

HELEN'S HERO

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EXT. SCRAPYARD - DAY

1

We open with an establishing shot of a sprawling scrapyard.

Somewhere within the bowels of the yard we encounter a girl, 7-9 years of age, gaunt-like wearing a tattered/weather worn coat, pants and winter hat. She is homeless. This is HELEN. She forages through a garbage can near the yard office.

After a spell she liberates a half-eaten chicken drumstick.

BARKS from a dog in the distance startle Helen, but soon the barking stops. She bites down on the drumstick, grabs hold of the plastic bag in the receptacle and carefully slides it from the container.

BARKS resume - louder/more aggressive - feet CRUNCH along the gravel heading toward her. Helen hears the CONSTERNATIONS of JUNKYARD BILL, 70's, heavy set, wearing denim overalls, who appears with his dog (on a leash), and wields a tired looking shotgun - his dog snarls and snaps at her.

JUNKYARD BILL
What the blue hell?
You again!
I told you not to
come here again!

Bill raises his gun at her with one clumsy hand while maintaining control of the leash - Helen stands with the drumstick between her teeth, eyes wide.

JUNKYARD BILL
Not one move.
I was in the Navy once...I'm a
good shot.

Bill pumps the shotgun.

JUNKYARD BILL
Citizen's arrest time ya little
pest!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 1:

Bill steps forward with caution. Then, Helen flings the drumstick over the dog's head.

The dog leaps up to snatch it, but misses - turning and chasing after as it tumbles across the ground behind Bill, pulling Bill off-balance in the process.

As such Bill falls onto his derriere, fires an incidental SHOT, gathers himself up, and looks for her. Helen is gone.

EXT. STREET - DAY

2

Helen approaches a street sign, hauling the hefty bag over her shoulder. She sets it down, reaches into her pocket and pulls out a folded map.

As she unfolds it we see a small pen inside with a paper-clip fastened family picture (3x5). She uses the pen to jot something on the map and then picks up the trash and continues across the street toward an abandoned warehouse.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING/WAREHOUSE - LATER

3

Helen drags the plastic bag into the empty space she calls home. En route the bag hooks on a tiny bent nail poking up from the floor and gradually spills forth its contents behind her.

Helen stops and takes notes, then crouches down and begins to forage through the spill. She plucks free a black and yellow banana peel, a tiny bag of sunflower seeds, and some other rotten fruit then puts them all in a sealed plastic bag she removes from her pocket.

She next sweeps toward her bed and lays on her side. A crude candle rests on an overturned crate, which acts as one part of a walled fortress of apple crates among other debris that shelter her from the elements.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 3:

She jerks a raggedy blanket up and over and face, tears the banana peel apart with tiny hands and nibbles away.

A sudden flinch as a police siren SQUEALS not far away.

As the siren INTENSIFIES she hastens to clean up the trash - filling the torn bag with its spilled contents.

The siren draws closer. Helen finishes bagging the spilled contents and sets the bag atop her blanket. She rolls the blanket over the bag to form a ball and then rolls the ball underneath a neighboring stairwell.

She then climbs behind her protective wall and squeezes herself inside of the crates. The sirens begin to fade into the labyrinth of the city. Soon, the sirens are no more.

Helen - cramped within a crate reaches into her pocket and pulls free the tattered 3x5 picture seen earlier. In it - she poses with her family - happier times. Dark shadows slice across the picture, and her face.

As she peels herself from the crate she tip-toes quietly around in a routine search for any intruders that may have evaded the police.

But then something on the floor catches her eye.

There along the floor where the bag had torn open something missed - a doll. More specifically a male superhero-like doll lays facing her - as though oddly leering at her.

Helen steps over to it and picks it up for closer inspection.

In detail:

- "12 tall (think Ken doll)
- Expressionless face
- short brown hair
- white mask on a rubbery head
- black soulless holes for eyes

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 3:

- muscle physique in plastic form
- dirty white tank top with torn blue jeans and black shoes

She glances back to the ball of garbage underneath the stairwell, then back to the doll. Helen smiles.

HELEN
I'm Helen.
What's your name?

Close up on doll face - expressionless.

HELEN
I'll call you 'Hero'.
Okay?

Close again on doll.

Helen looks again at the ball under the stairwell. She rises to set the Hero doll on a crate facing toward her.

HELEN
You can watch me clean up my
house, then we can play, and
then we'll have dinner.

INT. WAREHOUSE - NIGHT

4

Helen lies half asleep in her ratty sleeping bag, Hero tucked in her arm. She gazes out the cracked window at the full moon and remembers.

MONTAGE/FLASHBACK EXT. HOUSE - DAY

4A

- Helen plays outside with her sister, age 10, and neighbor girl, around Helen's age, who looks similar.
- After a bit Helen looks toward the driveway and sees her dad's car parked there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 4A

HELEN
Daddy's home!

- She smiles big and bolts from the yard.

MONTAGE/FLASHBACK INT. HOUSE - FOLLOWING

4B

- Helen enters the house and follows the muffled sounds of a in distress - her mother.
- She peeks around the corner of the den threshold and witnesses -

HELEN'S DAD
Norma, this is our
biggest bust to date.

HELEN'S MOM
I'm worried is all. It's
not safe. You even said it
yourself, these are the --

HELEN'S DAD
- "worst people to mess with."
I know.
(pause)
But it has to be done.

- Helen quietly backs away from the den threshold. A table next to her features a framed picture of her father wearing a police uniform, and next to that is the framed 3x5 family picture she now carries with her.

BACK TO SCENE 4:

Helen's eyelids open and close, heavy with fatigue.

As they finally close the camera will slow dolly-in towards Hero's blackened eyes (*is he thinking?*)

EXT. STREET - DAY

5

Helen comes to a stop near a street sign that reads: *Kellogg St.*

She pulls out her mini-folded map (Carmen's map) and follows the blue line (with finger) to Kellogg St. on the map. She uses the pen to mark a smiley face over that spot.

She then traces an invisible line up the zig-zagging map toward her destination: Aunt Carmen's house.

EXT. PLAYGROUND - FOLLOWING

6

Helen sees a swing set where kids are frolicking. She watches them fondly with want to join in. She sweeps toward the playground.

MS of kid swinging, balls being kicked around, kids running, laughing et cetera. The Hero doll tucked upright inside her knapsack seemingly surveys the scene.

Helen freezes at the sight of a police patrol car slowly encircling the park area.

HELEN

(solemn)

We'll have to play some
other time.

EXT. BRIDGE - FOLLOWING

7

Helen huddles under a bridge - gang graffiti decorating the bridge proposes this scene most inappropriate for a lone girl, much less a girl child.

The Hero doll sits upright aground with legs splayed forward beside her. His arms bent at the elbow and hands fashioned into open palm positions.

Helen unzips up her knapsack to find the sunflower seeds.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 7:

HELEN

Do you want to eat?

She puts a seed up to Hero's tiny closed mouth.

HELEN

There you go. All better.

A RUSTLING of SOUNDS startle Helen from behind - she whips back to look. 3 homeless looking kids come skidding down the rocky dirt path near the concrete pylons. They each dwarf her in size.

Helen hastily tucks the Hero doll into her knapsack.

The eldest, NASTY BOY, is 13, lean and struts with swagger. The younger boy, NASTY KID, is 10, weasely looking, and wielding a 3 foot broken broom stick, and the last is NASTY GIRL, 13, scraggly hair, smarmy and skinny, tattered clothing all.

NASTY BOY

What you got there, Helen?

NASTY KID

She's got dumpster food in there,
right, bum?

NASTY GIRL

Hey Helen, where did you get
your rags, I mean clothes?

Helen squeezes her knapsack tightly.

HELEN

(sheepishly)

Leave me alone.

NASTY BOY/GIRL/KID

(imitating Helen)

Leave me alone.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 7:

They collectively LAUGH. Nasty Boy eyes the knapsack.

NASTY BOY
Give it over scum bum.

Helen draws back from Nasty Boy, standing up at once. The trio encircles her like a murder of ravens.

NASTY BOY
C'mon Helen, we don't got
all day!

NASTY GIRL
Ew! Don't touch it...unless
you want germs.

Nasty Kid uses his broken broomstick to lift off Helen's hat and twirl it around the end of the stick. They GIGGLE amongst themselves at this.

NASTY GIRL
Who wants to sing?

NASTY KID
Not me.

NASTY GIRL
It's the Gross Helen song.

They begin to dance around Helen in a circle - SINGING, TAUNTING, CACKLING. Helen, in the middle is reaching for her hat, dangling from the broom stick - impossibly far from her reach.

-SONG-
(mocking)
*Helen smells, oh Helen smells
like a sewer rat from hell.*

Helen grabs a clump of dirt as they continue taunting - contemplating throwing it at them and running.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 7:

They cease the dance. Suddenly Nasty Boy lurches forward and tears the knapsack from her.

HELEN
Give it back!
(frantic)
Give it back!

Helen reaches out for the knapsack, but Nasty Kid and Girl boot a huge dirt cloud into her face - choking her. She furiously rubs her eyes.

Just then Nasty Boy overturns the bag over Helen's head - rotten fruit splattering into her hair. The Hero doll drops just below her on the ground.

NASTY BOY
Pew! You need a
bath bum!

They explode with LAUGHTER. Helen grips Hero tightly.

NASTY KID
She still stinks!

They kick dirt at her in a fury that blinds Helen and drops her to all fours. She is COUGHING and BEGGING them to stop as pebbles beat at her body.

They LAUGH, and kick with even more fervor.

NASTY GIRL
She smells so bad even her own
Mom couldn't take it!

NASTY KID
That's why she dumped her in a dump!

They LAUGH in unison.

Half-blind and struggling to catch a breath Helen realizes she's

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 7:

lost grip of the Hero doll. She thrusts her body prostrate and spreads her hands about the dirt frantically feeling for the it to no avail.

Nasty Boy stops kicking, as do the others. Helen rubs her eyes intensely - she barely sees.

NASTY BOY
(motioning to the river)
Let's give her a real bath.

HELEN
(terrified)
No!

The trio swarms on her with grubby hands and lift her off the ground, dragging her toward the river.

Helen fights, but is overwhelmed by their combined might, looking half-blindly back at the spot she last saw the Hero doll.

Out of the dust cloud descends the muscular arm of a man and suddenly Nasty Boy is cart-wheeling mid-air - face planting the ground. He clutches his throat - eyes wide as saucers.

A half instant later Nasty Girl's feet are flying backwards out of the dust cloud and into the neighboring brush pile.

At last, Nasty Kid fearfully drops the broomstick, backing away in fear he trips and tumbles backward down the embankment.

Still rubbing her eyes and trying to catch a breath, Helen lifts her gaze as the dust settles.

She witnesses the Nasty Trio beaten and down, uncertain they are even alive.

She whips her head around in search for the Hero doll - locates it aground, grabs him, her knapsack, hat and flees the scene.

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - DUSK

8

Helen WHIMPERS softly - her face, hair and entire body are dirt clad as though dipped in mud now dried. She removes the increasingly tattered family picture from her pocket, looks at it and softly/sorrowfully sings:

HELEN

(Vocalizing to: Twinkle-Twinkle Little Star)

*Up above the world so high
Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle, twinkle little star
How I wonder what you are.*

The Hero doll sits on the crate in front of her, devoid of expression, yet seemingly watching her. She picks him up, kisses his forehead and lays on her side clutching him dearly to her chest.

Helen shuts her eyes until all is black.

FLASHBACK SCENE 9

INT. LIVING ROOM of HOUSE - NIGHT

9

- Helen draws in a coloring book on the floor.
- Her aunt, CARMEN, 30's, attractive blonde, enters the room and plops down on the couch with a bowl of popcorn.
- A movie called the 'DEVIL'S HOUR' is playing on the television.
- Helen looks curiously at her and asks:

HELEN

Aunt Carmen, you know
how this is my house?

Aunt Carmen smiles back at Helen.

CARMEN

Yes, of course.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 9:

HELEN
Where's your house?

CARMEN
(pointing)
My house is over there.

HELEN
(crinkling nose)
By the kitchen?

Carmen CHUCKLES, then reaches toward the nightstand cabinet beside the couch.

CARMEN
Your daddy always loved his maps.
Come here, I'll show you.

Helen rises from the floor and plops onto Carmen's lap.

Carmen uses a pen to trace a line on the map up/down streets.

CARMEN
Here's where YOU live.
(tracing)
And here's where I live.
All the way up here.
See?

Carmen writes 'AUNT CARMEN'S HOUSE' and draws a smiley face around it.

END FLASHBACK SCENE 9

INT. ABANDONED BUILDING - NIGHT

10

There is a sharp SOUND of breaking glass. Helen snaps awake. She hears bickering VOICES from upstairs. It is GRUNGY and NITWIT, two petty criminals, 30's-40's.

Their voices become increasingly AUDIBLE.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 10:

GRUNGY (O.S.)
You've got to get serious!

NITWIT (O.S.)
I am serious! I am!

GRUNGY (O.S.)
So, what the hell was that?

NITWIT (O.S.)
What?

GRUNGY (O.S.)
You get in, smash the display
cases, get the stuff, get
out.

Helen gets off of her ratty blanket and drags it with her to a
hiding spot under the staircase.

NITWIT (O.S.)
Yeah, so...

GRUNGY (O.S.)
So, you were just standing there!

NITWIT (O.S.)
I wasn't! I got-

GRUNGY (O.S.)
We got half of what we could have
if you'd done your job!

NITWIT (O.S.)
I did my job!

Helen flinches at the tone of their words.

Grungy and Nitwit enter the area where Helen hides.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 10:

The two men enter a staircase and begin heading down. Helen hides just underneath them.

GRUNGY

Oh really, because I didn't know
your job was to just stand there
and look like an idiot!

NITWIT

It wasn't me who tripped the alarm!

Helen pulls the blanket over her head like a hood and
balls up tightly underneath the stairs.

Grungy stops and grabs Nitwit by the coat.

GRUNGY

Listen to that! Quiet! Listen!

Helen holds her breath. A faint SIREN trails off.

GRUNGY

You hear those sirens? Those sirens
mean that we're dead if you
make any more mistakes -
you understand?

They finish descending the staircase.

NITWIT

You got me into this!

GRUNGY

You made the mistake.

Nitwit GRUMBLES incoherently.

GRUNGY

And if a cop gets us, you know,
we're gonna have to kill him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 10:

Helen puts her hands to her ears.

NITWIT
Oh! Man! You--

GRUNGY
We're just gonna have to
take care of things!

NITWIT
I... ok.

Nitwit kicks a piece of scrap in frustration. It lands near where Helen is hiding. Helen scoots over to avoid it.

The robbers hear her movement. Grungy signals Nitwit to be quiet as they head toward the staircase.

Grungy rips the raggedy blanket away and discovers Helen.

GRUNGY
What is *this*?!

NITWIT
She was here the whole time.

Helen is too frightened to respond.

NITWIT
She heard everything.

Nitwit is nervous. His eyes flit around like a crack-head.

GRUNGY
You. Little girl.
What did you hear?

Helen panics, rolls out from under the stairs and tries to escape. Nitwit grabs her by the arm and dangles her in the air.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 10:

GRUNGY
What are you doing?

NITWIT
She seen us. Nobody else seen us yet,
but she knows what we look like.
(to Helen)
You know what we look like!

Helen tries to pull away but Nitwit holds her firmly.

GRUNGY
Yeah, she was...

NITWIT
We can't let her go.

GRUNGY
Hey... um...

NITWIT
You said not to mess up again.
Here's me not messing up. Give me
your knife, man.

GRUNGY
I know what I said but this is--

NITWIT
I'm doin' it.

Nitwit reaches for the blade at Grungy's side.

Helen struggles to break free. She turns away from the two men
in search of something, anything, to help her.

Her eyes widen like saucers as the shadow of a man grows tall on
the wall behind them.

Suddenly, Hero's hand breaks Nitwit's hold on Helen.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 10:

Helen lurches free.

Nitwit jolts backward in surprise.

Hero, now in full-sized man form stands defiantly before them.

Nitwit pulls out a gun and empties 10 rounds point-blank into Hero's chest. Nothing happens as Hero kicks the gun out of his hand.

Nitwit then charges Hero -

****FIGHT ENSUES****

After the fight, Grungy and Nitwit are unconscious (or dead)??

Hero stands silently in the middle of the room, neither breathing heavily nor sweating. Statue-like.

HELEN

You're a real hero too.

Hero does not respond. Helen circles around him.

HELEN

You're here to protect me,
aren't you?

Hero looks down at her blankly.

She looks at him and reaches out to touch his mask.

HELEN

I can't reach...pick me up.

Hero picks her up by the hood of her jacket with one arm. She touches his mask.

HELEN

Put me down.

Hero puts her down.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 10:

Police sirens SOUND OFF - Helen snaps her head around at the window to look.

HELEN
We have to run.

When she turns back Hero is gone.

HELEN
Where are you, Hero?

There on the ground the Hero dolls lays there.

FLASHBACK SCENE 12

INT. HOUSE - NIGHT

12

Helen, her sister and the neighbor girl are playing hide-go-seek.

- Helen's older sister is "it" and covers her eyes while counting to 10 ALOUD.
- Helen and the neighbor girl dart away from her GIGGLING.
- Helen passes the picture of her father in uniform.
- Helen darts from room to room searching for a place to hide. She finally decides on her own room.
- She crawls underneath the bed and listens.
- All is eerily quiet, then -
- Doorbell to house RINGS.
- Footsteps toward door.
- Door opening.
- Helen's sister SHRIEKING in terror.
- Men rushing in - LOUD COMMANDS.

MAN 1 (O.S.)
Get over here!

HELEN'S SISTER (O.S.)
Let me go, daddy!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 12

DAD (O.S.)
Let her go!

HELEN'S MOM (O.S.)
(terrified)
Oh my God, no!

- Helen's dad talking LOUD.

DAD (O.S.)
Let them go, take me
instead!

- Helen's mom talking LOUD-scared.

MOM (O.S.)
Please! She's just a
child!

- Slow dolly in on Helen looking scared - 10 beats, silence.
- CAMERA stays on Helen's face
- Numerous GUN SHOTS.
- Footsteps hustling up the stairs.
- From Helen's perspective: only feet seen.

MAN 1
He's got 2 daughters right?!

MAN 2
Right.

MAN 1
We capped the older one.

MAN 2
And I did the mom.

MAN 1
What was that?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 12

- The men's feet find the neighbor girl hiding in the closet.
- Neighbor girl CRIES and SCREAMS.
- SHOT fired. Silence.
- Room erupts in GUNFIRE - Helen's dad.
- The 2 men hit the floor dead. Smoke fills the room.
- Helen can see they are men in police uniforms.
- SIRENS heard in distance.
- Helen's dad, wounded collapses to the floor.
- He turns and sees her under the bed. They lock eyes.
- He whispers to her.

HELEN'S DAD
Helen, you're...you have to go.
Get out...go to Aunt Carmen's...
Trust...no one...

A single set of footsteps enter the quieted room and halt. Her father looks up. 3 SHOTS fired into him. His eyes close.

A cell phone RING TONE erupts to a unique TUNE from the gunman's pocket.

GUNMAN
Yea. It's done.
We got them all.

The sound of a flip-phone closing and the footsteps make way out the door. The footsteps stop just at the door and pivot back, as if to address Helen's deceased father.

GUNMAN
You did this to
yourself you sanctimonious
son of a bitch.

INTERCUT:

The picture of her father in police uniform now broken on the floor and blood spattered, the family picture right next to it.

END FLASHBACK SCENE 12

EXT. BACKYARD - DAY

13

Helen sits under a large tree, exhausted.

She holds up the Hero doll.

Child VOICES slice through the air. A kickball bounces over the fence and rolls to a stop near Helen.

She rises to pick it up with a relish.

Around the corner hobble the Nasty Trio, all beaten looking. Nasty Girl features a huge swollen eye, busted lip and broken nose.

Nasty Boy has a crude neck brace on while Nasty Kid uses crutches with gashes all over his face.

They see Helen, GASP, and hobble away the opposite direction as fast as they can.

Helen watches them go. She drops the ball and frowns.

She examines the Hero doll for a moment, looks back at the now empty corner from whence the Nasty Trio just stood, a confused look on her face.

HELEN

Can you hear me?

Hero doll stares back blankly.

She digs around her knapsack and pulls free a trowel and hesitates.

HELEN

If you keep beating people up
the policemen are going to find me.
The policemen hurt me. They hurt my
Daddy.

She puts the trowel back in her knapsack, slides Hero doll into a pocket on her knapsack and resumes her journey.

EXT. STREETS - DAY

14

Helen comes to a stop at the end of a street. She studies the map while tracing a line from 'here to there'.

HELEN

If I go here it's faster.

EXT. STAIRWELL - FOLLOWING

14A

Helen meanders down a long, windy staircase that leads to a walking path.

EXT. WALKING PATH - CONTINUING

14B

Camera tracking shot: Helen sweeping past the Hamm's Brewery building -- smoke stacks looming in background.

EXT. CREEK - CONTINUING

14C

Helen stops to rest at a creek, puts her knapsack down and removes the Hero doll from his place. She coddles him and then digs into her knapsack for some seeds for him to 'eat'.

A long/silent moment is shared between her and the doll.

EXT. TUNNEL - FOLLOWING

14D

Helen meanders through a tunnel. When she pops out the other end she notes what appears to be an abandoned house.

HELEN

I think we'll sleep
in there.

INT. BASEMENT OF ABANDONED HOUSE - MORNING

15

Helen wakes up, rubs her tired eyes and glances over at a small radio plugged into the wall.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 15:

She reaches for it and fiddles with the dial. It CRACKLES to life. A news report is heard in voice over:

*"...police increase search efforts
for missing 7-year-old, Helen -- "*

Helen turns the radio off. She holds the Hero doll and thinks.

EXT. ABANDONED HOUSE - FOLLOWING

16

Helen exits from a broken basement door that ascends a small concrete staircase leading to a trash-strewn backyard.

She looks around, kisses the Hero doll on the forehead, lays it aground, reaches for her knapsack and liberates a trowel from it.

She plunges the trowel into the ground and begins to dig a doll-sized grave.

HELEN

Just for a little
bit, ok?

The Hero doll lays motionless as though leering at the sky.

Helen perks up as a pair of shiny black shoes enter her frame.

A police officer looms before her. This is OFFICER JAMES, 30's, in shape, boyishly handsome with a nuance of purity in his voice.

Helen glowers at his badge, then up at his face.

JAMES

Hello, what are you doing?
Do you live here?

She resumes digging the grave.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 16

HELEN
(to herself)
No.

JAMES
(genuine concern)
Well, this is private
property, not a playground.
Come on, I'll walk you home.

Helen continues digging, now at a frantic pace.

JAMES smiles sympathetically - piecing it together that Helen is no ordinary neighborhood kid.

Hero appears behind him.

JAMES
Hey, you need to come with me.
I'll get you some help.

He reaches his hand toward Helen.

JAMES
Come on now, let's go.

Helen's eyes grow wide as she sees Hero behind JAMES.

HELEN
(softly)
No.

JAMES
Come on, it's just a little
ways to my car.

Helen darts back in fear as Hero chokes JAMES from behind.
JAMES kicks the trowel Helen had set on the ground away. It skitters across the ground landing inches under a neighboring fence.

They fight. **DETAILS TO COME LATER**

They are fairly well matched at first, but once they are on the ground, Hero dominates.

Helen struggles to reach the trowel under the fencing as her hand barely fits.

Hero issues JAMES some vicious ground and pound from top mount. Blood runs down his face.

JAMES frees his service pistol and shoots it directly into Hero's stomach multiple times. There is smoke and a GUNSHOT, but the bullets take no effect.

Horrified, yet astonished, JAMES lies helplessly as Hero raises a broken and jagged cinder block above his head with the intent to smash it into JAMES's.

Helen finally grabs hold of the trowel, turns to see what Hero is about to do and screams:

HELEN
STOP!!!

Instantly Hero vanishes and the broken cinder block drops as JAMES rolls away.

JAMES blinks incredulously at what happened.

Helen sees the Hero doll back in the hole she dug.

She frantically fills the hole with dirt as Officer JAMES returns to his senses. She completely buries Hero.

As JAMES staggers to his feet he CALLS to Helen.

JAMES
Wait...

Helen darts off and into the neighboring alleyway. JAMES rises to his feet wobbly and confused.

Helen runs down the alleyway in tears. She reaches a safe distance and whirls back to look for Officer JAMES. No sign.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 16:

She drops to her knees, reaches into her pocket, pulls out the family picture, and sobs bitterly.

JAMES appears in the distant background (rack focus shot), limping toward her while [appearing to be] calling for back up. SIRENS WAIL in the far off.

As he draws closer to Helen unawares, the sirens grow louder.

INT. POLICE STATION - LATER

17

THUNDERCLAPS tear open the sky as RAIN patters viciously against the rooftop. Officer James, now bandaged and bruised enters the office of the police captain, BILL CUNNIGHAM, 50's, tall, stern, but with "good guy" looks.

The Chief motions JAMES to sit.

CHIEF

Officer James, let's not
waste time. Tell me
what happened.

JAMES motions to the damages on his person.

JAMES

Um, long story short, sir,
the assailant got the best
of me, and I thought he was
going to kill me...

A pause.

CHIEF

And?

JAMES

Then he was...just...gone.

The Chief glares at Officer JAMES, trying to retain composure.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 17:

CHIEF
Strange. You got a
description?

JAMES
He was dolled up like some kind
of...I don't know...superhero.
And I put 3 rounds into his
chest...
(pause)
Sir, can we talk
about the little girl?

Chief Cunningham rises from his chair and paces the floor.

CHIEF
I got three dead cops,
and one beaten up by a -
are you off your ghord?

JAMES
I'm sorry?

CHIEF
They're holding a press
conference today. I have
to explain why one of my
officers was attacked,
and by who.

JAMES
Um, I'm not following..

Cunningham slams his hand on his desk.

CHIEF
Remember Grungy Gino and his
accomplice in the jewelry heist?

JAMES
Yea. Nitwick - Nickwick.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 17:

CHIEF
Nitwit Nick. While you were
sleeping off your run in with
the "superhero" dispatch called
two stiff in Lowertown. Coroner
report says they were
pulverized...to death.

A lull of silence fills the room. The Chief picks up his phone
and dials.

CHIEF
A lot of homeless kids
hang out in Lowertown.
(pause)
Bring her in, Gerald.

INTERCUT:

EXT. OUTSIDE - SAME

18

Rain peppers the ground above the Hero doll grave.

BACK TO SCENE 17

A meanish looking officer, Gerald, 50's, walks Helen into the
office. She's cleaned up. Gerald pulls up a chair for her.
Helen remains standing.

Chief Cunningham's cell phone RINGS with the same ring tone
Helen heard from underneath her bed the night her family was
murdered. Chief Cunningham answers.

CHIEF
(guarded)
Let me call you back.

OFFICER GERALD
Have a seat young lady.

Helen remains standing, staring blankly at Chief Cunningham.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 18:

OFFICER GERALD
Go ahead, sit.

When Helen refuses to sit, Gerald grabs her around the neck and tries to force her to sit. She struggles and CRIES out.

HELEN
NO!

Officer JAMES steps in and grabs Officer Gerald by the collar.

JAMES
She's just a kid!

Officer Gerald balls up his fist and is about to punch JAMES.

OFFICER GERALD
Why, you little!

CHIEF
Knock it off!
Both of you, out.
Now.

JAMES resists.

JAMES
But Chief!

CHIEF
NOW!

Both officers leave the room, closing the door behind them.

CHIEF
You're Helen Anderson.
Henry's daughter. Look just
like him, only cuter.
(pause)
Henry was a good cop.
(under his breath)
Maybe too good.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 18:

Helen stares blankly at him.

CHIEF
You were there the night
he died, they died, hiding.
(a beat)
You saw what happened.
You saw who was there.

INTERCUT:

EXT. OUTSIDE - SAME

19

Rain has now washed away the dirt grave the Hero doll rested in
- we see his blackened eyes leering into the sky.

BACK TO SCENE 17:

Helen stares the Chief down, almost eerily. He reclines back
into his chair, puzzled.

CHIEF
Your protector, who is he?

Helen stares blankly at the Chief for a long moment, then pivots
slowly toward the door and walks out of the office.

The Chief, still seated, is baffled. Camera dolly out and see
Hero standing directly behind him now, pressing his fists
together.

EXT. POLICE STATION - FOLLOWING

20

Helen descends the flight of stairs outside of the station. She
stops, reaches into her pocket and pulls out the map.

Then, darting her eyes around she spots a homeless woman with a
shopping cart draped with a tarp of some sort.

Helen dashes toward it as the homeless woman walks away
momentarily.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED SCENE 20:

She ducks underneath the cart, hidden by the flappy tarp.

The homeless woman returns to the cart and resumes pushing it up the sidewalk, unaware of Helen underneath.

EXT. POLICE STATION - FOLLOWING 21

Officer JAMES rushes outside the station with a fearful look, having stumbled upon something terrible happen inside.

JAMES frantically searches the area for Helen, but to no avail.

EXT. PARK - FOLLOWING 22

Blocks away from the police station now, Helen slips out from underneath the cart, quietly lifts a small jacket the homeless had stuffed into it while the homeless woman has her back turned and scurries off.

Helen gets to the beginning of a street. The sign reads: Arcade St. She pulls out her map again and traces the line Aunt Carmen drew to where it reads Arcade St.

She folds up the map and stuffs it into her pocket. As she does this, she feels something.

She clutches hold of an object inside and wiggles it free. It is the Hero doll, staring at her. Her eyes widen like saucers and she is elated.

HELEN
Hero.

She carries on with him toward Arcade St., and dashes off to the side at the faintest sound of an approaching police siren.

FADE TO BLACK