

Raising Hell(en)

A story
by
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(art by helen, too!)

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For my mommy
Juanita Lloyd Bray
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Once upon a time there was a little girl named Helen. She lived in a house with a big yard, and she ran all around pretending she was a cowboy. She had toy guns and could sneer just like the bad guys in the TV westerns. She was quite a handful for her mommy!



One day Helen decided to run away.

"I'll make you a peanut butter and jelly sandwich so you'll have something to eat when you get hungry," her mommy said.

Helen was happy to have the sandwich, and when she reached the very, very edge of her yard, she sat down to eat her sandwich and look at the world beyond. It looked like a very big world! So after Helen ate her sandwich, she decided she wouldn't run away that day after all, and ran away to play instead.



Let's Play
Green
Lantern!

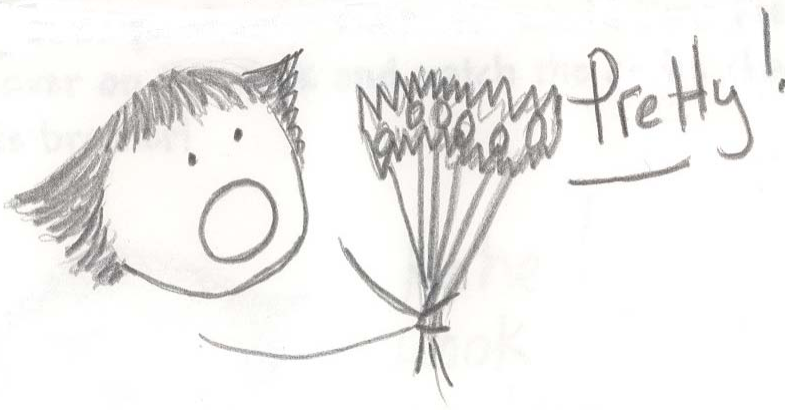
Not many people know this, but Helen invented the yard sale! She found lots of neat things in the garbage—like empty Old Spice bottles. She put up some boards between some trees to display all the treasures she found. When it was all set up, she cupped her hands around her mouth and broadcast her grand opening to the neighborhood:

"COME TO LLOYD'S STORE!"

But no one did, especially not Helen's mommy, who didn't want to pay for things she'd already thrown away.



One day early in the springtime, while Helen was playing in the woods, she found a secret patch of wildflowers! They were beautiful, with long stems and bright yellow blooms. She picked them all, every one she could find, and took them home to her mommy—a lovely bouquet of the neighbor's daffodils.



Helena loved to go to the beach, where there were many neat things to do, like go crabbing off the dock across the street. She would catch lots of crabs, which she would put in a bucket. When she had a big bucketful of pissed off crabs hissing and bubbling and clacking their pinchers, she would turn the bucket over on the dock and watch them chase her little brother!



He he!
Look
at 'em
run!

Helena also liked fish off the shore with her mommy, who taught her how to use a great big fishing pole to catch pompano, a yummy little fish with a little yellow tummy.



Sometimes her mommy would fix peanut butter and jelly sandwiches for a picnic on the beach. One day the wind blew very hard. It blew so hard it blew sand all over Helen's peanut butter and jelly sandwich. Beach sand doesn't taste bad, just a little gritty.



My
Favorite!

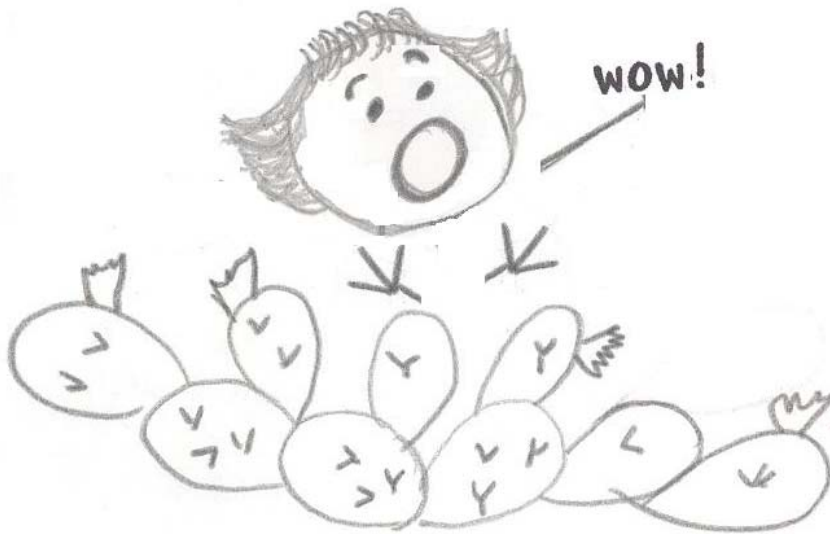
One day while Helen was playing in the ocean, she got caught by the undertow! That's a very strong current that can pull a little kid all the way out to sea. Helen became frightened and tried to get back to the shore, but the undertow was too strong!



*That's when Helen's mommy, who was stronger than any old undertow,
walked out past the breakers and saved her life. Otherwise, Helen might
have ended up on Gilligan's Island!*



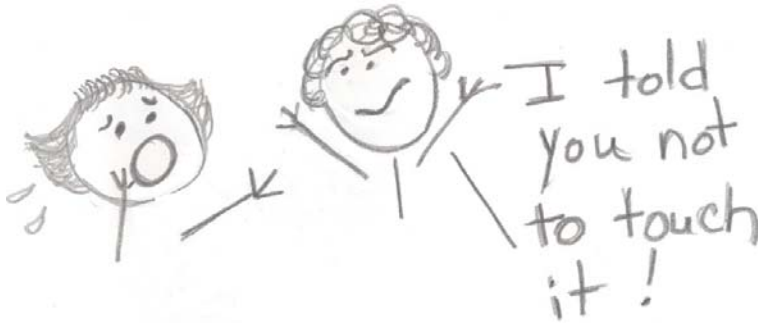
Another fun thing about the beach was going out to eat. One time while Helen and her family were standing outside a restaurant, Helen noticed a very strange plant in the decorative planter outside the restaurant door. Instead of leaves, it had smooth flat pads covered with downy hairs. Helen was very curious.



"What's that?" she cried.

"It's a cactus. Don't touch it," her mommy warned.

What do you think Helen did? That's right, she touched the cactus! The downy hairs were really protective needles, and Helen got a finger-full. It's a good thing her mommy had a pair of tweezers in her pocket book so she could pull the cactus needles out of Helen's finger.



As Helen got older, she got to be an even bigger handful for her mommy. Scientists understand the reason for this now. It's because Helen's brain was under construction!



Just like in Minnesota where road construction goes on forever, it took many, many years before the construction on Helen's brain was finished. But her mommy was always there for her—even to this very day!



The End