



THE HERO'S HANDBOOK

Don't leave
HoMe without it

CERTIFIED HEROIC

CALLING ALL HEROES



Welcome to The Hero's Handbook, for heroes of the everyday.

What an honour it is to be addressing you fine young things. This thoroughly engrossing handbook is your essential guide to being a hero. It has been conceived, researched, written and brought to you with fanfare and melody by me.

This handbook is also designed to be personalised by you. Add your hero thoughts and experiences big and small – to these pages. In fact, the smaller the better. Microscopic hero-ing is one of the most exacting of the hero's skills. We observe so little of our everyday worlds. But you, heroes – you must always be looking out for more.

You must seek the signs that others do not see – the unexpected glance, the minute movement of the hand, the hastily scribbled note, the twitch in the eye, the whispered aside.

Listen. Look. Learn.

But enough of my thoughts (heroes should never reveal too much about themselves: See TOP TIP 1 in TEN TOP TIPS FOR HEROES). If I know you (which I do not, of course, but that is beside the point), I am guessing you will already have a quibble of questions about who the 'me' might be but STOP, I implore: park such questionable quibbles elsewhere for I have a question for you (and you and you and you. In fact: ask everyone you know this question.

My question for you is:

WHAT MAKES A HERO A HERO?

Compare your answers with a friend. Or two.

THE POINT:

A hero's journey is a marvellous thing and every journey will be as different as baked beans and beef ragout. As you follow in the footsteps of all those heroes who have gone before you, I bestow upon you the spirit of adventure and the hero's ancient blessing of good luck:



CHAPTER 1

TEN TOP TIPS FOR HEROES



The Hero's Handbook is bursting with excellent advice and Top Tips (even if I say so myself). Here are ten of my best Top Tips for heroes in a hurry.

TOP TIP 1: Never reveal too much about your hero self

Everyday heroes are unassuming sorts. Power and glory are not for you. Heroes believe things should be *SAID*, which, of course, stands for:

Satisfying, Anonymous, Invisible, Discrete.

TOP TIP 2: It's never too late to be a hero

Heroic behaviour is not determined by age. Oh no. Your heroic potential bubbles away for as long as you do. Yes, I know what you're going to say. You're going to say it gets harder to vault walls, scale buildings with your bare hands, or drive cars in high-speed chases once you're over 25, but I say to you: don't despair. Change the way you view the hero world and swap one set of skills for another. For example, you could take up knitting. Yes, you heard me correctly: knitting.

Knitters, you see, are like wallpaper, or curtains, or any seemingly innocuous household furnishings. They can blend in anywhere and everywhere, needles a-twitching, wool at their feet.

You probably passed a knitter today. You may not have seen them, but they definitely saw you. Knitters are life's knit-pickers, attune to the intricacies of observation. They can eavesdrop without dropping a stitch. They can slip next stitch purlwise without breaking a sweat.

The heroism of knitters is unsurpassed in the craft world. Did you know, for example, that they are some of the most accomplished coders of all times? Yes, knitters flourished during World War Two, inserting code into jumpers, socks, long scarfs, short scarfs, vests, earmuffs, mittens.

Discover three extraordinary things about World War Two code-knitters:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How absolutely devilish. Knitting is not only inspirational, it's practical. In fact, some of the oldest knitted artefacts are socks from Ancient Egypt. (Probably for all-night parties in the afterlife: Dress casual. Wear socks.)

Further to my furthermore, the knit, knit, knit of the needles can also be used most successfully for a quick bout of hypnotism, should the hypnotic need ever arise.

TOP TIP 3: Everyone can be a hero

See TOP TIP 2. Heroism is open to all kinds of people (especially the aforementioned knitters.) Big, small, old, young, previous experience, no previous experience. Embrace your inner hero (see Chapter 2: Finding your Inner Hero). Feed it an abundance of green vegetables and watch it flourish.

TOP TIP 4: The early hero catches the clue

To be on the LOOK OUT, it helps to be awake. Have you ever heard of a sleepy hero catching a crook? No, I thought not. The sleepy are not vigilant. The sleepy have muddled heads and slow responses. Two-footed vigilance is required at all times to be a hero. Rise with the sun. Set your alarm clock half an hour earlier and be ready to watch the day's delights and dangers (it's not called ALARM for nothing, you know) unfold.

TOP TIP 5: Clues news

In the kitchen: create a trail of breadcrumbs (brown bread is best), or write an invisible message using lemon juice.

In the bathroom: carve a clue in the soap or write a message in steam on the shower wall (Warning: do not turn on the bathroom fan. Steamy messages disappear faster than a winning streak).

In the library: the loneliest shelf is X Y Z. Choose the most obscure Z title you can find, such as *Zebrules*^{*}, *A Guide* and leave a clue in the middle of it. Make that book's day.

TOP TIP 6: Sometimes, things are not what they seem

The familiar can be the very best of disguises. A goldfish in a fish bowl, for example, eats fish food, blows bubbles, swims in circles and butts its head against the glass. It looks exactly like ... a goldfish.

But look again and consider this: could that goldfish be a remote controlled listening device, transmitting your secret words to ears that should not hear?

In short, I say to you: never trust a goldfish.

^{*} A Zebrule is the hybrid offspring of a male zebra and a female horse

TOP TIP 7: Sometimes, things are just what they seem

Sometimes, a goldfish is just a goldfish. Suspicion can be misplaced. Always be prepared to pick up your suspicion (you may need tweezers), dispose of it carefully in the bin, and allow the goldfish to be a goldfish.

TOP TIP 8: Rubbish bins ooze with details. They also ooze with rubbish. A hero must deduce which is which.

P.S. They can smell the same.

TOP TIP 8a: Wear gloves. And possibly a nose peg. Rubbish is stinky. Details can be stinky too.

TOP TIP 8b: However repugnant these smells, do not allow your nostrils to think for you. Nostrils are notorious for thinking only of themselves.

TOP TIP 9: Be prepared to change direction.

For the geographically challenged (such as myself), this can be an intense top tip. Is right right? Or is left right?

Be bold and commit to one direction. You have a 50 percent chance of success.

But change your mind quickly and run towards the right 50 percent as soon as you realise right is not right, or left is not right (I know. I'm confused too).

TOP TIP 10: Shadows are a hero's best friend. Slink into one today.

As the sun pulls away from the day and shadows creep around its edges, this is the time for the business of heroes. A hero should glide from shadow to shadow like a stingray in the shallow of the sea.

Your hero top tips:

CHAPTER 2

FINDING YOUR INNER HERO



This is a short chapter.

Because you don't need to look far to find your inner hero.

It goes where you go.

Dig deep.

Hero well.

P.S. Heroes need wild imaginations – that stuff at the very heart of us.

The wilder the better.

Don't hold back.

Reach for the impossible.

It's only as far away as you imagine it to be.

Impossible things this way



CHAPTER 3

HERO ME



This is your hero passport.

It is TOP SECRET. For Hero Eyes only.

Keep it under lock and key. Under your bed. Or buried in the garden. Do not let it fall into enemy hands, such as those of your little brother or sister.

HERO ALERT:

Brothers and sisters can never be trusted.

They will leak your secrets for a bag of sweets.

NAME		DISTINGUISHING FEATURES	
CODE NAME		DISTINGUISHING SKILLS	
AGE		PERSON YOU TRUST MOST IN THE WORLD	
HEIGHT		Keep your friends close	
EYE COLOUR		PERSON YOU TRUST LEAST IN THE WORLD	
CODE WORD		Keep your enemies closer	
to convey imminent danger to another hero.		STRONGEST STRENGTH	
FAVOURITE ANIMAL		WEAKEST WEAKNESS	
FOOD YOU CAN'T RESIST			
FOOD YOU CAN RESIST			

CHAPTER 4

HEROIC THINGS TO SAY



Heroes need words for all occasions. Never leave home without a bag stuffed full of your best expressions. Refresh these expressions often. Dictionaries, encyclopedias, or books by your favourite authors, are wonderful places to find unique hero words and expressions.

Some of my favourite hero words are:

PERSPICACIOUS

BRAVE-HEARTED

FOOD

Your favourite hero words:

(a hero has to eat. See Chapter 5: A Hero's Backpack)

Stuff and nonsense

Heroes in the field also need expressions that seem nonsensical to the non- heroic among us. They will, however, make blinding sense to another hero and alert them to danger (see also Chapter 3, Code Word).

Some of my favourite expressions are:

► I am sleepy and the oozy weeds about me creep

(a literary operative may understand this. Or not.)

► The old lady with cakes has already passed by

(a Croation operative should understand this.)

► Turn not pale my beloved snail

(An Alice in Wonderland-loving operative will understand this)

Your hero expressions:

CHAPTER 5

A HERO'S BACKPACK



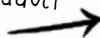
Food is the fuel of heroes. A hungry hero is no help to anyone.

Many heroes have been rumbled by their tummies. This disturbing and potentially dangerous rumbling reality has an appropriately disturbing name:

borborygmi

Avoid this four-syllable monstrosity at all times by including snack packs for every hero occasion.

get help
from an
adult



Hero Protein Patties

- a tin of tuna
- 1 sweet potato, cooked and mashed
- breadcrumbs (for inside and outside)
- 1 egg
- peas (optional)

Mix all ingredients together, form into patties, roll in breadcrumbs and fry in olive oil, three minutes on either side. Eat immediately.

Hero Protein Shake

- 1 banana (can be substituted with any fruit)
- 1 dollop of natural yoghurt
- drizzle of honey
- milk to cover

Blend, drink with smoothness (it's a hero thing) and go forth on your hero way.

Hero Protein Balls

- coconut
- nuts (almonds, sunflowers, pistachios but avoid macadamias. They are tough nuts to crack)
- dried apricots
- sultanas
- oil

Mix together, then roll into balls. Eat as many as you can immediately.

Your Favourite Hero Recipe

CHAPTER 6

HELP! IS THERE A HERO IN THE HOUSE?



How many times have you heard this call?

Tick the most appropriate response for you:

☐ *Never*

☐ *More than once*

☐ *Once*

☐ *Too many times to recall*

It may have been shouted from the rooftop, or echoed down the hall or the stairwell. Possibly it hurtled down the street towards you, leapt from a moving vehicle, or came flying out an open window and hit you on the head.

This is the call for HERO YOU. It lands on you with all the intensity of a summer shower. You are drenched in the need for action.

A hero's ears must always be alert.

(NB: Earplugs are not helpful to a hero. Remove immediately)

A hero will never look around for someone else to answer this call. It is not the hero's way to turn the other cheek. Your hero antennae must be twitching 24/7. You don't THINK you just DO. INSTINCT is a hero's best friend.

Are you ready to hear a Hero Call?

☐ **Yes**

Congratulations:
you are a hero.

☐ **Maybe**

Critical: room for
improvement.

☐ **No**

Commiserations: this is
not the handbook for
you. Stop reading it at
once.

CHAPTER 7

HERO CODES



Hero codes abound. You might decide to make up your own (ingenious! You clever hero, you). Or, you may decide to use some of the most popular, such as the following:

The Caesar Cipher

This is one of the earliest codes ever used, and what a clever old Caesar Julius was. This alphabetic code is formed by simply shifting the alphabet along a certain number of places. The trick, however, is in working out the number of the shift.

Decode the message below:

1) RUVDSLKNL PZ WVDLY

HINT: the shift number rhymes with KEVIN:

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z

Your answer _____

The Nato Phonetic Alphabet

A Alpha	F Foxtrot	K Kilo	P Papa	U Uniform
B Bravo	G Golf	L Lima	Q Quebec	V Victor
C Charlie	H Hotel	M Mike	R Romeo	W Whiskey
D Delta	I India	N November	S Sierra	X X ray
E Echo	J Juliet	O Oscar	T Tango	Y Yankee
				Z Zulu

In this inventive, international alphabet (so pilots from countries all over the world could communicate with each other while flying high), HM (for Henrie Melchior) becomes HOTEL MIKE. How intriguing.

Your initials _____

Your initials using the NATO phonetic alphabet _____

Your best friend's initials _____

Your best friend's initials using the NATO phonetic alphabet _____



Don't miss Henrie Melchior's adventures in

HAPLESS HERO HENRIE

and

HENRIE'S HERO HUNT

WALKER  BOOKS