



When Hallmark Met Librarianship

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Will a Librarian Stereotype and a Hollywood Movie Stereotype Find True Love This Holiday Season?

To start the holiday season, Librarianship.ca launched a contest to offer Canadian library and information specialists an opportunity to explore both their creative and romantic sides.

In a nutshell:

We asked you to create the plot of a Christmas romance movie that features an information professional (it could have been a librarian, an information management consultant, an archivist, a library technician, an iSchool professor, a vendor, or whoever) and/or an information setting.

You didn't have to write the entire screenplay but give us:

- 📖 A title
- 📖 An outline plot summary

In total we received 22 entries from members of the library and information management community.

All the entries were sent to our jury to read and select a winner based on entertainment value.

Congratulations to Beatrice Houston Gilfof for her winning entry: Kringle Family Fonds!

Beatrice will receive a \$50 gift certificate to Chapters Indigo or to an independent Canadian bookseller.

Honourable mentions go to:

- 📖 Dimitri Kezis for When Content Met Context
- 📖 Molly MacDougall for The Plus One Halliday Romance
- 📖 Melanie Sucha for The Macro

Thanks to our jury members:

- 📖 Nancy Black, Nipissing University and Canadore College
- 📖 Rachel Cyr, Government of Canada
- 📖 Zoe Dickinson, Russell Books

Thanks also to everyone who entered the contest:

- 📖 Rachael Bennett
- 📖 Colette Berube
- 📖 Julie Cameron
- 📖 Deanna Campbell
- 📖 Hridi Das
- 📖 Robyn Feres-Cameron
- 📖 Dave Hook
- 📖 Sarah Horrocks
- 📖 Beatrice Houston Gilfof
- 📖 Dimitri Kezis
- 📖 Madeleine Lefebvre
- 📖 Molly MacDougall
- 📖 Maria Ruth Napigkit
- 📖 Leanne Olson
- 📖 Josie Powell
- 📖 Melanie Sucha
- 📖 Nicole Taylor
- 📖 Tracy Urquhart
- 📖 Merley Wheaton
- 📖 Ashleigh Yates-MacKay

Entry #1

The Gift of Community Library OR The Christmas of Knowledge

Plot: After a new stay member was hired at the local public library it became apparent their needed to be new informational programs offered. The local library created a team of librarians and library technicians to review community demographics and conduct a survey of needs assessment to provide a new type of informational session programs.

The library professionals created a dual series of programs which paired up an area of service along with technology sessions.

The new Interlibrary loan technician Anna was to educate what Interlibrary loans service was all about, the library policies and provide assistance to patrons to request materials independently using INFOntario and/or through branch staff. Her technology partner librarian Bobby had been with the library for eighteen years and never did this library conducted programs like this so he was bitter and taken from his comfortable corner of collection management for being partnered with the new staff member Anna who proposed demographics and needs assessments for such sessions. His focus was on collection through technology through their library's digital collection of cloudLibrary, Hoopla and Cantook.

Anna and Bobby would meet twice a week in July to create their sessions topics so that advertising and program registration would commence beginning of October through to the week prior to Christmas. At the beginning Bobby was adamant on problems regarding to their topics and always something he would discourage but Anna was able to pull extra strings to get it down. Come September they required more time together to organize their methods to deliver information and make sure the room, supplies and everything was in order. Due to a group of regular patrons who attended regularly and always stayed after to ask for more help and various questions picked up the dislike that Bobby had for Anna and began their own session to connect these two staff members on a whole different informational level. As weeks progressed Bobby was seeing the charm, hard work and even community engagement on their informational sessions and decided to take the leap to ask Anna out to the local park for a picnic to thank her for all she had done with him and for their library. After a several times of great outings together in their community, he learned that she had applied to her old community library and would be going back the starting of the new year. The patrons in their informational sessions noticed Bobby's lack of enthusiasm and asked and they were so shocked and staged an intervention with Bobby to finds ways for Anna to stay. The week of Christmas was filled with festivities and at the Christmas party on December 23rd Bobby took the microphone and expressed the libraries gratefulness for Anna arriving to their team, showing them different ways to engage community members with services and technology and results from patrons. Later that evening Bobby expressed his feelings to Anna under the community Christmas tree but Anna knew she was leaving in just one week. After reflection and enjoyment of this library, staff, patrons and community on Christmas Day, Anna showed up on Bobby's front porch and told him he filled her full of happiness and was going to stay and have more informational sessions with him.

-- Colette Berube

Entry #2

Untitled

The shy Information management specialist falls in love with the tall dark and handsome information hoarder.

Will her love and commitment to support him to mend his ways be sufficient?

Will he be able to learn to save information of business value in proper corporate repositories or is he doomed to spend his life alone and all his free time trying to retrieve records for an ATIP request?

-- Julie Cameron

Entry #3

Borrows of Holly

A young, new graduate (Holly) gets hired on as the new Readers Advisory technician at a small-town library/art gallery. An artist associated with the gallery upstairs (Reid) meets her in the lobby one day and she tells him about her job. The next day he comes into the library to ask Holly for book recommendations for Christmas romances, in the attempt to 'read between the lines' and figure out what kind of man Holly is attracted to. Holly enjoys recommending her favourite books, however she soon catches on to what Reid is doing. Holly tells her friend one night and the friend suggests pranking him by sneakily recommending a thriller novel instead. After recommending Reid the thriller, she remembers that the novel includes a scene where the heroine is followed to her house. Holly returns home that night to find Reid's car parked in the lot of her apartment complex. She nervously enters the lobby to find Reid waiting for her. He then tells her "Merry Christmas" and pulls out a painting he made her over the weeks of a bookshelf with elaborately decorated spines of all her favourite novels. At the bottom of the canvas is written the title of the painting: "Holly's Story".

-- Nicole Taylor

Entry #4

The Macro

By day, he is Chuck Spadina, a data management specialist. By night, he's Knovell, a lonely hacker. Confined to his apartment as the world contends with isolation orders, supply chain shortages, and extremist attacks, Chuck grapples to evade mindless videoconferences and company keystroke tracking technology, while Knovell uncovers disturbing signs that things are not all they seem. Visions of a white star appear in SQL code, in corrupt spreadsheets, on web forums, on essential workers' face masks – what does it mean and where will it take Knovell?

Days shorten and darkness extends until, on the longest night of the year, a SkipThePants meal delivery results in a dangerous attack. Knovell is rescued by the enigmatic Nicklaus and the beautiful Dewey who offer him a choice: take the shortbread and continue to struggle in an order he knows, or take the gingersnap and risk everything to understand the truth.

Knovell and Dewey travel through cold and treacherous terrain with Nicklaus and his cervid crew, learning that classifications are only real insofar as our minds make them so, while only fear, desire, grief, and love can represent what truly makes us human.

As microbial and programmatic viruses align forces, Nicklaus is captured inside a recursive loop. Will Knovell and Dewey save both Nicklaus and humanity? Will they and their love survive?

Or were you looking at the reindeer with the red nose?

-- *Melanie Sucha*

Entry #5

Season's Readings

Jane Astin, a feisty librarian working in a big city, steel-tower corporate archive, heads to her small hometown on the Christmas Eve train, to attend the local public library's Kris Kringle Kandlelight fundraiser book auction. Library manager, Bill Darcy, is an old high school friend. Jane makes an unfortunate impression, slipping on melted snow in front of the reference desk, knocking over the books for auction. Tidying them up, Jane spots one worth a great deal of money. She advises Bill this could solve the library's leaky roof problem. After a gingerbread social tea where Bill and Jane reconnect over eggnog, the auction is about to start - but the book is GONE! Bill's ex-girlfriend Caroline Bingley, glamorous but embittered chair of the library board, seems strangely blasé about this. Tensions and misunderstandings mount up through the snowy evening, as suspects are grilled in the stacks. Still, Jane feels a pull to her hometown and wonders if she could really surrender the glory of being a corporate archivist. As Bill catches her eye from the wedding cake decorating section, Dewey 641.8653, Jane trips over a book truck, upsetting Caroline's purse, out of which falls the book! It is auctioned off to great acclaim and profit. Caroline throws her inappropriately fancy, sparkly scarf around her neck and storms off. Bill and Jane gaze fondly at each other over the checkout station, which happens to be right under the mistletoe.

-- *Tracy Urquhart*

Entry #6

Long Overdue

After a difficult divorce Mark Wilson (late 40's) moved to a new community to start a job as library branch manager with the hope that he can start rebuilding his world and create a new home for him and his 3 daughters. Teetering on the edge of homelessness himself he is anxious to prove himself so he dives into work with a quirky group of library staff and into his new community where his passion for equity and justice puts him at the front of a fight to help people experiencing homelessness. A budding friendship with a gregarious real estate agent/local bar owner with 2 kids of his own leads to an unexpected male/male romance and a second chance at love and family.

-- Merley Wheaton

Entry #7

When Content Met Context

Plot summary: *READ IN VOICE OF A MOVIE TRAILER, WITH A REALLY LOW VOICE AND TALKING WITH A STUPID CADENCE...*

In a troubled time of information chaos with file shares, email and collaboration tools on both cloud and on premises, Content ran wild with no structure.

In the office, Content couldn't be found when it was required, when it was found it was often outdated, leading to embarrassment and awkwardness when it's bosses, Litigation, ATIP and Audit, who often came knocking at the door.

Because it was missing a key part of itself that could help control its wild side, Content would often be find itself in embarrassing situations with its pants caught down leading to privacy breaches and embarrassment. This led to Content being isolated and alone, losing trust and partnerships with those around them.

Having had enough and nearly reaching the tipping point, Content sought help from an IM Specialist, who introduced Content to Context.

Everything was about to change...

-- Dimitri Kezis

Entry #8

Team Love

The fat, swirling snow flakes fell on the blustery December day. Spending the hour before work walking the new puppy along a trail instead of on a bus commuting, the IM specialist felt like working from home was starting to feel ok despite the loneliness.

Preparing for a virtual meeting and prolonging the peace of the pandemic pet stroll, the IM specialist grabbed a cup of coffee, uploaded a festive virtual background and consulted standard responses to questions relating to classification architecture, information management and retention rules. Clicking the Teams video link the IM specialist was surprised to see a single individual icon instead of the expected stakeholder group of seven.

After waiting the polite five minutes it became obvious that no one else was going to participate in the discussion. Ever the professional, the IM specialist offered to review the prepared notes so the stakeholder could take back the relevant findings to their team.

The stakeholder boldly enabled their mic and camera and declared 'I must confess this meeting was a ruse but I could think of no other way. We have participated in many virtual meetings since the work from home order and I have been astounded and impressed with your command of the virtual space we now operate in. You amaze me professionally and I feel that you would complete me personally. Can we get a fully masked coffee and see where this leads?'

Imagine kids, this is how your non-binary, non-bot grandparents met in December 2021!

-- Sarah Horrocks

Entry #9

Booked For Christmas

It's December and a librarian gets the opportunity to participate in an international exchange program and gets placed working in the Royal library of a small country that nobody has ever heard of, yet strangely looks a lot like Vancouver. There, she meets the Prince of said small country. The librarian loves Christmas, but the Prince claims that he is always too busy with his Royal duties to really appreciate Christmas. She convinces the Prince to disguise himself as a commoner so he won't be recognized and she takes him ice skating, to a tree-lighting ceremony, to a Christmas market (where they have hot cocoa) and enter a gingerbread house building contest. She shares with him some of her favourite Christmas books. She convinces him of the wonder of all things Christmas. All seems to be going well, until his mother the Queen discovers that he has been disguising himself as a commoner and forbids her son from dating the librarian. But then the librarian manages to find in the library a long-list Christmas book written by the Queen's grandfather. It brings back such happy memories for the Queen of her grandfather reading the book to her. The Queen rethinks her stance, forgives her son and allows her to date the commoner librarian. They kiss at the end.

-- Dave Hook

Entry #10

Kringle Family Fonds

It's December 15th and it just snowed. Deep in the darkest recesses of a lesser consulted corner of LAC's holdings, an archivist is chasing down a mouse. She (or he) stumbles over a box that has fallen. She lets out a less than festive string of choice words as the mouse makes its escape into a tiny hole (decorated with tinier Christmas lights.) The archivist blows the dust off the top of the acid-free cardboard to read "Kringle Family Fonds." The faint sound of jingle bells from somewhere outside... Inside the archivist discovers what appears to be an ancient, enormous scroll. It's a list of names, addresses, ages and descriptors of behaviours (rude, pleasant, insubordinate, lawful, lovely, bawdy, polite, etc.) And so begins the saga of the great digitization project of Santa Claus's original Naughty/Nice list. From policy development, re-interpretation of the Statistics Act to consider the implications of magical lists, emerging digitization tools for historic scrolls, all resulting in final real proof that Santa is not only real, but is one the first statisticians.

-- Beatrice Houston Gilfoxy

Entry #11

Access to Information... Privately

Cataloguing a former Prime Minister's Christmas cards was the perfect job for mousy archivist Buck Armstrong. Buried in the piles of holiday greetings, he didn't have to confront his heartbreak. Hiding in the basement of the archives is a perfect place to wait out Christmas Eve, until he uncovers a secret, buried deep in a crumbling envelope. Information that others are hunting for, and the clock is ticking. There is only one person to turn to, and she's the last person Buck wants to see.

UX designer Tess Paige is the only one with the authority to act. When Buck brings her the envelope, she can hardly meet the eyes of the handsome archivist. Things had gotten too hot for comfort when the PM paper tiger team dwindled to just the two of them. The meeting RODD hadn't shown their passionate conversations and off the record glances.

An important Access to Information request had taken everyone off the project, as all hands turned to meeting the December 25th deadline. However, the Christmas card revealed a secret affair between the PM and a society matron, and this new information could set the archives ablaze. Buck and Tess have to wrestle with the responsibility to reveal all, or redact this most private information.

Sparks fly in the stacks as the two race to beat the clock, in time for Christmas Day. Will they reveal all? Or will they keep their lips, and the records, sealed?

-- Robyn Feres-Cameron

Entry #12

On Reserve for Love

Marianne, a librarian in a small college, feels stifled by her job and has little respect for her boss, who takes credit for her ideas. Since her painful breakup with Mel, a college professor, she has guarded her emotions from intruders.

Nathan, a handsome man, approaches the reference desk asking to donate a large number of theatre books. Marianne explains the library's gift policy, but Nathan is insistent that she see them for herself. She reluctantly agrees, as she's trying without support to develop a theatre collection for the college.

Marianne is excited by the quality of the books. They belonged to his wife, a theatre director, who died some years before. They talk for hours about plays, their lives, their passions, and sparks begin to fly. Their relationship grows as her heart thaws, but Nathan tells her he is leaving town to become VP of publishing at a large university. She knows that to protect her heart she must forget him.

Marianne is shocked when Mel, her former love, confesses he made a terrible mistake and wants her back. Old emotions briefly resurface but she soon realizes Mel is focused on himself, and that he was one of the reasons she felt stifled. As she walks home in the rain to clear her head she sees Nathan standing outside her door, soaking wet. He asks her to share his new life in the city, to begin a new chapter for them both. They kiss.

-- Madeleine Lefebvre

Entry #13

Once Upon a Star

After a decade in the limelight known as the "Belle of Bollywood", Lakshmi Senyal is headed back to her roots in Toronto to make her Western acting debut during the Toronto International Film Fest (TIFF). As part of the media tour, TIFF's Film Reference Library will be holding a special exhibit about her life. The only catch? It will be curated by none other than the boy whose heart she broke at 18 when she left him for her breakout role in India, Ren Nakamura.

When the rest of the world sees Lakshmi's life of gold, glitz and glamour, Ren quietly remembers his childhood crush's favourite hole-in-the-wall spot for Mexican food on Dundas Street, the books she reads and the feel of her fingers interlocked with his own. Their attraction simmers once more as they work together and Ren thinks she will be the one that got away. Again.

However, when her flight out of Canada to LA is cancelled just days after the exhibit on Christmas Eve, Lakshmi finds herself stuck in the city known as the Hollywood North in a panic. Ren doesn't think twice about offering his spare room at his place as Lakshmi's waits out the snow. Armed with a second chance, they dive into each other's past and wonder if what they have can grow - even if their lifestyles seem to be worlds apart as they rediscover the city hand in hand once more.

-- Hridi Das

Entry #14

The Archivist & The Prince

A week before Christmas archivist Emily decides to take a career risk and accept the position of royal archivist for the Kingdom of Galwig. The only catch? She needs to work with grouchy heir to the throne Christopher - a man who wouldn't know charm or joy if it hit him upside the head.

-- Ashleigh Yates-MacKay

Entry #15

Saving the Christmas Collection

Unlucky in love and over worked, public librarian Noelle must save the local genealogy collection from being weeded by consultant Jamie. When they discover that Drew's family is originally from the area and ran the town's first ever Christmas pageant, the two decided to join forces and bring it back.

-- Ashleigh Yates-MacKay

Entry #16

Christmas Outreach

Public librarians Blake and Drew have two things in common: their love of community programs and hatred of one another. When the duo are tasked with coming up with a special Christmas Eve outreach program for the local children's hospital, sparks fly and the two realize sometimes you can't judge a book, or person, by it's cover.

-- Ashleigh Yates-MacKay

Entry #17

A Christmas for the Books

Heather is a university librarian who just wants to have a quiet holiday away from life in the busy city. When she returns to her hometown for Christmas, her plans get tossed in the book return when a local lawyer asks for her help to save the town's Christmas tree farm. She must search the town's records - and her own heart - to save Christmas.

-- Rachael Bennett

Entry #18

Christmas Heirloom Mystery

Emma is an archivist who loves her job. One day, her assistant, Roy, tells her that he's building his family's genealogy tree. Curious, Emma looks up her father's family records on a widely known public database. She finds a record of her ancestor, Anna, who was banished from the town of Merridale because she was accused of stealing the town's heirloom. Emma takes a vacation from work and travels to Merridale to spend Christmas there to learn more about her ancestor and clear her family's name.

There, she meets Arthur, the town's librarian and historian who helps with her research on her ancestors, the heirloom and the time capsule. As they do their research, they start to develop feelings for each other. Together, they solve the big mystery and find the missing heirloom and time capsule. But more misunderstandings come. Emma learns that Arthur is up for a promotion and makes it clear that she does not want to leave her job. Roy visits the town and Arthur mistakes him as Emma's boyfriend.

To celebrate the finding of the heirloom and time capsule, the town holds their annual Christmas festival where it is announced that Arthur is the new library director and that there is an opening for a librarian/historian. The two reconcile and Emma becomes interested in the job, hinting to everyone that she will apply and stay in the town permanently. She spends the rest of Christmas with Arthur and the town.

-- *Maria Ruth Napigkit*

Entry #19

The Plus One Halliday Romance

Crys Halliday is a Toronto businesswoman. Her brother Nicholas is getting married over Christmas, so she goes home to Small Town Nova Scotia for the holidays and wedding. Her plus one was supposed to be her businessman boyfriend, Kole, but he said he couldn't come because of work.

The day after Crys arrives home, she goes to the public library. While wandering the stacks, Crys meets her old high school friend, Ivy, who is now a librarian. The two women chat while Ivy puts up a holiday book display. Crys mentions her predicament, and Ivy says she'd happily be Crys' "platonic" plus one. For the next couple days, Crys and Ivy do fun things together, including ice skating and going out for hot chocolate.

On the day of the wedding, Crys wears a poinsettia-red dress. Ivy wears suit a with a bowtie that matches Crys' dress. Crys thinks Ivy is quite handsome. Nicholas' wedding goes off without a hitch. On their way to the reception, Crys and Ivy are intercepted by Kole, who has somehow made it just in time. When Kole insults Ivy's outfit, Crys realizes the budding feelings she has for Ivy are True Love. She breaks up with Kole right then and there. By next Christmas, Crys has moved back home to open a bookstore and be with Ivy the librarian. They also adopt a pet cat named Mistletoe.

-- Molly MacDougall

Entry #20

IM Under the Mistletoe

Holly, a corporate information management consultant, is tiring of the transitory relationships she's had ever since she moved to Toronto. She often feels like she must redact her true self and her heart usually ends up feeling like it is being shredded. Once her contract and latest romance ends, she returns to her small hometown.

Holly is distraught to discover that her family's mistletoe farm is at risk of being overtaken by a property developer due to a missing deed. She goes to the local township office on Christmas Eve to see if they have a copy, and finds her ruggedly handsome ex-boyfriend, Chris, working there. He shares that he actually received a Freedom of Information request for the same record from the developer – hoping that they can't produce it.

Chris and Holly look for the deed together. Things get flirty in the file room as they reconnect over records schedules. They open up file boxes along with parts of themselves that they didn't realize were still closed off. Chris admits to Holly that he still buys mistletoe from her parents every year, hoping to see her again during his favourite holiday. Holly is beginning to realize there's no place like home for the holidays... and maybe longer.

Will Chris teach Holly the true meaning of Christmas? Will Holly teach Chris the importance of good information management? Tune in to see if they find the missing record and whisper "FOI love you" under the mistletoe!

-- Josie Powell

Entry #21

Folio Navidad: A Christmas Love Story

A folio stolen generations ago...
A small-town librarian who has sworn off love...
Twin girls who want a family for Christmas...
And a prince in disguise...

Rare book librarian Nicole Frost works in the small town of Goose River, Canada. She's shocked to find records proving an ancient folio in her collection was stolen from the tiny European country of Amoria. She posts to a specol Listserv and soon a gorgeous man arrives in town, introducing himself as an archivist named Felix.

Prince Felix of Amoria is seeking the magical folio whose absence has cursed his family every Christmas for the past two hundred years. He certainly wasn't looking for love in Goose River! But Nicole's down-to-earth personality charms him (imagine, a prince of Amoria being shushed in the library!).

Nicole (known as "Saint Nikki" for her courage raising twin daughters Holly and Ivy after her husband was trampled by a reindeer) clashes with Felix at first. He brought a pen into the reading room, for Rudolph's sake! But there's something about his green eyes, charming accent, and the way he borrows her pink mittens for a snowball fight with Holly and Ivy. The stranger starts to melt Saint Nikki's frosty heart.

When the twins need chaperones for the sixth grade Snow Ball, the prince steals a kiss from the librarian under the mistletoe. But can Nikki forgive Felix when she learns his true identity? Will these lonely souls find love on Christmas?

-- *Leanne Olson*

Entry #22

There is Snow Cheese like in Ottawa

It was a cold and snowy Ottawa night. Millie's bones were aching from the bitter winds of change. The pandemic had upended her year. She hadn't accomplished all that she had desired.

There was that ache inside to write that one last novel before she turned her badge in from working for the government. Her creative desires were stone cold, as her quarterly invites for input to the new Ottawa Library – Adisoke, were over. It was approved to be built—maybe. It sounded just like an O-train novel. Oh, Ottawa how far we have come! She and her colleagues would dream of what the capital's library could be, but a special place in her heart was meeting with mysterious Jacques Frost. Who was this mysterious being? Cold one minute, disappearing the next. Something had come between them. Was the pandemic keeping them apart or was it something else? Could it be? No! It couldn't be?

Tim-Biebs! Holy night! The last time they met at Tim's, their favourite coffeeshop, to discuss their vision for the library, gingerbread men danced to their conversation as innovated ideas flew fast and furious. There must be a canoe, the Red Black's lumberjack mascot-- no that was out. Pierre Trudeau in his canoe or maybe Justin on a surfboard to attract millennials? Canadian athletes winning gold for Canada splashed high on the walls.

Books! There must be books, lots of books, to the ceilings! Higher, higher!

Ah, but technology has crept in like an AI bot, trying to take over the Reference desk. However, they were relieved. It was their patriot duty, was it not, like a double-double or a Gretzky, to come up with innovative ideas. Were they not librarians? Or would Ryan Reynolds win the coveted honour?

-- Deanna Campbell