

Small Hero, by Hana Aianhanma, May 2019.

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Small Hero

The life of a true hero is not easy, and that is without mentioning the search for a proper cape. Why, look no further than Darryl Dorthensworth for a hero which exemplifies this.

Like any real hero, there was very little special about Darryl. He was so pedestrian that no one who had met him could remember any distinguishing features. He could be so unobtrusive that most people either would not recall he had been present, or had not noticed him in the first place.

Darryl was perfectly fine with that. The true hero has little interest in recognition. Even better, not getting noticed was a huge advantage in the hero business. Indeed, it was his being unnoticed that threw the first Good Deed in his lap.

At the time he was completely unaware of his calling. He was quietly studying in a coffee shop in his home town when a group of youngsters sat at a table nearby. His worn-out laptop was in front of him and a big size cappuccino, essential fuel for his brains, lied within easy reach. There was just a thin wall between him and that gang. They were discussing the jeweller next door.

“They have no security.”

“Are you sure?”

“No cameras and no hidden alarm buttons. They rely on the honesty of the neighbourhood and their safe.”

“I don’t believe it.”

“It’s true.”

There were four of them and they were not being very careful.

“So, we hit them tonight?”

“Yes. We leave the loot at the stash in Percy Park.”

Not only were they careless but also way too trusting. Darryl waited until the criminal youths left before packing up and leaving too. Time to inform the police.

It was then that the idea hit Darryl. Why bother the police when he could handle this by himself? Why even stop there? He could become a hero, a small artisanal one who would go after little guys like these. In the process, the police would be freed from catching those small-time criminals. His contribution against crime would, in its own modest way, help to solve the bigger problems. Yes, that seemed like an excellent idea. He would need some sort of costume and a *nomme de guerre*, but that could wait until later. Time to stop daydreaming and prepare for his

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