get scraggy... or express their individuality by PICKING ON others.

SAZ *(outraged)* Seriously!?

TONI pulls hood up.

TYSON *(louder)* I'm at Carnegie Library for @createstronger with activists in my community; adults, little kids, *(looks at SAZ)* some really annoying.

SAZ I CAN'T STAND THIS!

TYSON *(to SAZ)* I share a room with two little sisters. I CAN DO THIS ALL DAY.

TONI *(shouts)* Shut up! This is a QUIET SPACE!

TYSON *(whispers)* I'm rehearsing my Young Entrepreneurs presentation.

LEE *(whispers)* Yes but we're trying to concentrate.

SAZ And you're driving us nuts with your motivational crap!

TYSON You're driving me nuts we're even having this stupid conversation.

TONI I AM "NUTS"! This isn't helping.

LEE Let's just sit quietly.

SAZ *(angry whisper)* Are any of you even doing the Industrial Revolution projects?

LEE Course.

TYSON Sorted.

TONI I know that Living with Machines stuff off by heart.

SAZ Oh *really*?

TONI *(suddenly)* *"*A girl employed in the upper room of Mr. Horton's cotton factory was very improperly playing with the beam, when her clothes were caught and she was thrown against the machinery with such force as to break her legs, and injure her head so she died."

LEE That's from the newspaper reports!

TONI "An Inquest was held on the body of Peter Knowles, aged 14, accidentally crushed between roller beams in the cotton spinning mill of Hargreaves and Dugdale. The accident must have arisen entirely from his own inattention. Verdict, Accidental Death."
(beat) I keep thinking about them. Kids... sent to work, never came home.

LEE It could be us.

TYSON Guess what I'm doing? I'll give you a clue... Andrew Carnegie.

LEE The millionaire who built this library?

SAZ Carnegie's not Industrial Revolution.

TYSON Andrew Carnegie literally made his fortune off it. Richest man in America, funded... *(looks around)* 2500 libraries worldwide.

SAZ You're literally reading that off the wall.

TYSON You're literally reading off your revision notes.

LEE He's not really a worker, is he?

TYSON It's all work. He was just good at it.

SAZ I don't know how long we'll be here, but I *can't wait* to hear your project...

TYSON I know you're being sarcastic, but I look forward to it. Before Tuesday though, when I'm doing Young Entrepreneurs.

LEE Let's all present to each other. Toni?

TONI ...Whatever, OK. Yeah.

TYSON Have you seen your socials? Council's sending guards.

LEE *(checks messages)* Oh no... (*to SAZ)* Your dad phoned my mum!!

SAZ *(checks phone)* My mum's outside...

9. **Main library**

KEL, MO, SCOTTY and JUDE arrange 10 chairs in a circle. LOLLY sits reading.

SCOTTY The grown-ups are doing daily campaign “check-ins”. I think we should. In case people are... worried or have questions.

SAZ and LEE rush past to entrance.

KEL OK, I’m Kel. You all know me. I guess I’m speaking for the Librarians.

SCOTTY Not really.

KEL *(to Scotty)* I’m a trainee librarian. I’ve been coming here since I was 3.

SCOTTY *(to all)* I’m Scotty. My parents ARE librarians. I’m doing the kitchen rota; my brother Alex is doing a rota for Min-Hero on the kids’ computer. We think this place is worth fighting for.

LOLLY puts down book, claps.

LOLLY Thanks Scotty. Love you, Kel. Jude...?

JUDE Er... first timer at Carnegie Library. Just moved here. I’m into fitness, so for me, a gym is fine – sorry! I’m doing early morning stretch if anyone’s interested.

LOLLY *(claps Jude, then)* Hiya, I’m Lolly. Love your activism and that there’s friends for Rocky. Free food, stories, time to play. I’m starting a Book Nook like in the Kids’ section, for us.

LOLLY claps self, others join in. All look at MO... writing.

SCOTTY Are you taking minutes?

MO Just... why everyone’s here.

KEL Mo’s a writer.

SCOTTY The local paper wants us to blog.

JUDE We have a local paper?

KEL The Buzz. Online. They really support this library.

SCOTTY *(to MO)* How much have you written?

MO Loads. Mostly stories.

SCOTTY That’s great.

LOLLY (*waves)* Bernie! Over here!

BERNIE *(arrives)* There's a crowd outside.

KEL How many?

BERNIE Dunno, 25? Wanting to use the library. Council are chaining the doors. Anyone who leaves now, can't get back. Here's your stuff, Lol.

LOLLY takes the bag, hugs BERNIE, who shakes hands with others.

BERNIE Good luck guys, message me if you need stuff.

SAZ and LEE return with plates and tubs of food.

LOLLY Sandwiches!

SAZ Our parents just delivered all this.

LEE I thought my family would be furious, but they're really proud.

KEL and MO bring a table for the food. LEAFY arrives in hi-vis waistcoat, with a megaphone.

LEAFY *(loudly)* ATTENTION, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN!

KEL What are you doing?

MO Are you evicting us?

LEAFY THE COUNCIL HAS SECURED THE BUILDING. TRESPASSERS ARE FREE TO LEAVE. BUT AFTER LEAVING, YOU CANNOT BE READMITTED.

LOLLY Fascists!

LEAFY *(lowers megaphone)* I'm obeying orders. *(megaphone)* YOU'RE BREAKING THE LAW!

They boo. LEAFY leaves.

SCOTTY Wait 'til the kids hear about this… (*Heads towards kids' area, shouts)* Hey Alex and Rocky, we're under siege! Yay!…

CHORUS become the voice of an Official Letter.

– This Library is a non-residential property and not designed to be lived in. We (the Council) hereby give persons unknown formal notice to quit.

– Be advised the police can take immediate action if squatters commit other crimes.

– causing damage when entering the property

– causing damage while in the property

– not leaving when they're told to by a court

– using utilities like electricity or gas without permission

– fly-tipping

CHORUS becomes the crowd of gossiping NEIGHBOURS.

– It's been three days now; look at their rubbish.

– It's not their fault the council took their bins.

– They're schoolkids, families, grandparents. We donated sleeping bags.

– They're hardline activists! Who even needs libraries now?

– These days everyone has a smartphone!

Days 3-6 Saturday-Tuesday

10. **Main library**

'MONTAGE' AROUND THE 10 CHAIRS... LOLLY and TONI reading. MO sits, writing...
The mood is calm, organised.

MO Carnegie Blog, Day 3. Silence from the council. Inside, our waiting world goes on.

SCOTTY and JUDE pass.

SCOTTY Jude and I are doing shifts greeting visitors -

JUDE Loads more food donations. Saz made a washing-up rota.

TABLEAUX /freeze-frames of them discussing, reading, brushing teeth during the following...

LOLLY and LEE pass, carrying books.

LEE ...Did you finish reading *Frankenstein*?

LOLLY Yes it was wild! Starting *Dracula* tonight...

MO writes...

MO Day 5. Weird to see my words – our lives – online. Still no response from the council. We publish our demands. Friends cover the railings with messages of support.

FREEZE-FRAMES: discussion, doing hair, reading books. JUDE stands by a chair.

JUDE Sweep your arms up all the way... Inhale.

LOLLY and KEL follow...

LOLLY, KEL *(inhaling)* Hmmff

LEE joins stretch.

JUDE Rise on balls of your feet... Exhale.

LOLLY, KEL, LEE *(Exhale)* Aaah

JUDE Inhale, lock your fingers and push, arms above your head, twist left, exhale. Inhale. Twist right. Exhale...

MO and ALL join final breath.

ALL Aaaah....

MO paces, on phone...

MO **"**Are we trying to change the world or stop it changing?". Did you get that? And photos from Kel?

SCOTTY *(on phone)* Six days. Nothing more from the Council! Are they plotting something?

MO *(on phone, stops pacing)* Sorry... they want what? *(to SCOTTY)* The Buzz says some big newspapers want to republish my blog...

KEL The Council must be getting the message. We're not leaving.

SCOTTY We really need someone to handle publicity...

TONI watches SAZ and LEE ticking off revision timetable...

SAZ Done... and done!

TONI What about our Industrial Revolution presentations? Before Tyson leaves.

SAZ Blimey, yes! "Young Entrepreneurs!"

LEE How about tonight, with everyone?

SAZ heads to the computer area

SAZ *(calls out)* You ready to enlighten us about Andrew Carnegie? Tyson?

TONI finds TYSON in the kitchen *scrubbing their trainers.*

TONI You in here? Tyson?

TYSON What?

TONI You're washing your trainers! Thought they were always new.

TYSON I never get new stuff, but I will, you see I'll get all the merch and sponsorship after I get this funding...

TONI Still, it's good you take care of your things. Respect.

TYSON Self-respect, yeah. Value.

TONI You ready for our presentations later?

KEL, JUDE and LOLLY bring food as TONI brings TYSON.

LEE Let's eat together tonight – for Toni's birthday.

TONI *(stunned)* How did you know...?

KEL Your birthdate's on your library card. You don't mind, do you?

TONI shocked, shakes head.

LOLLY *(shouts)* Toni! Your mum's here.

TONI panics, runs to door. TYSON and LEE follow. The others exchange glances.

CHORUS / noisy CROWD outside.

LEE returns.

JUDE Is Toni OK?

LEE *(unsure)* Toni's mum's... lively. Dancing with the crowd... *(Tyson returns)* You're not filming them?

TYSON Toni said no.

Raucous singing outside.

CHORUS *(outside)*
Happy Birthday to youuu, Happy Birthday to yoo-ou!
Happy Library-Occupying birthdaaay dear Tonniii!!! HAPPY BIIIIRTH -

TONI returns mid-song. A moment's quiet.

KEL You OK?

TONI Yes. Yes I am! *(Happy)* This is the best birthday ever!

LEE Let's do *our* family photo. Say 'libraries'!

TONI & ALL *(Link arms, shout)* LIBRARIEEESS!

KEL I'm posting this #SaveOurLibrary

11. **Main library - later**

SAZ, LEE, TYSON, TONI, KEL, MO, LOLLY, SCOTTY and JUDE around the table. SAZ begins...

SAZ The Industrial Revolution officially began in 1760-

LOLLY Wait – these talky thingies are short, right?

SAZ My project is a timeline of the Industrial Revolution as a history of invention.

JUDE A *short* timeline?

LOLLY I didn't like school when I actually went; not up for lots of blah now.

SAZ *(sarcastic)* Is that so?

SCOTTY Short is better, for a presentation. Right, Tyson?

TYSON Hundred percent.

SAZ sighs irritably.

SAZ *(recites)* Most people think the Industrial Revolution began in 1760. My project examines the timeline of technological innovation leading up to the Industrial Revolution, from 1543 with the (*EE-OH-LE-PILE*) Aeolipile or Hero's Engine "a simple steam turbine which spins when water inside is heated, producing torque (*TORK*)", and the steam turbine invented by Taqi al-Din in Ottoman Egypt in 1551, to the Flying Shuttle invented by John Kay in Lancashire 1733 -

LOLLY starts to clap. SAZ glares at LOLLY.

SAZ *(to Lolly)* I'm still speaking. *(Louder)* The Spinning Mule invented in 1785 by Edmund Cartwright, the Power loom, and the *(getting flustered) ('BESSY-MER')* Bessemer process for steel production patented by Henry Bessemer in 1856. Plus detailed diagrams of how each worked-

LOLLY claps even louder, joined by JUDE, then others. SAZ fumes, despite applause.

LEE Great, Saz. I haven't finished mine. Lolly's been helping –
(*LOLLY points to display of books. SAZ folds arms.)*
It's a history of the Industrial Revolution through stories. While engineers invented dangerous new machines, in 1818 Mary Shelley wrote *Frankenstein,* about a scientist creating a man powered by electricity who becomes a monster – when she was just eighteen!
(Others react)
In 1897, Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula,* about a millionaire vampire sucking people's blood; Bram Stoker himself got ill with overwork and faced poverty. These, and other books of the period tell the human horror of the Industrial Revolution.

Enthusiastic applause.

MO Excellent!

TYSON Toni?

TONI *(after pause, haltingly)* The industrial accidents upset me. Kids, mums... hurt and killed. Lots of things upset me. I miss a lot of school. Here, I started writing poems. Probably rubbish. About kids who survive. Like Isaac Hartley, 13, a bobbin boy working on that big machine that breaks and snags his sleeve as he's trying to mend it. He's on his own...

(reads from phone...)
No one in the room to help
Isaac. Whirling, flesh torn, seventy revolutions a minute.
Faster than a car, so much agony, crushing machine.
And he kept his head
All alone, Isaac kept his head
Aside -
From the blades, the spinning, the terror,
One of his arms and leg dreadfully fractured, but his head
His head was so little injured
(*looks up)*
He recognised people trying to help him
and saved his own life.

Silence, then sincere APPLAUSE.

TYSON *(shocked)* That's properly good, Toni.

LEE Tyson?

TYSON This feels weird.

SAZ ...Andrew Carnegie?

(This might be the first time anyone has used or heard the Scottish pronunciation)

TYSON Andrew *(KAR-**NUH**-GEE)* Carnegie.

LOLLY Like the library?

MO This library, yes.

KEL His foundation provided the funds to build it.

TYSON What do you think Andrew Carnegie was doing age 13, in 1848?

TONI No idea.

SAZ Living with his posh family in upstate New York?

TYSON You know Andrew Carnegie's Scottish, right?

SAZ *(flustered)* I thought he was American.

TYSON Born in a one-room cottage his family shared with another family in Dunfermline. His Dad struggled to make a living as a handloom-weaver. They were starving –

LEE You sure this is the millionaire Carnegie who built libraries?

TYSON His parents borrowed money off family to migrate to Pennsylvania, USA. Where, age 13, Carnegie's first job... was a bobbin boy.

TONI No way.

TYSON Changing spools of thread 12 hours a day, 6 days a week in a Pittsburgh cotton mill for $1.20, until John Hay, a Scottish bobbin manufacturer, gave Carnegie a job for $2.00. Then he was a messenger boy in the Telegraph Company. He memorised the locations of Pittsburgh businesses and learned the different sounds of telegraph signals, so he could translate them by ear.

SAZ Is this true?

TYSON That's only half of it. If you want to hear the rest of his extraordinary life, you'll have to tune into @createsronger.

Laughter, applause... SCOTTY spools their phone.

SAZ I've enjoyed revising with you. But I'm leaving tomorrow. My first exam is Thursday. I want to go home, have a bath. Tyson – good luck for Young Entrepreneurs tonight.

SCOTTY *(suddenly)* Oh no! First responses from the Council!

KEL What is it?

MO *(phone)* The councillors... commenting on our photo of Toni's birthday...

CHORUS (*Snarky councillors)*

– Cakes and singsongs at library protest!

– 'Campaigners enjoy middle-class luxury while local children starve'!

– So called 'Protesters', party at our expense.

– Attention-seeking teenagers.

– Get these entitled squatters out now!

KEL All this time, waiting for them to engage... then this?!

MO *(checks phone)* I'm getting abuse on my blog.

JUDE *(phone)* If the Council sells the building, maybe they *can* fund more school meals?

SAZ Yeah, should they really save this place for a few book lovers?

LOLLY We're not "a few book lovers"!

TONI This place is a refuge! Somewhere I can think.

TYSON I see a way out here, between the bunk beds, poky corridor, packed shelves, dark stairwells where the lifts don't work and lights flash on and off. I see my future.

KEL *(upset)* I'm not giving up! They'll have to drag me out. As soon as I could walk, Dad held my hand to come here. "Choose any book", Dad said; "in the library, we're millionaires!".

SAZ You did everything you could. Tyson? Shall I ask my dad to give you a lift?

TYSON No. I'm not leaving.

LEE What about Young Entrepreneurs?

TYSON What took Andrew Carnegie from bobbin boy to billionaire? A library. His boss John Hay opened his library to boys from the mill and Carnegie started reading. That's his education. He passes exams for the new Pennsylvania Railroad company and his proud mum mortgages their home to buy shares, which quadruple in value. Carnegie gets jobs for his brother and little sister. He works, learns, invests...
(looks at them) What's the point of being an 'Influencer' if you don't influence great things?

TONI Carnegie didn't just survive...

KEL He fought back.

SCOTTY *(to Tyson)* Tyson, if you're staying, will you be our press officer?

TYSON Sure. @Createstronger hashtag #Carnegie *(one by one Tyson counts aloud the assembled group, finishing with themselves…) 9.*

LOLLY No, make that Carnegie10, don't forget Bernie, supporting us from the outside, we're all part of the struggle.

ALL The Carnegie 10! *(Then then do a collective high five)*

MO *(phone pings)* *The Guardian* is reprinting my blog!

KEL It's kicking off.

All except SAZ cluster round phones, talking intently.

SAZ *(attempts joke)* Enjoy the revolution. *Try* not to get arrested!

LOLLY Oh go back to your fancy house!

Cornered, SAZ says it almost without thinking...

SAZ At least if I have kids, they'll have somewhere to live.

OTHERS shocked.

LOLLY I love my son. (*barges past SAZ, upset)* Rocky! Bedtime!

SAZ scrabbles up revision notes, hurries out.

In the Computer area....
TONI and TYSON move chairs.

TONI You can set up your Press Office here.

TYSON Bring your desk over.

TONI OK.

LEE watches SAZ neatly unfurling sleeping bag.

LEE Your presentation was very thorough.

SAZ You don't have to be nice to me.

SAZ lies down, turns away.

In Kid's section
LOLLY opens a storybook, then shuts it.

LOLLY It's too late for silly stories. Go to sleep.

LOLLY curls up on the beanbag, hugging the book.

In the garden
SCOTTY calls home.

SCOTTY Dad, did you and Mum see what the councillors put on social media? Don't worry, it's made us even more (*listens)* What? *(moves aside, quieter)* Why not?
But it's not over until they change... What do you mean?

SCOTTY hangs up, shaken.

Act 3

Day 8, Thursday morning
MO writes quickly...

MO A week ago, I arrived for one day's work experience. None of us expected to be here eight days later, with hordes of people and camera crews camped outside.

We hear CROWD outside.

12. **On the steps...**
NOTICEBOARD /CHORUS hustles sideways being notices from occupiers, as BERNIE arrives.

– Thank you for your support and donations!

– This library belongs to everybody. Activities today:

– Kids book club, Library steps, 10AM.

– Jude's Afternoon Tai Chi, Garden and online 2PM.

– 7PM, Tyson welcomes another celebrity guest on @Createstronger/Carnegie10

SCOTTY greets CHORUS who become voices in the CROWD of supporters.

– Lovely atmosphere with all the banners.

– I always hoot when I drive past.

SCOTTY *(subdued)* Thank you, much appreciated.

– We saw you on TV, with your community bookshelf.

– Our local library was closed. You kids are an inspiration.

BERNIE *(pushing forwards)* Scuse me, coming through.

– Will the Carnegie 10 achieve anything except attention, and free food?

SCOTTY Local restaurants donate food. What we don't need, goes to foodbanks.

BERNIE SCOTTY! I need to see Lolly!

SCOTTY Bernie? They're doing Tai Chi.

BERNIE Give Lolly this letter. It's urgent.

SCOTTY *(to crowd)* Thanks everyone! Write to the council and your MP.

13. **Computer room...**

TYSON livestreams 'Carnegie Chat' with LEE, TONI and KEL. SAZ packs to leave.

TYSON We're rounding up Carnegie Chat with an audience question: what's your stand-out memory from this crazy week?

LEE Mo's blog in the papers with a photo of our hands reaching out through the metal gates. And visits and letters of support from Michael Rosen, Nick Hornby, Stella Duffy, Adjoa Andoh and Colm Toibin (*Kolum ToeBeen*).

TONI Someone got their period, and we put out an emergency tweet at 2am for sanitary products which got delivered in fifteen minutes by a nurse on their way home.

KEL Carnegie Chess Club meeting on the steps, the sound of the brass band arriving. I just hope the Council lets future kids have memories here too.

TYSON *(holds out mic)* Saz?

SAZ *(nervously)* Er... When the little kids formed a historically accurate under-7s Roman Legion and marched around chanting pretend Latin.

TYSON Excellent. *(wraps up)* Don't forget to follow us @createstronger for The Carnegie 10 book recommendations, Saz' revision tips and Jude's early morning stretch.

KEL, TONI and TYSON end zoom, relax.

LEE You spoken to Lolly?

SAZ Er no... I mean... I'm sure Lolly's fine about it. I'm leaving tonight anyway.

14. **Main library**

LOLLY sits in their Book Nook staring at a letter with SCOTTY, JUDE and MO.

KEL *(arriving)* Is that the Council letter?

SCOTTY Lolly's got a flat.

JUDE You've put in an offer?

MO Not *buying* one.

LOLLY 2-bedroom Housing Association flat with shared garden.

JUDE Is that good? You don't seem happy...

LOLLY shrugs.

SCOTTY Lolly has to see it and decide tomorrow.

LOLLY I don't want to let you down.

MO You're not.

LOLLY This feels like home to me and Rocky.

SCOTTY You and Rocky need that flat... *(distracted by messages)*

MO Unless it's a rat-infested crap hole.

LOLLY *(laughs)* Rocky likes rats.

SCOTTY texts. TONI, TYSON, LEE and SAZ arrive.

TYSON Is that the council eviction letter?

LOLLY No. *(Glances at SAZ)* I've been offered a flat.

SAZ *(flustered)* That's great!

MO They have to sign for it tomorrow.

LOLLY *(to SAZ)* Because getting a flat is more important than saving a library, right?

JUDE You have to go, for Rocky's sake.

SAZ (*Trying to be friendly)* ...I've got my first exam tomorrow. I'm leaving tonight too.

Awkward pause.

KEL *(to Scotty)* Are your mum and dad pleased we're getting so much attention?

SCOTTY No, actually. Dad's freaking out it could 'impact my future' and theirs. *(Reads from their phone)* 'Your photo in the papers, always in front. We know you're trying help but maybe your new friends are leading you on. And if librarians get sacked, it's more likely to be us.'.

KEL You want to leave too?

SCOTTY Honestly? I don't know.

15. **Library steps...**

Later, SCOTTY and KEL receive a food delivery, watched by CHORUS */SECURITY GUARDS.*

- *(sniffs)* Smells like free dinner for you lucky lot. Again.

SCOTTY Another massive delicious free meal from Khan's.

– Alright for some.

– Beats dried up sarnies.

KEL *(to Guards)* Why don't you have it?

– Don't mind if we do!

SCOTTY *(gives CHORUS take-away)* There's a bench round the corner where you could eat.

– Tasty!

CHORUS/ GUARDS go. MO, LEE, TYSON, TONI, JUDE come out, then LOLLY and SAZ with bags.

JUDE *(suddenly)* Can I just say–

ALL Shh! / No!/ They'll hear you!

LOLLY *(huddles them together)* Go on Jude.

JUDE *(quieter, to LOLLY)* I was bullied at my last school. Lost my self-esteem, let myself go. So, I vowed to get fit and healthy through exercise. I never expected to make friends here. But I did.

JUDE hugs LOLLY. SAZ emotional / maybe cries.

LEE Saz?

SAZ I've never been bullied. But I bully myself. For grades, being top. (*to Lee*) You're right, history's more than dates but you can revise dates; people just... happen in front of you.

LOLLY No Saz, we happen together. It's called making friends.

SAZ That's the one thing I find hard. *(to Lolly)* I didn't mean what I said.

LOLLY Yes. You did. *(deep breath)* But I forgive you.
(*turns away to shout...)*
Come on Rocky! Hold my hand down the steps.

MO sits on top step, writing as...

TYSON *(prepares to film)* Stand either side of the steps. Toni?

TONI *(reads)* We came for silence. To a house of words. Among ideas, shared dreams, we found our voices. As we leave, the words come with us. From pages, the voices of history. We are no longer alone.

All form a tunnel with their arms. LOLLY and SAZ descend steps

ALL (*EVERYONE)* Lolly Lolly Lolly! Saz Saz Saz!

Everyone returns inside except MO. And LEAFY who has watched everything....

LEAFY You're Mo, right? I read your blog.

MO Weird hearing someone reads stuff I wrote. At least it's not my stories.

LEAFY What's up with your stories?

MO ...The world always ends.

LEAFY Do you think they'll save this library?

MO I don't know. This is the realest time of my life, but I feel like I'm dissolving.

MO picks up their bag to walk away. Looks back at the library...

LEAFY Wait... you're leaving?

MO *(suddenly)* No, wait, my mistake. Let me in!

LEAFY My actual job is keeping you out. *(LOUD)* This gate has a No Returns policy!

CHORUS *(Guards returning)*

– That was well tasty!

– Could go a beer now!

– Or a lie down.

LEAFY grabs MO's arm to hurry them round the corner.

MO You're hurting my arm!

LEAFY *(whispers)* Shh! The eviction order is being enforced at noon tomorrow. Here's the garden keys. There's the cellar door. Warn Tyson and the others.

MO Thank you.

LEAFY Will you put me in a story?

MO Let's see how it ends...

Day 9 – Friday Morning

16. **Main library...**

KEL, MO, LEE, TONI, TYSON, JUDE on random chairs. The circle broken. SCOTTY brings a letter.

SCOTTY Here. Official council response.

TONI *(reads)* Interim possession order?

LEE (*passing it round)* Eviction.

MO Noon today.

JUDE Mickey and the adults are arguing what to do.

TYSON We should decide too.

MO I thought the council might change their minds.

KEL grabs letter, screws it up.

KEL I'm not changing mine.

MO We did all we could, Kel.

KEL Mum divorced Dad when I was 7. I came here on my own, til Mum and I moved. Dad's new wife just had a baby; they live miles away. Does no one care anymore!

SCOTTY My parents told me to quit. They're scared my protest might stop them getting jobs at other libraries. But I can't. My little brother needs *this* library.

TYSON The best thing we can do is leave on our terms.

TONI Heads high.

MO We can message our supporters, press, get everyone outside for 11AM.

KEL Go to the Council before they come to us.

Noise of doors banging, running feet.

JUDE What's happening?

TONI They're coming in through the cellar!

But it's LOLLY, SAZ and BERNIE who arrive. Others all cheer/ relief.

SCOTTY Bernie!

MO Lolly!!

LEE *(to Saz)* Saz! How was the exam?

SAZ Great, but I missed you!

BERNIE Mo left the basement open.

LOLLY You can come and occupy MY NEW FLAT!

All hug / congratulate them.

KEL Wait. Each of you choose a book. Mo and I can check them out.

MO Can I do that?

KEL In the absence of a qualified librarian a trainee is permitted to issue loans.

SCOTTY To be returned when this library re-opens...

They each choose a book, stand in line for KEL and MO to check them out. Then...

MO All done?

KEL Open the doors...

JUDE *(Reacts to scene outside)* Wow...

BERNIE Woooah!

LEE So many people....

SAZ All around the library, blocking the roads.

LOLLY There must be like... gadzillions....

SCOTTY Crowds from all over have turned up to support.

KEL This is it. Let's go.

CHORUS line up too. They all 'march' on the spot together seeing things as they pass.

– 2000 people join the march to the Town Hall.

LEE They're wearing Save Our Library T-shirts.

– School kids carry homemade signs.

JUDE *(points)* That's Charlene White squabbling with Channel 4 -

– 'SAVE OUR LIBRARY'.

SCOTTY Security guards arrive to seal the door....

– Hands off our books!

MO ...One of the guards chases us...

TYSON It's Leafy!

LEAFY *(taking off hi-vis)* I'm on your side. *(Megaphone)* THE CARNEGIE 11!

TYSON Kel, there's a message on our Insta from your Dad. They're coming!

– 'Your baby brother wants to meet his famous sibling'.

KEL But they're too late, we've left -

TYSON *(messaging)* I'll tell them to ...

– 'Meet us at the Town Hall!'

JUDE We're almost there... The crowds are even bigger!

LEAFY AND BERNIE SAVE OUR LIBRARY!

SAZ AND LOLLY WE LOVE BOOKS!

They raise linked hands. TYSON films.

TONI Now what's happening?

SCOTTY *(checks phone)* The council are making an announcement....

MO *(to audience)* It's like the next few moments happen in slow motion...

KEL That's the Mayor...

LEE What's she going to say?

LOLLY I can't bear it...

BERNIE An Emergency Meeting?

MO Strong community feelings...

SAZ A period of consultation during which...

TONI *(emotional)* ...The library remains open.

SCOTTY With a full library service? *(Realising, joyful)* We did it!

LOLLY We won!

KEL Dad? *(Sees someone in audience, waves)* Is that you?

All celebrate together.

...TEN YEARS LATER... *The CHORUS become an older professional TV crew: camera operator, sound recordist, director, camera assistant, production manager. TYSON watches them set up, then....*

17. **Town Hall steps. Ten years later.**

...TYSON steps forward. Ten years older, confident, assured TYSON draws them together for a TV interview. All hug / nod / shake hands – depending how recently each has seen all the others.

TYSON *(to camera)* So, can you believe it's ten years since we all stood here and heard the council announce that they would review the closure of Carnegie Library...?

Others smile, shake heads, react...

BERNIE Power to the people, right?

During the following, they nod, listen, agree with each other etc.

TYSON *(to Bernie)* Bernie, what's your standout memory of the occupation?

BERNIE That we didn't know each other but we stood up for something. Together.

LEAFY I rang home from these steps, 'guess where I am?' My sister said, "We know where! We can see you on telly! You – of all people – occupying Carnegie Library!"

KEL But managing the aftermath *was* tough. We wanted attention but were not prepared for it. I was interviewed when I was tired and emotional and I just ranted.

MO Kel spoke at the court appearance. At the end the Judge said: I saw it in all the papers – you did a good job.

All speak to camera /audience and each other

SCOTTY For me, it was a political awakening. I began going on demonstrations with people I met through the occupation... climate crisis...

BERNIE ...anti-austerity -

LOLLY Homelessness.

LEE Supporting refugees...

TYSON So the library occupation had an impact, beyond saving the library?

LEE Big time. I used to complain about my parents' rules, but I realised that we shared the same values – charity, kindness, respect for others – the occupation drew us closer together.

KEL It was a ripple effect over summer, with protests at other libraries, letters to the press.

MO In September, the Council announced our library would not close at all.

JUDE I didn't actually support libraries. I just happened to be jogging past. I'm so glad I plucked up the courage to join in.

TYSON So Toni? Any advice for young library campaigners today?

TONI The same advice I would give my younger self. Trust yourself to trust others and you'll be amazed what you can do. Me, I went travelling, started my own blog...

LOLLY The first thing we got for our flat was a bookshelf. My son turned his room into a mini library, remember? Rocky still sees Alex - he comes with Scotty to our Book Group.

BERNIE We even had a published author visit – Mo!

LOLLY leads clapping for MO.

MO ....Funny thing is, I nearly didn't show up for my work experience that day. I was writing a story about the earth being taken over by cyborg corporations and I was planning to sneak off at lunchtime. Then I met you lot and that library changed my life.

SCOTTY I have a statement from my little brother. He's got exams. *(reads)* "I felt like Tiberius Gracchus defending the people's rights. I liked meeting famous writers when they read poems through the gates. The second stage of min-hero isn't hard; you just have to lock in. Read books! But not Beast Quest. The library doesn't have all of them".

They laugh. TYSON steps forward.

TYSON *(as if to a camera)* By age 30, Andrew Carnegie owned businesses in iron, steamers, rail, and oil. He built his Carnegie Steel Corporation into the largest manufacturing company in the world. Then sold it for 480 million dollars – equivalent to many billions today – to give away his entire fortune. Alongside countless other educational donations, he funded 2,500 libraries worldwide. What would he tell today's billionaires – ?

CHORUS as Billionaires.

- Elon Musk
- Jeff Bezos
- Mark Zuckerberg?

SAZ We are not machines! / - We are not machines!

LEE Or monsters... / - Or monsters...

MO Human worth is not what you can afford to buy

LOLLY But what you are willing to share.

TYSON This is Tyson Reports for Channel 4, thanking my guests – The Carnegie 10 -

LEAFY *(jumps in, shouts)* Eleven!

ALL The Carnegie Eleven!

TONI leads the shout.
TONI / ALL / CHORUS SAVE OUR LIBRARIES!

End