

Out of Darkness



Adapted from *The Story of my Life* by Helen Keller

Tracy Wells

Adapted from the autobiography, *Helen Keller, the Story of My Life*

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BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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Out of Darkness

3

For Oliver

Out of Darkness

CLASSIC. Adapted from the autobiography, *Helen Keller, the Story of My Life*. At just 19 months old, Helen Keller was stricken with an illness that left her blind, deaf, and mute. Her struggle to overcome her handicaps with the help of her teacher, Anne Sullivan, is recounted in this heartfelt adaptation. Keller's extraordinary educational advances under the tutelage of Sullivan are highlighted, including the monumental moment when Keller learns how to spell "doll" on Sullivan's hand and at the Kellers' water pump when Helen understands the word "water" to mean the cold liquid flowing over her hand. Audiences of all ages will love the story of Helen Keller, who overcame immense hurdles to become an activist and author. Easy to stage.

Performance Time: Approximately 45-60 minutes.



Helen Keller and Anne Sullivan

About the Story

Helen Keller was born in Tuscumbia, AL, in 1880. Stricken with an illness at 19 months old, Keller survived but was left deaf and blind. When Keller was 6 years old, her parents hired a tutor, Anne Sullivan, a recent graduate of the Perkins Institute for the Blind. Sullivan taught Keller how to communicate and became her closest friend and companion. Keller wrote her memoir, *The Story of My Life*, while she was a student at Radcliffe. Her autobiography was later adapted into a teleplay, a Broadway play, and the movie, *The Miracle Worker*, featuring Patty Duke as Helen Keller and Anne Bancroft as Anne Sullivan. Keller died in 1968 and her ashes were placed next to those of Anne Sullivan at the Washington National Cathedral in Washington, DC.

Characters

(4 M, 11 F, 8 flexible)

(With doubling: 4 M, 11 F, 1 flexible)

YOUNG HELEN: Helen Keller at seven years old; left blind, deaf, and mute after suffering a severe illness at 19 months old; wears a dress suitable for a child with a bow on top of her head; female.

TEEN HELEN: Helen Keller at 12 years old and then as an older teen; at 12 years, she wears a longer dress and a bow on the back of her head; as an older teen, she wears a hairstyle and dress suitable for a young lady; female.

ADULT HELEN: Helen Keller as the author of *The Story of My Life* who narrates her story; sits off to one side writing her autobiography; wears her hair up and a dress suitable for an adult woman; female.

ANNE MANSFIELD SULLIVAN: Helen Keller's teacher, a graduate of the Perkins Institute for the Blind; female.

KATE ADAMS KELLER: Helen Keller's mother; female.

CAPTAIN ARTHUR KELLER: Helen Keller's father, a newspaper editor; male.

AUNT EV: Helen Keller's aunt; female.

MILDRED KELLER: Helen Keller's younger sister; female.

ALEXANDER GRAHAM BELL: Famed inventor of the telephone and advocate for the deaf and blind; a friend and mentor to Helen; male.

SARAH FULLER: Helen Keller's speech teacher at Horace Mann School in New York City; female.

ARTHUR GILMAN: Principal of the Cambridge School for Young Ladies; male.

IDA: Student at Radcliffe; female.

GRACE: Student at Radcliffe; female.

ELIZABETH: Student at Radcliffe; female.

DOCTOR: Doctor; male.

EXHIBITORS 1-8: Fair exhibitors; flexible.

NOTE: Costumes should reflect late 1800s style.

Options for Doubling

AUNT EV/EXHIBITOR 1 (female)
DOCTOR/EXHIBITOR 2 (male)
SARAH/EXHIBITOR 3 (female)
GILMAN/EXHIBITOR 4 (male)
IDA/EXHIBITOR 5 (female)
GRACE/ EXHIBITOR 6 (female)
ELIZABETH/ EXHIBITOR 7 (female)

Setting

Late 1800s-1901.

Set

There are three platforms of various heights: USC is the tallest, SR is medium height, and SL is the shortest. A bare stage may be used instead of platforms, if desired. Simple set pieces that can be easily moved on and off are used to set the scenes. Set pieces include four chairs, a small table, a water pump, a chalkboard, and a cot (opt.).

Props

Large doll wrapped in blankets (doll is the size of a year-old child to represent Helen as a baby)	Ladder
Doctor's kit	Cup of "water"
Key	Cardboard cards with raised letters on them
Lollipops	Blanket
Small piece paper	Assortment of natural items (flowers, rocks, etc.)
Doll made of towels	Violets
3 Suitcases/bags	Exhibition items from India, Egypt, Venice, Scandinavia, Peru, France, and South Africa
2 Buttons	Letter in an envelope
Sewing kit	4 Books
Pocket watch	4 Pads of Paper
Replica of first telephone	4 Pencils
3 Teacups, saucers, and plates	4 Graduation caps
Newspaper	4 Graduation gowns
Sunglasses, for Anne	Sheets
Pretty doll	

Special Effects

"Water" (can be blue confetti, etc.)
Sound of pocket watch striking noon
Sound of train slowing
Sound of train stopping

*You cannot touch the clouds, you know;
but you feel the rain
and know how glad the flowers
and the thirsty earth
are to have it after a hot day.
You cannot touch love either;
but you feel the sweetness
that it pours into everything.”*

—Helen Keller

Out of Darkness

(AT RISE: Adult Helen and Young Helen are DSC, holding hands. Behind them are three platforms of various heights: USC is the tallest, SR is medium height, and SL is the shortest.)

YOUNG HELEN: Once, I knew only darkness and stillness.

ADULT HELEN: My life was without past or future...

YOUNG HELEN: But a little word from the fingers of another
fell into my hand that clutched at emptiness...

ADULT HELEN/YOUNG HELEN: And my heart leaped to
the rapture of living.

(Adult Helen and Young Helen turn to one another. They sign "I love you" and Young Helen exits. Lights down upstage. Spotlight up on Adult Helen.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* The beginning of my life was simple, and much like every other little life. I came, I saw, I conquered. At six months I could say, "How d'ye," and one day, I attracted everyone's attention by saying, "tea, tea, tea" all day long. They tell me I walked the day I was a year old. And I loved the song of the robin and the mockingbird. One of the words I learned in the early months of my life, "water," stayed with me long after the illness came.

(Spotlight down on Adult Helen. Lights up USC. Kate enters in a rush, holding a large doll wrapped in blankets [to represent baby Helen]. She crosses to USC.)

KATE: *(Calls.)* Arthur! Get the doctor, quick! *(To doll.)* It's all right, Helen. The doctor's coming. *(Brings the doll up to her cheek.)* You're burning up. *(Dropping to her knees and looking at the doll.)* You're going to be okay, I promise. Mommy's

here. *(Looks at the doll closely.)* Helen, what's wrong? Can't you hear me?

(Arthur enters with Doctor.)

ARTHUR: Here she is, Doctor. She's been burning up from fever.

DOCTOR: Let me take a look. *(Kneels down and begins to examine.)* Yes, you're right. Her fever is quite high. *(Examining.)* Rigid abdomen. *(Looks in ears. To Kate.)* And some loss of hearing, correct?

KATE: She used to smile when she heard my voice. I haven't seen that smile in days.

DOCTOR: And some loss of vision too, I suspect.

ARTHUR: What's wrong with her, Doctor?

(Doctor stands.)

DOCTOR: It's acute congestion of the stomach and brain.

ARTHUR: And the prognosis?

DOCTOR: *(Looking down, sadly.)* I'm afraid it's unlikely Helen with survive.

KATE: *(Screams.)* No!

(Kate buries her head in the doll and blankets. Arthur rushes to her side to comfort her as lights go down USC. Spotlight up on Adult Helen.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* But I survived. The fever left me as suddenly and mysteriously as it had come. No one knew I would never see or hear again. But I would speak. Oh, yes, one day, with the help of my teacher, I would find my voice again.

(Young Helen rushes on. She slows down and feels around at the ground. She holds a key up to the light and hides it in her hands. Spotlight on the highest platform, where Kate is standing.)

KATE: *(Calls.)* Ev! Help! Helen's locked me in the pantry again!

(Young Helen smiles as Ev enters SL.)

EV: *(Calls.)* Don't you worry, Kate. I'll find that key and get you out.

KATE: Hurry!

EV: I know you can't hear me, Helen, but I know it was you who took the key and locked your mother in the pantry. Now come out and give your Aunt Ev the key! *(Young Helen hides behind one of the platforms. Ev enters and looks around. Young Helen lays on her stomach and snickers as Ev approaches. Young Helen holds the key up to the light, and Ev snatches the key away from her.)* Thank you very much. *(Starts to go CS. Furious, Young Helen tries to get the key back, but Ev holds it out of her reach.)* I don't think so, Helen.

(Ev crosses to the CS platform and mimes unlocking the door. Young Helen follows her.)

KATE: *(Bending down to calm Young Helen.)* Helen, it's all right. Mother knows you didn't mean to lock her in the pantry again.

EV: Yes, she did.

(Kate scowls at Ev. Young Helen throws a tantrum. Arthur enters.)

ARTHUR: What's all this carrying on for?

KATE: Well, Arthur, you see...there was just this little incident with Helen accidentally locking me in the pantry –

ARTHUR: (*Shouts.*) The pantry?! Not again! We can't keep letting Helen carry on like this! She does whatever she wants, whenever she wants. And these outbursts are becoming a nuisance. She's prone to a tantrum nearly every hour of the day. She's an animal, and we have no control over her!

KATE: I'm doing the best I can, Arthur.

ARTHUR: You coddle her!

(Arthur takes a lollipop out of his pocket and hands it to Young Helen, who sits up, takes the lollipop, and starts to eat it.)

KATE: It's so hard when my communication with her is so limited.

ARTHUR: What do you expect me to do about that? You're her mother.

(Kate takes a piece of paper out of her pocket and unfolds it.)

KATE: Well, actually, I found mention in this article by Charles Dickens in his "American Notes," where he talks about a girl by the name of Laura Bridgman, who was deaf and blind but also educated.

ARTHUR: Educated? How can that be?

KATE: I don't know, but read what Mr. Dickens has to say. If Helen can be educated, maybe she won't be prone to such outbursts.

(Kate holds out the paper and Arthur takes it.)

ARTHUR: We can only hope.

(Lights start to fade on the platform as Arthur reads paper. Arthur, Young Helen, and Kate exit. Note: During the following, four chairs are placed CS. Two chairs are next to each another, facing SL. The other two chairs are placed a couple of feet away, directly next to

each another, facing SL. The chairs represent a train passenger car. Lights up CS. Arthur, Kate, Young Helen, and Aunt Ev enter and sit in the chairs, with Ev and Arthur on one side, and Kate and Young Helen on the other. Aunt Ev is carrying a bag and a doll that she made out of towels. Note: They bounce or lean in unison to indicate the train is moving.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* My father contacted an eminent oculist in Baltimore by the name of Dr. Chisholm, who had been successful in treating many cases that had seemed hopeless. So we made the journey to Baltimore.

AUNT EV: *(To Arthur.)* What an exciting trip for a young girl! So much to see and do in Baltimore.

ARTHUR: It's not that kind of trip, Evelyn. And, besides, there's nothing for Helen to see, anyway.

EV: Sorry, Brother, I only meant—

ARTHUR: *(Agitated.)* I know what you meant. *(Turns and looks away from audience as if he's looking out the window.)*

EV: *(Looking down.)* Sorry. I really do want to be helpful. I'm so glad you invited me to come along with you to Baltimore.

KATE: That's all right, Aunt Ev. Why don't you show Helen what you brought for her?

EV: *(Brightening.)* Oh, yes! It's a doll I made. *(Takes Young Helen's hands and places the doll in her hands. Young Helen uses her hands and fingers to feel the doll.)* I know it's not much, but I noticed as we were boarding the train that she didn't have a doll to hold, and doctors' offices can be awfully frightening for young children.

KATE: Yes, they can.

EV: So I took some of the towels out of my suitcase and fashioned a doll out of them. Well, a sort of doll, anyway.

KATE: I think it's wonderful. Thank you, Aunt Ev.

(Young Helen, who is feeling the doll's face, starts poking where the doll's eyes should be and makes an odd, strangled noise.)

EV: Does that mean she likes it?

(Young Helen pokes more insistently at the doll and makes a louder noise.)

KATE: I'm not sure.

(Crying out, Young Helen starts shaking the doll and poking at its eyes. Arthur pulls a lollipop out of his pocket.)

ARTHUR: *(Irritated.)* Can you quiet that child down, Kate? The other passengers on this train don't need to hear her carrying on.

(Kate holds out a lollipop to Young Helen, who swats it away and resumes poking at the doll.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* Couldn't they see? The doll had no eyes! Even if they were only ornamental...even if they would never actually see...the doll needed eyes.

EV: *(To Young Helen.)* What is it, Helen? What's wrong? *(Young Helen starts feeling around. She feels the buttons on Ev's coat. She stands and crosses to Ev's coat, where she picks up the hem of Ev's coat and feels it.)* My coat? Do you want me to sew the doll a coat?

(Young Helen rips two buttons off the coat and holds them up.)

KATE: Helen, no! *(Swats Young Helen's hand.)* We don't damage other people's clothing. I'm so sorry, Ev.

EV: It's all right. *(Young Helen rushes back to her seat and places the two buttons on the doll where the eyes should be. Smiling, she looks up and points at the doll. Realizes.)* Wait! It's the eyes she was looking for!

ARTHUR: The eyes?

EV: I didn't give the doll any eyes! *(Takes Young Helen's hands in hers.)* Is that right, Helen? You just want the doll to have eyes?

(Ev takes Young Helen's hands and places them over her own eyes. Young Helen feels for a minute, nods enthusiastically, and makes a joyful noise.)

KATE: That's it! She just wanted the doll to have some eyes!

EV: Then hand it over, and I'll fix that right away! *(Kate hands Ev the doll. Ev pulls out a needle and thread from her bag, "sews" the eyes on quickly, and hands Young Helen the doll.)* There you are, Helen. All better.

(Young Helen feels the doll's face for eyes, exclaims excitedly, and hugs the doll tightly. Ev and Kate clap. Lights down CS. Chairs are removed. Two chairs are placed facing each other on the SL platform. A small table is placed between the two chairs with a replica of Bell's first telephone on it.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* It was a pleasant journey, and Dr. Chisholm received us kindly, but he could do nothing for us. He said, however, that I could be educated and advised my father to consult Dr. Alexander Graham Bell of Washington. And that's what we did.

(Lights up on SL platform. Alexander Graham Bell is sitting in one chair with Young Helen on his knee. Kate is sitting on the other chair. Ev and Arthur are standing on the platform behind them.)

KATE: So what do you think, Dr. Bell?

BELL: I think Helen is a very intelligent girl, isn't that right, Helen? *(Pulls out his pocket watch and hands it to Young Helen, who grasps it and examines it with her fingers. She feels a button on the side, holds up the watch, and presses the button repeatedly, opening and closing the cover. She makes a joyful noise.)*

Excitedly.) That's right, Helen! That button opens the watch. *(Takes the watch from Young Helen and winds it.)* And this makes the watch strike the time. *(Sound of watch striking noon is heard. Bell grasps Young Helen's hands, places the watch in her hands, and holds her hands closed over the watch.)* She can feel the vibrations as the watch strikes 12 times. *(Young Helen makes excited noises and looks at Bell's face. Bell taps the top of her hand with each number.)* Nine, ten, eleven, twelve. *(Takes the watch from Helen.)* Very good, Helen.

ARTHUR: Then you can help us, Dr. Bell?

KATE: *(To Bell.)* You've helped people all over the world communicate with the invention of your telephone. Who better to help us learn to communicate with our Helen?

(Bell picks up the telephone and gives one end to Young Helen. Note: During the following, Young Helen feels the phone, puts it on her head, in her mouth, over her eyes, etc.)

BELL: That may be so, but there are teachers who would be much more effective helping Helen communicate than I. *(Takes the phone piece from Young Helen, holds one end to his lips, and takes Young Helen's hand and places it on his face for her to feel. After she does, he hands it back to her and she imitates him. Bell takes a piece of paper from his pocket and hands it to Arthur. To Arthur.)* Here is the address of a friend, Mr. Anagnos, who is the director of the Perkins School for the Blind in Boston. Mr. Anagnos educates teachers for the blind and deaf. I'm sure he can help you find a teacher for Helen.

ARTHUR: We will write to him straightaway.

KATE: *(Takes Bell's hand.)* Oh, thank you, Dr. Bell! You have no idea how much your help means to us.

BELL: It's my pleasure. The world may know me best for my telephone, but my true passion is working with the deaf community. And when that work allows me to meet

wonderful people like Helen, well, what greater gift in life is there?

(Helen puts the phone to Bell's mouth and hugs him. Bell chuckles. Lights down SL.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* The most important day I remember in all my life is the one in which my teacher, Anne Mansfield Sullivan, came to me. *(Lights up on the center platform. There is a table with three chairs. There is a chair on the SL and SR side of the table. The third chair faces the audience. The table is set with three place settings. Kate is sitting on one of the chairs, sipping from a teacup. Arthur is sitting on the other chair, reading a newspaper. The third chair is empty. Kate and Arthur mime eating and drinking.)* On the afternoon of that eventful day, I stood on the porch, expectant. *(Young Helen enters and crosses to SR platform.)* I guessed vaguely from my mother's signs and from the hurrying to and fro in the house that something unusual was about to happen, so I went to the door and waited on the steps.

ARTHUR: *(To Kate.)* Where is Helen? She should be at the table. It's a big day for her.

KATE: Yes, it is. I think she's too excited to eat. I believe she's out on the porch.

ARTHUR: The porch?! What good is it to stand out on the porch all morning? I'm tired of this child doing whatever she pleases. That teacher better instill some discipline into that child.

(Arthur shakes out the newspaper and goes back to reading. Young Helen looks up.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* The afternoon sun penetrated the mass of honeysuckle that covered the porch and fell on my upturned face. *(Young Helen looks out toward audience.)* I did not know what the future held for me. It seemed as if a tangible white darkness shut me in, and a great ship, tense

and anxious, groped her way to the shore with plummet and sounding line, and I waited with beating heart for something to happen. (*Young Helen brings her hands together and places them over her heart.*) I was like that ship before my education began, only I was without compass or sounding line, and had no way of knowing how near the harbor was. (*Note: At the line "Light, give me light," Young Helen holds her hands up and looks upward, mouthing along with Adult Helen.*) "Light! Give me light!" was the wordless cry of my soul... (*Spotlight shines on Young Helen as she drops her arms but continues to look upward.*) ...and the light of love shone on me in that very hour.

(*Spotlight dims on Young Helen. Anne enters, wearing sunglasses and carrying a bag in one hand and a doll in the other. She crosses to CS and stops.*)

ANNE: This is it. The start of the next daring adventure in my life is about to begin. (*Crosses to Young Helen and puts down her bag. Young Helen holds out her hand. Anne takes her hand. Initially, Young Helen recoils but reaches to feel Anne's face.*) Yes, little one, your teacher is here. (*Young Helen takes Anne's glasses off and feels them.*) And like you, I understand the challenges of a world you cannot quite see. (*Young Helen puts the glasses on.*) Although the darkness is far greater for you than it ever was for me. (*Anne takes the glasses from Young Helen and puts them back on. Young Helen reaches out for them desperately and whines. Anne takes both of Young Helen's hands.*) Don't worry, Helen, I'll help bring you out of the darkness and into the light.

(*Hearing Young Helen's whining, Kate stops drinking her tea and stands to listen.*)

KATE: (*To Arthur.*) Did you hear that? I think I heard Helen whining.

ARTHUR: *(Without looking up from his newspaper.)* What else is new?

ANNE: *(To Young Helen.)* I brought you a present. *(Holds out the doll to Young Helen.)* Here you go, Helen. *(Young Helen takes the doll and feels its face.)* That's right. It's for you. *(Anne takes Young Helen's hand and writes "D-O-L-L" onto her palm as she says each letter.)* That's a doll. *(Spells.)* "D-O-L-L." *(Young Helen snatches her hand away and looks down at it. She drops the doll, reaches for Anne's hand, and uses her fingers to draw lines onto Anne's hand, imitating her.)* Not exactly. Like this... *(Anne takes Young Helen's palm in hers. Spells slowly.)* "D-O-L-L." "Doll." *(Anne holds her palm out and Young Helen slowly writes the letters onto it as Anne spells along with her.)* "D," very good. Now an "O." Nice job, Helen. And an "L." *(Stops Young Helen and shows her how to make an "L" correctly on Young Helen's palm.)* No. An "L" is like this. *(Anne holds out her palm and Young Helen resumes writing.)* Yes. That's and "L." Now another "L." *(Young Helen writes the final "L" and then looks at Anne's face.)* That's right! *(Takes Young Helen's hand, places it on Anne's face, and nods to show Young Helen that she got it right. Anne picks up the doll and hands it back to Young Helen. She takes Young Helen's palm and writes "D-O-L-L" on it as she says the letters. Spells.)* "D-O-L-L." "Doll!"

(Young Helen makes a loud, excited noise and takes Anne's palm and writes "D-O-L-L" onto it. Hearing the excitement, Kate and Arthur rush to the SR platform.)

KATE: My goodness, it seems as if there is a great deal of excitement out here on the porch.

ANNE: I am Anne Sullivan. I'm the teacher Mr. Anagnos sent from the Perkins School for the Blind

ARTHUR: How good of you to come.

(Young Helen rushes over to Kate and spells "D-O-L-L" on Kate's palm.)

KATE: *(To Anne.)* What is this?

ANNE: I started showing Helen how to write letters on another's hand as a means of communication. What she spelled was "doll."

(Young Helen spells "D-O-L-L" on Kate's palm again.)

KATE: *(Excitedly.)* I can feel each letter! *(Spells.)* "D-O-L-L"!

Arthur! She understands the word "doll"!

ANNE: Not exactly.

ARTHUR: What do you mean?

ANNE: You have to remember that at this point, Helen doesn't possess even the most rudimentary understanding of language. She doesn't know what she is writing, that the letters "D-O-L-L" spelled together mean doll, or what a doll is, or even what a letter is.

KATE: But she spelled the word on my hand! And she is standing there holding a doll.

ANNE: She spelled it on your hand because she imitated the finger movements I had made. And she holds a doll because I brought her one as a gift from the children at the Perkins School for the Blind.

ARTHUR: That's very kind of you to bring Helen a gift, but what she needs from you is education.

ANNE: And that I will provide to her. But it will take time and an unconventional approach. I need you to be patient with me and with Helen.

ARTHUR: I'm afraid my patience with Helen is quite limited these days.

(Young Helen continues to write "doll" on Kate's palm.)

KATE: *(To Anne.)* So she doesn't understand what she's writing, but maybe one day she will. *(Looks at Anne expectantly.)*

ANNE: I have no doubt. Who knows? Maybe one day she'll go to college.

(Young Helen looks at Anne with interest.)

ARTHUR: College? The girl can't even communicate. There's no chance she'll ever go to college.

ANNE: If you allow her to, I think you will find that Helen will surprise you. *(Arthur looks skeptical.)* For now, I will continue working on getting her to understand that there is significance in the writing of letters with her fingers. From there, I will teach her what letters are.

ARTHUR: *(Exasperated.)* But that's hardly anything at all!

ANNE: *(To Arthur, sharply.)* People seldom see the halting and painful steps by which the most insignificant success is achieved.

KATE: Why don't we get you settled in, then? We have a wonderful room all made up for you.

ANNE: Very well. *(Picks up her bag.)*

ARTHUR: I can take your bag for you.

(Arthur holds out his hand in an attempt to take the bag. Anne pulls her bag away.)

ANNE: No need. Just show me the way.

(Arthur looks at Kate and shrugs. He gestures "right this way." Anne marches off SR followed by Arthur. Young Helen sits on the edge of the platform, holding the doll and writing "D-O-L-L" on the doll's palm as Kate watches on. Lights down SR on CS platform. A water pump is placed CS.)

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* In the days that followed, I learned to spell a great many words in this uncomprehending way. *(Lights up on the CS platform, where Anne is sitting on a chair, holding a cup of water. There is a small table with Anne's bag on it. Young Helen is standing in front of Anne, holding the new doll. The towel doll is on the floor next to Anne's chair. Note: During the following, Young Helen and Anne spell the words on one other's palms.)* Among them "pin," "hat," "cup," and a few verbs like "sit," "stand," and "walk." But my teacher had been with me several weeks before I understood that everything has a name.

(Anne takes Young Helen's hand and dips it into some water.)

ANNE: *(Spelling the word on Young Helen's palm.)* "W-A-T-E-R." "Water." *(Young Helen dips her hand back in the cup and spells the word on Anne's palm. Anne says the letters.)* "W-A-T-E-R." Very good. All right, Helen, I think you're ready to move along in your lessons. *(Takes the doll from Young Helen. Young Helen immediately reaches out for the doll. Anne holds out her palm and Helen spells "D-O-L-L" on it. She holds out her arms, wanting the doll.)* That's right. This is a doll. *(Puts the doll down next to her chair. Picks up the towel doll and holds it out to Young Helen, who takes it.)* And this is a doll, too. *(Young Helen feels the doll, realizes it's not the one she asked for, throws it down in a rage, reaches for Anne's palm, and spells "D-O-L-L" on it.)* Yes, I know you want the other doll, but you need to learn that the word "doll" applies to more than just the doll I gave you. *(Anne picks up Young Helen's palm and spells "D-O-L-L" on it as she says the letters.)* "D-O-L-L." *(Young Helen nods enthusiastically. Anne picks up the towel doll and hands it to Young Helen, who immediately becomes enraged.)* You can get mad all you want, Helen, but it doesn't change the fact that both are dolls. *(Young Helen crosses to the table, picks up a small key, and runs to the far side of the platform.)* What have you got there? *(Young Helen holds up the key and*

makes a mischievous noise. Angry.) Don't you dare! (Young Helen mimes opening a door, shutting it, and locking it. She runs off the platform and down to CS. Anne mimes pounding her fists on the door. Shouts.) Let me out of here!

(Young Helen runs around CS, feeling with her hands and looking for a hiding place. Lights up on SL platform, where Ev enters.)

EV: *(To Anne, calls.)* What's all this commotion?

ANNE: *(Mimes pounding on the door, shouts.)* Let me out of here!

EV: *(Looking up at the CS platform, calls.)* Annie? Is that you? Are you all right?

(Young Helen finds a hiding spot near the water pump. She mimes burying the key. Ev crosses to the CS platform and stands on the other side of the "door" from Anne.)

ANNE: *(Shouts.)* Helen locked me in here and took the key!

EV: *(Shaking her head.)* Not again...

ANNE: *(Incredulously.)* Not again? She's done this before?

EV: Let me get Arthur to help you. *(Exits SR.)*

ADULT HELEN: *(To audience.)* In the still, dark world in which I lived, there was no strong sentiment or tenderness.

(Arthur enters, carrying a ladder, followed by Kate.)

ARTHUR: *(To Kate.)* I thought this teacher was supposed to get Helen under control!

KATE: She's doing the best she can. Helen has come a long way since Miss Sullivan arrived.

ARTHUR: *(To Kate, pointedly.)* She hasn't come far enough. She hasn't learned not to lock people in their rooms.

KATE: We must keep trusting in the plan Miss Sullivan has in place.

(Arthur positions the ladder next to the CS platform.)

ARTHUR: I'd be a lot more trusting of Miss Sullivan if our 7-year-old daughter hadn't just locked her in her room.

(Arthur climbs the ladder and knocks on the "window." Anne crosses from the "door" to the "window" and opens the "window.")

ANNE: Oh, thank you, Captain Keller.

ARTHUR: Take my hand. You're going to need to climb out the window until we can find the key.

(Arthur holds out his hand. Anne takes it and climbs out onto the ladder. Anne and Arthur climb down.)

KATE: I'm so sorry Helen did this, Miss Sullivan. It's not like her to do something like this.

ANNE: From what I hear, this is *exactly* something she would do.

KATE: I only meant that under your instruction, I'm sure her behavior will improve, and she won't do something like this again.

[END OF FREEVIEW]