

Heroes of the West

Written by

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SYNOPSIS

Heroes of the West is a campy, western comedy that revolves around adopted sisters Betsy and Daisy. The two young women leave their domesticated lives on the ranch in search of adventure and purpose. They become apprentices to Macho Desert's most handsome and incredibly dashing hero Hank The Hunter. Under his misguided leadership, Betsy and Daisy soon realize that the town hero is a misogynistic narcissist. In an attempt to break free from Hank the Hunter, they start their journey to becoming heroines. They capture Macho Desert's most wanted criminal and Hank's arch-nemesis, Toothnose. However, Hank finds their "womanly" way of catching a criminal unfit for the Old Wild West, so he lets Toothnose go. Although distraught by Hank's actions, Betsy and Daisy now must work with him to find a way to take down the notorious Toothnose before he destroys the whole town.

CHARACTER BREAKDOWN

HANK THE HUNTER: M, presumably White, 20s, a dashing cowboy/town hero who is a raging narcissist and an egotistical idiot.

BETSY: W, Black, 15, (played by 20-year-old actress), a serious aspiring heroine interested in breaking tradition. Daisy's adopted sister.

DAISY: W, White, 15, (played by a 20-year-old actress) a bubbly young girl who looks up to Hank the Hunter. Betsy's sister.

TOOTHNOSE: M, any ethnicity, 20s, evil villain with a nose shaped tooth or tooth shaped nose. Also, Hank's archenemies.

MARY: W, any ethnicity, 20s, a ditsy damsel in distress and the mayor's daughter.

MAYOR: M, person of color, 40s, Mayor of Macho Desert.

JIM: M, White, 30s, Betsy and Daisy's lazy and overbearing father.

HELEN: W, White, 30s, Betsy and Daisy's traditional mother.

FIRST WANDERER: M, person of color, any age, is a lonely cowboy.

SECOND WANDERER: M, person of color, 20s, Indigenous storyteller.

THIRD WANDERER: W, any ethnicity, 20s, a schoolteacher.

EARFACE: M, any ethnicity, 20s, Toothnose's cousin, an arsonist.

NEEDLE AND THREAD: M, any ethnicity, murderer in a cactus costume.

BABY SNATCHER: M, any ethnicity, 20s, villain, kidnaps babies.

WILLIAM: M, any ethnicity, 20s, he didn't pay his taxes.

ROADKILLS: W, any ethnicity, 20s, murders travelers.

WOMAN (V.O.): W, any ethnicity, 40s, Hank's bitter mother.

YOUNG HANK (V.O.): M, any ethnicity, 6, Hank as a timid child.

ANNOUNCER: M, any ethnicity, wrestler announcer voiceover.

TOWNSWOMAN #1: W, any ethnicity, 20s, fan girl.

TOWNSWOMAN #2: W, any ethnicity, 20s, fan girl.

TOWNSWOMAN #3: W, any ethnicity, 20s, fan girl.

TOWNSMAN: M or W, any ethnicity, 20s, fan boy.

CASTING NOTES

[**Note: There are 23 characters, but only 12 actors are needed.]

Do not double cast:

HANK, BETSY, DAISY, MARY, MAYOR

May Double cast:

TOOTHNOSE/EARFACE/NEEDLE AND THREAD/BABY SNATCHER/WILLIAM

JIM/ANNOUNCER

HELEN/YOUNG HANK (V.O.)

TOWNSPERSON #1/THIRD WANDERER

TOWNSPERSON #2/SECOND WANDERER

TOWNSPERSON #3/HANK'S MOM/ROADKILL

TOWNSPERSON #4/FIRST WANDERER

Offstage voices:

WOMAN/YOUNG HANK

STATEMENT

This play satirizes the machismo of the classic western genre by comedically executing and commenting on the tropes.

ACT ONE

AT RISE:

SCENE ONE: MACHO DESERT

There is a set of train tracks sitting in the middle of the barren desert.

When the evil TOOTHNOSE enters, holding a screaming MARY. He ties her to the tracks. SUDDENLY the sound of a train approaching is heard from the distance.

MARY is barely tied up and could escape easily, but she makes no attempt to leave. The sound of the train grows louder then the train is revealed to be headed straight towards MARY!

TOOTHNOSE laughs maniacally as he places a stick of dynamite underneath MARY. She screams in peril as TOOTHNOSE exits, laughing sinisterly.

MARY

Help! Help! Is anyone out there?! Please save me!

(SUDDENLY, HANK THE HUNTER aka HANK enters from behind the audience. A song begins to play reminiscent of *The Good, The Bad, and the Ugly* theme song...

...HANK's dramatic entrance is slow and tense, he looks like a knock-off **John Wayne**. He speaks in a gruff manner.

Throughout HANK's dialogue, MARY continues to scream. She's heard faintly in the background in the beginning, but grows louder and louder throughout HANK's monologue, to the point that she is hysterical.)

HANK

It's about eighty-five degree weather.

(Hank holds out a finger as if he is testing the weather while he furrows his brow... As Hank continues, he includes the audience in on his inner dialogue.)

HANK

I'm standing in a dirt field in the middle of Macho Desert. There's nothing but dust and cactuses. Wait, is it cacti or cactuses? Uhhh... it doesn't matter. I see that Toothnose has tied another innocent young lady to a pair of train tracks. And now a giant train is heading straight towards her. If I don't run in and save her she will most likely DIE. Of course. It's a good thing Toothnose didn't plan on me being here: The Old Wild West's most daring, dashing, incredibly handsome HERO. No dirty rotten criminal is a match for me. It ain't like this is the first time I've saved someone from Toothnose's filthy clutches. There was Crooked-Teeth Anne. Toothnose was about to take advantage of the little lady before I swooped in. Poor soul...she'd be a lot prettier if it weren't for the alignment of her teeth. And then there was Sally May. Old Toothnose tried to take her pearls. Luckily I was there to take them back. Boy did she have a nice set of knockers on her, if you know what I mean.

(Winks at an audience member.)

And who could forget Ladasha. I found her and Toothnose at a saloon. The lights were dimmed, they were fondling each other. Once I saw that horrific sight, I decked Toothnose right in the face. And as I pulled him away Ladasha said she loved me but she was looking directly at Toothnose when she said it. Which was a little odd... Come to think of it, it almost seemed like those two were in some sort of courtship. And Toothnose wasn't actually doing anything wrong. It might've just been a consensual loving relationship that I interrupted and tore a part. *(BEAT)* Nah.

MARY

HELP!! ANYONE!!! ANYONE AT ALL!?!

HANK

That's what I do. I save people.

(The train is now incredibly close to killing MARY.)

MARY

Can somebody please SAVE me!

HANK

Because I'm **Hank**.

(A loud pistol gunshot sound effect SUDDENLY goes off.)

The.

(Another gunshot sound effect goes off.)

Hunter.

(Finally the last gunshot goes off.)

HANK turns to MARY who is still tied to the tracks.)

HANK (CONT'D)

Don't you worry little lady, Hank the Hunter is here.

(The heroic western song grows louder.)

HANK swoops in with ease, grabs the stick of dynamite. Inspects it, looks at the audience casually with a smirk, then, tosses the dynamite.

An explosion is heard offstage.

...HANK examines the rope for a moment too long. Suddenly, with one pull the rope is easily undone. He quickly grabs MARY and pulls her away from the tracks just in the nick of time. The song fades as the train passes by.

TOOTHNOSE reenters.)

TOOTHNOSE

Guess I better check on dead Mary...Hey! Damn you Hank the Hunter. Damn you to hell!

HANK

Well, if it isn't the man we call Toothnose. The only man in town who has a nose shaped like a tooth. Or is it a tooth shaped like nose...

(The MAYOR and a crowd of
TOWNSWOMEN enter.)

TOWNSWOMAN #1

Look, Hank the Hunter just saved Mary Fields from Toothnose!
He's so amazing. I wish he would save me.

(While HANK is distracted with
the TOWNSWOMEN, TOOTHNOSE
slowly slips away. He isn't
very sneaky about it and
should have been spotted, but
no one notices.)

BESTY and DAISY, two young
women, look on from afar. Much
like everyone else. They are
completely enamored with
HANK.)

BESTY

He sure is quite the hero.

DAISY

I don't know what Macho Desert would do without 'em.

(The TOWNSWOMEN begin to crowd
HANK who is still holding
MARY.)

TOWNSWOMAN #2

I wish he would save me in the middle of the night.

TOWNSWOMAN #3

I wish he would save me while I'm taking a shower.

BETSY

Hank has stopped so many robberies and murderers.

DAISY

I wish I was half as brave as he was.

TOWNSWOMAN #1

I wish he would save me butt n-.

HANK

Ladies, simmer down now. Wouldn't want you to get too hot in
the blazing desert.

(All the TOWNSWOMEN sigh. HANK
smiles as he places MARY
down.)

HANK

I'm just here to return Mary Fields so, I can deal with old Tooth-.

(HANK turns to see that
TOOTHNOSE has escaped.)

HANK

Dang it. He gets me every single time. Until next time you evil fiend!

(MAYOR approaches and reveals a
giant bag of cash.)

MAYOR

Thank you Hank the Hunter. You saved my sweet baby girl.

(HANK reaches for the cash.)

HANK

Why you're wel-.

(MAYOR quickly pulls the bag away.)

MAYOR

But you also let Toothnose go. Again.

HANK

Well my hands were tied and he's a sneaky fellow.

MAYOR

Right. Since you are the only person trying to catch him, I guess that's noble enough for three-hundred-.

HANK

I thought we agreed on a thousand.

MAYOR

You're not getting a thousand.

(BETSY and DAISY approaches.)

BETSY

Mr. Hunter?

(HANK notices BETSY and DAISY,
he attempts to impress them.)

HANK

A thousand! Oh Mayor, that's much too generous. I told you three-hundred would do...

(MAYOR rolls his eyes as he
exits.)

DAISY

(to Betsy)

Wow he's so humble!

(HANK starts to walk away to reconvene with the swooning TOWNSWOMEN when BETSY interrupts him.)

BETSY

Hank the hunter! May we—.

DAISY

Hank the Hunter! I can't believe it's really you! I mean he's here. He's right here!

(BETSY laughs nervously as she turns to DAISY.)

BETSY

Heh, heh, don't embarrass us.

(DAISY still in shock, points her finger way too close to HANK's face as she continues to geek out.)

HANK

Yes, it is I. In the flesh. I know...I'm much better looking in person than in print.

DAISY

Don't be so modest, you're practically an Adonis.

BETSY

We just wanted to know if you could sign this for us?

(BETSY pulls out a wanted poster of TOOTHNOSE. While DAISY rips out a newspaper clipping with a headline about HANK THE HUNTER.)

HANK

Well sure I can. Now who do I make it out to?

BETSY

Betsy.

HANK

Betsy...with the...

(HANK examines BETSY's figure as he comes up with a name.)

HANK
Big bottom! Big Bottom Betsy.

BETSY
Umm...my last name is Johnson.

HANK
And what about you?

DAISY
My name...um, my name is...

(DAISY panics as she tries to
remember her name.)

DAISY
Sand...

(She examines her surroundings
as she tries to come up with
something.)

DAISY (CONT'D)
San...Sandy? No, dirt boot horse!

HANK
Oh kay then, dirt boot horse-.

BETSY
Her name is Daisy.

HANK
Right. Daisy....

(HANK checks out DAISY.)

HANK
Daisy...Dy-an-mite...

(He signs the newspaper.)

DAISY
Is that my hero name now?!

BETSY
Hank the Hunter, I just wanted to let you know that you're
basically our reason for living.

(HANK takes the girls kindness
for flirting and begins to
flirt back.)

HANK
I bet I am. I. Bet. I. *Am.*

DAISY

Yeah, we've read every article about you in the paper.

HANK

Oh, I bet you have. I. Bet. You. *Have*.

BETSY

You inspire us so much.

HANK

I bet I do. I. Bet. I. *Do*.

DAISY

I even forced my mom to make a cross stitch of your face. I sleep with it every night.

HANK

That's weird.

(A woman's screams is heard in the distance.)

HANK

Excuse me ladies, ain't no more time for gossiping. Duty calls. And if I ignored a cry for help well then I wouldn't be—

BETSY

Hank.

(Gunshot effect.)

DAISY

The.

(Gunshot effect.)

BESTY/DAISY

Hunter!

(Gunshot effect.)

HANK

Only I do that.

(HANK gears up as if he is going to sprint off but he actually runs in slow motion for dramatic effect.

The offstage scream continues.

There is a sound of a horse approaching.

A TOWNSMAN enters with a "horse". He moves past HANK at normal speed as the screaming continues. The TOWNSMAN stares at HANK confused as he passes by with his "horse" at normal speed. HANK is still walking slowly. The screams fade.

HANK is now in the dark and the focus is on DAISY and BETSY, but HANK still moves slowly in the background until he exits.)

DAISY

I can't believe we got Hank's signature! This is the best day of my life! He smelled exactly how I thought he would.

BETSY

How's that? Like whiskey and gravy?

DAISY

Yes and with a hint of vanilla!

BETSY

I guess, but the fighting was real cool!
(BETSY has a realization.)

Aww tumbleweed! After all that action we gotta go back to the ranch. Boring old ranch...

(BETSY kicks the ground as she and DAISY walk offstage.)

LIGHTS DIM.

SCENE TWO: LIFE ON THE RANCH

BETSY kicks the ground as she and DAISY approach the ranch with a bag of chicken feed.

Their parents HELEN and JIM are waiting on the front porch. There are "cows" nearby, portrayed by actual people.

HELEN

It's about time you got home. You two were supposed to fetch us some chicken feed from the General Store. You've been gone for two hours!

DAISY

We're sorry Ma. There was all this commotion with Hank the Hunter and Toothnose.

BETSY

Yeah, it was really wild! There was this train and the Mayor's daughter was tied up and-.

JIM

Nope.

BETSY

It was-.

JIM

Nope.

BETSY

Really exciting and I-.

JIM

No! Your mom set you out on an errand and it was your job to complete it in a timely fashion.

BETSY

But we couldn't even get through the crowd if we wanted-.

JIM

I said nope.

BETSY

Dad, you're not even letting me finish explain-.

JIM

Finish?! I'll tell you what hasn't been finished.

BETSY/DAISY

The cows haven't been finished...

JIM

Milking the cows hasn't been finished! Now get to it.

HELEN

Well I'm going to feed the chickens, like I've been waiting to do. For two hours.

(HELEN grabs the feed from the girls.)

JIM

You do that, honey. Only useful woman around here.

(HELEN exits.)