

Scrabble My Heart

Two unsuspecting college students get thrown into a hunt for the treasure of a legendary 1950s Scrabble player.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

A bell sounds. College students shuffle out of the lecture hall. WREN (19), sarcastic and guarded, but loves fiercely, approaches linguistics PROFESSOR WALTER KELLY (40s).

WREN

Professor Kelly, I had a question about the research project. I chose Gideon Wilde from the list you gave, but I couldn't find much about him online. Do you know where else I could look?

PROFESSOR KELLY

Ah— Gideon Wilde. Good choice. He's a Brown Alum, so you should be able to find something on him in the library's archives.

WREN

Okay, I'll take a look. Thanks.

Wren leaves the lecture hall and almost walks into FINN (19), cute but alarmingly Scrabble-obsessed, outside the door.

WREN (CONT'D)

Sorry—

FINN

Sorry I— No, it's okay. I didn't see you there.

Wren turns to leave.

FINN (CONT'D)

Hey, wait a minute. Were you just talking about Gideon Wilde?

WREN

Uh, yeah. I'm researching him for my linguistics project.

FINN

I'm a big fan of his. There's a book about him in the library. I can show you sometime if you want.

WREN

Oh... sure. Thanks.

FINN

I'm Finn, by the way.

WREN

I'm Wren.

FINN
I'll be in the library after 6, if
you want to stop by.

WREN
I'll find you.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Finn, now wearing GLASSES, sits at a table reading a book.

WREN
Hey.

Finn looks up to see Wren. His eyes spark. *She came.*

WREN (CONT'D)
Is now a good time to show me the
book you were talking about?

FINN
Yeah, come on. The book's over
here.

Finn leads her through the library stacks and to the back.
Wren is standoffish but Finn won't let up.

FINN (CONT'D)
Do you like the class so far?

WREN
(shrugs)
It's fine. I'm just trying to pass.

FINN
Yeah, I get that... So, why'd you
pick Gideon Wilde for your project?

WREN
Honestly, I thought his name
sounded cool. And he seemed
interesting for an old Brown
linguistics professor. Imagine
getting famous from playing
Scrabble—

FINN
Lexico.

WREN
What?

FINN

Wilde first got famous playing
Lexico when it was invented in
1931. Then, the game was renamed to
Criss-Cross Words before it was
officially trademarked as Scrabble
in 1948. Wilde played it through
all its stages.

WREN

How... how do you know that?

FINN

(coolly)
I like Scrabble.

Finn pulls out a BOOK from a shelf titled "Wild(e) Words: A
Biography on Gideon Wilde." Finn hands it to Wren.

FINN (CONT'D)

This is a biography on Gideon
Wilde, Scrabble extraordinaire.
Should have everything you need to
do your project on him.

They walk back to the table and sit down next to each other.
Wren flips through the pages and reads excerpts out loud.

WREN

Hold on, I... think these pages are
stuck together?

Finn bends closer.

FINN

What— How could I have not noticed
that before? I've read that book
like 50— I mean one time.

Wren tries to split the pages with her nail. It doesn't work.

She thinks for a moment then rummages in her bag for her
STUDENT ID. She pries apart the pages with her ID.

They both skim the page.

WREN

Holy cow.

FINN

It says here Gideon Wilde used to
run an underground Scrabbling ring
right here in Providence in the 40s
and 50s.

WREN

And that he hid all his money
before he died in 1959.

Finn and Wren look at each other, full of shock.

WREN (CONT'D)

Do you think... he could have
hidden it somewhere around here?

FINN

I mean, it's highly likely.

WREN

There must be a clue on the page
about where it is! Gideon sooo
gives *Gravity-Falls-hide-a-clue-in-*
a-book vibes.

The two reread and inspect the page.

WREN (CONT'D)

Wait. There's something etched in
the bottom margin here. Some
letters...

FINN

Here, these are reading glasses.

Finn holds his glasses over the letters. They magnify.

"H R * KA KE KW KI K TU

CMA L * E X PAD HL G M"

Finn rereads the letters, deep in thought.

WREN

What? That's it? These letters
could mean literally anything! How
are we supposed to know where the
money is? Maybe if we have
coordinates or something...

FINN

Coordinates? Like what?

WREN

Well, Providence is around 41.8 N
and 71.4 W, right? So—

Finn lights up.

FINN

That's it! We do have coordinates!
The letters! Their Scrabble scores
spell out the latitude and
longitude!

(points to the letters)

"H" is worth 4 points in Scrabble
and "R" is worth 1. "CMA" is
trickier, but if you add up all the
individual letter scores, it's 7.

The top row must be latitude and
the bottom row is longitude. The
asterisks are the decimals!

Finn pulls out a pencil and starts translating the letters
into coordinates.

WREN

So, do you just know the Scrabble
letter scores off the top of your
head?

FINN

Yes. It's basic Scrabble literacy.

Wren smiles, genuinely impressed.

WREN

That's actually kind of awesome.

Finn finishes and shows Wren. She inputs the coordinates into
her PHONE.

WREN (CONT'D)

Okay, it's by this place which is
now a cat cafe? That must be where
the treasure is.

FINN

Guess that means we're going to a
cat cafe.

Wren thinks it over, then nods.

INT. CAT CAFE - DAY

Finn brings two coffees back to the table and sits across
from Wren. A CAT snuggles up to Wren's neck and she laughs.

FINN

Okay, the employee said we can
speak to the manager once she comes
out. We can just wait here for now.

Wren plays with the cat and Finn watches her. *She's more relaxed today.* Finn smiles. Wren sighs and puts the cat in her lap.

WREN

So, why are you doing this?

FINN

What do you mean?

WREN

I mean the treasure hunt. Why's it
so important to you?

Finn hesitates, then admits.

FINN

I like Scrabble... *really* like it.
And I feel like I need to prove
myself. That if I do this, my whole
Scrabble obsession won't be seen as
a silly little hobby. People will
take me seriously for it.

Wren stops petting the cat. She studies Finn.

WREN

You're allowed to like things,
Finn.

FINN

No, I'm allowed to like *certain*
things. And only to an appropriate
degree. At some point it just gets
weird.

Wren opens her mouth, but Finn shakes his head.

FINN (CONT'D)

So. Why are you doing this?

WREN

(sarcastic)

I don't know... Because I like
Scrabble too?

Finn gives her a look— *oh, please.*

WREN (CONT'D)

Okay, fine. I... I want to follow through on something for once. In the last 2 years I've dropped 6 clubs and changed my major 2 times.

You're just... so certain. You know what you like. I'm not like that.

FINN

But you know you like this? The hunt?

WREN

Yeah. I know I like this.

The MANAGER (60s), a warm-hearted cat lady, comes up to them.

MANAGER

How can I help you two today?

Wren puts on an overly-sweet smile.

WREN

Hi, my boyfriend here's great-grandfather owned the house that used to be on this lot. We think he buried something in the backyard... Is there a chance we could go back there and check it out? We promise to cover up any holes that we dig.

Finn's eyes grow wide, startled by Wren's ability to lie so easily. The manager gives a soft laugh.

MANAGER

My, my, you two are on quite the adventure, aren't you? I'd trade half my garden just to hear my grandmother's voice again. I'll unlock the gate.

(winks)

Go on through the back.

Wren and Finn stand up.

WREN

That's incredibly kind of you. Thank you. This means a lot to us.

MANAGER

I really hope you find what you're looking for.

(MORE)

MANAGER (CONT'D)
And can I just say, you two make
such a lovely couple. Next time you
stop by, coffee's on the house.

EXT. CAFE BACKYARD - DAY

Wren walks through the yard, looking down at her phone.

WREN
Okay, the next clue should be
somewhere around here.

She motions to the general ground where she stands.

Finn puts down his backpack and pulls out a shovel. He starts
digging and Wren crouches down beside him.

THUNKKKK!!!! They look at each other, excited. Finn shovels
quicker and Wren digs with her hands.

Wren pulls out a box and dusts the dirt off the top. She
opens the latch. Inside is a note that reads:

WREN (CONT'D)
"To honor my darling Livvy.
At Liberty Forum we first met
Swayed and watched the sun set.
A silver wish I tossed from hand
In hopeful sights I see her again.
When we wed I came once more
To cast a wish as I did before."

FINN
That's so swee—

WREN
The clue must be on the coin! He's
talking about the fountain! We need
to go to Liberty Forum!

FINN
Saturday? At 3?

Wren eagerly nods.

EXT. LIBERTY FORUM FOUNTAIN - DAY

Finn approaches Wren, sitting in a dress by the fountain.

FINN
So, Wren, what's on the schedule
for today?

Wren holds up a METAL DETECTOR.

WREN

This metal detector only picks up
high concentrations of silver.
Before 1965, quarters and dimes
were made out of 90% silver. Now
they're made up of mostly copper
and nickel.

So if there's an old coin in there,
(points to fountain)
this bad boy's going to find it.

FINN

How do you know that?

WREN

My grandpa and I played Jeopardy
together when I was younger.
American history and world leaders
were my jam.

FINN

(thinks)
Huh...

Wren hovers the metal detector over the water and waves it
around. She walks around the fountain, trying to get a
signal.

Passersby give them a strange look. Finn gets nervous.

FINN (CONT'D)

She lost her earring in the
fountain!

WREN

No, I didn't!

Finn's lips form a thin line.

BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP BEEP!!!

WREN (CONT'D)

Found something!

Finn rushes over and they both look into the fountain.

WREN (CONT'D)

So... uh...

Wren looks down at her PRETTY DRESS.

FINN
Oh, for god's sake.

Finn looks around and groans. He climbs into the fountain and digs into the water. He fetches the coin.

Finn climbs out, pants and shirt half wet. They inspect the coin.

WREN
Most of the letters are worn away.
But... I think there's an engraving
here.

"R E A T R S T"
Rea-trst. What do you think it
means?

Wren looks to Finn. He thinks.

FINN
There're 7 letters, like the 7
tiles you have in Scrabble. It's
probably an anagram... "Retrast."
"Restarr." "Restart!" We have to go
back to the start! The clue is
probably in the book!

WREN
Let's go!

They turn to leave. Wren stops Finn by the chest. His eyes
dart to her hand.

WREN (CONT'D)
Hold on. This coin is like ultra
valuable. Since we're taking it, we
should leave something behind...

Wren reaches into her tote for a COIN. She holds it to Finn.

WREN (CONT'D)
Want to do the honors?

Finn takes the coin.

WREN (CONT'D)
Wish for something good. Wish that
we find the treasure. Wish that we
win lots of money.

Finn studies Wren. Beat.

He closes his eyes and makes a wish. He tosses the coin into
the fountain.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY

Finn reads the same page in WILDE'S BIOGRAPHY over and over. He sighs and flips the page.

ZOOM IN on the nearby window and play a TIMELAPSE. Fall progresses: the leaves turn colors and fall off. It's winter now: the air is chill.

INT. LIBRARY - DAY, TWO MONTHS LATER

ZOOM OUT to Finn in the same position, now wearing a sweater. He stares at the book. Wren walks up to him.

WREN

Finn, it's been two months. I already finished my project. You've scoured that book cover to cover at least a 100 times by now. You have to let this go.

FINN

(irritated)

It's not about the stupid project.

Wren looks hurt. *Shit*. Finn runs a hand down his face.

FINN (CONT'D)

Sorry... I didn't mean it like that.

Silence hangs between them.

WREN

I'm leaving in three days.

FINN

... So, that's it? You're giving up?

WREN

I'm not giving up. I just... don't even know if I believe in the treasure anymore.

Like, how do we even know the coin he hid was still in the fountain? And that the clue is in the engraving? What if we're just making something out of nothing?

FINN
How could you even say that? The
note, the hidden page, they all
mean something.

WREN
I know-

FINN
If that's how you feel, then why
are you still here?

WREN
(sighs)
... Just. Happy holidays, Finn.

Wren turns and leaves. Finn groans. He clenches his jaw and
focuses back on his book.

EXT. SANTA'S WORKSHOP - DAY

Finn walks past Santa's Workshop. Two ELVES take a smoke
break outside. He overhears their conversation.

ELF #1
Every year, these kids line up just
to see if they're naughty or nice.
Shouldn't they already know?

ELF #2
I don't know, man. It's all just
names on a list anyway.

Finn slows to a stop. His eyes grow wide. He checks the time
on his phone and takes off running. The Elves blink.

INT. AIRPORT - DAY

Wren waits in line at the airport with her suitcase. She
idles in place. Sounds come from the overhead speakers.

CUT TO: Finn runs through the airport. He searches faces and
gate signs.

CUT TO: Wren waits.

CUT TO: Finn spots her.

FINN
Wren!!

Wren whips her head around.

WREN

Finn?! What are you doing here?!

Finn reaches her, heaving as he talks.

FINN

You can't leave.

WREN

Why not?

FINN

Because I figured it out. I figured out the clue!

Wren gets instantly excited.

WREN

Really?!

Nodding, Finn pulls out the COIN from his pocket and explains the clue. His mouth moves, but we can't hear what he says.

Wren's face lights up as she listens. She throws her arms around Finn and they hug. They break apart grinning.

WREN (CONT'D)

Come on!

Finn and Wren run out of the airport with her suitcase.

INT. LECTURE HALL - DAY

Finn and Wren run into the empty lecture hall, panting and out of breath, suitcase with them. Professor Kelly stands by the podium. He looks over, concerned.

FINN

It was you! This entire time, it was you! You added Wilde's name to the list on purpose to send us on the treasure hunt.

Deviously, Professor Kelly's lips curl into a grin.

PROFESSOR KELLY

I knew you two could figure it out. I've been waiting years for someone to pick Wilde's name from the list.

Wren nods. She shows him the engraving on the coin.

WREN

The letters on the coin. "R E A T R
S T." "Restart." At first we
thought we had to go back to the
book, but no...

FINN

It meant you. The person who put
Wilde's name on the list. Who has
Wilde's exact position from 65
years ago.

Beat. Professor Kelly laughs.

PROFESSOR KELLY

Well done, kids.

He hands them a KEY from his wallet.

PROFESSOR KELLY (CONT'D)

This key has been passed down
generation to generation from all
the tenure linguistics professors
at Brown. It unlocks a safe at old
Cobble Stone Bank. I think you'll
be very happy with what's inside.

Finn and Wren beam. They look at each other. Then the key.

INT. BANK - DAY

Wren and Finn stand in a room of safe deposit boxes. Wren
takes the key and unlocks a safe. Finn sucks in his breath.

There are WADS OF CASH, GOLD BARS, and RARE, OLD COINS from
the 1900s. They're awestruck.

Wren takes a wad and flicks through the cash. She whistles.

WREN

There must be at least \$500K in
here.

FINN

That's enough to pay off both our
college tuitions... Then give the
rest to charity.

Wren gives a nervous laugh.

WREN

We'll talk about that later.

EXT. BANK - GOLDEN HOUR

Finn and Wren sit on a bench outside the bank, watching the sunset.

FINN

Wren, how do you know the latitude
and longitude of Providence?

WREN

(shrugs)

I like putting random coordinates
in my phone and seeing where they
take me.

Finn shakes his head, amused.

FINN

So, you crush history questions
playing Jeopardy with your grandpa,
you memorize coordinates to random
cities. You like history and
geography and...

WREN

(quietly)

Stories about people from the past.

Finn smiles.

FINN

Have you ever thought about history
as a major?

She hadn't. Wren considers this.

WREN

Do you think I'd be good at it?

FINN

I think you'd be great at it.

Wren smiles too.

WREN

And what about you?

FINN

What about me?

WREN

I think you should own the whole
Scrabble thing more.

(MORE)

WREN (CONT'D)

It's an important part of you. You should share it with more people.

Finn goes quiet.

FINN

What if they think I'm weird?

WREN

Then let them. The right people will think you're brilliant. Sometimes, you just need one person who gets it. And that can be me... But the world's big, Finn. There'll be more. Trust me.

Finn smiles, just a little.

FINN

I'm really glad I met you, Wren.

WREN

Me too, Finn.

They sit in silence and watch the sunset. Beat.

FINN

I didn't wish for us to find the treasure, you know.

Wren turns to Finn. They lock eyes.

WREN

Then what did you wish for?

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END.