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Cambridge Discovery Readers

Quick Change!

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American English



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People in the story

Helen: a 12-year-old girl
Mom: Helen's mother
Dad: Helen's father
Aunt Carol: Helen's aunt
Joe: a bad man
Frank: another bad man

BEFORE YOU READ

1 Look at the pictures in Chapter 1 and *People in the story*. What do you think? Answer the questions.

1 What does Helen's dad drive?

.....

2 Is the baby Helen?

.....

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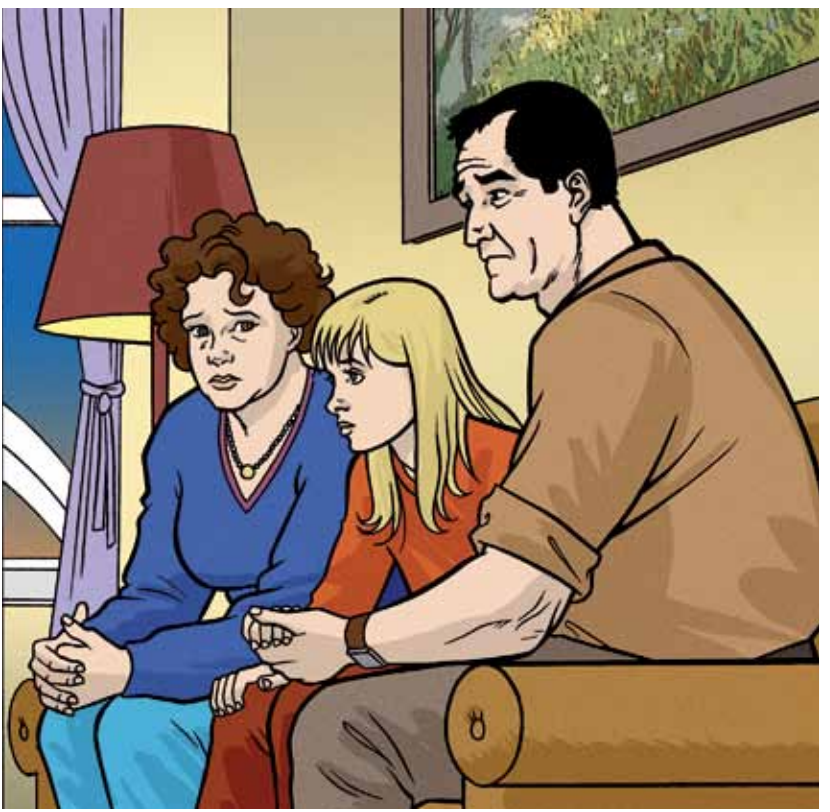
Chapter 1

My twelfth birthday

Listen. I've got an interesting story. It's about me. Where do I start?

OK, I know. My birthday. My twelfth birthday. My mother and father want to talk to me.

My mom and dad smile a lot. They're happy people. But they aren't smiling today.



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"We love you, Helen," Mom tells me.

"Yes," Dad says. "We love you very much."

"But, Helen . . . we have to tell you something," Mom says.

I look at Mom. I don't understand.

"*What?*" I say.

Dad holds my hand. He looks into my eyes.

"We love you, Helen. You're our daughter. But . . . you're our adoptive daughter[1]."

There is a noise in my ears. Someone's shouting. It's me.

"*No!*"

"Please, Helen," Mom says.

Dad takes something from the table and gives it to me.

"Please. Read this," he says.



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"I'm driving the taxi when I hear something. Something in the taxi. I stop to look. And I see you."

He smiles. "You're crying and you're angry. But you're very beautiful, too. Just one look, Helen. One look and I love you."



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I look at them.

"But who am I?" I ask. "Who are my . . ."

"Your birth parents?" Dad says sadly. "We don't know. No one knows."

He gives me something. "This is yours, Helen," he says. "I think it comes from . . . them."



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I look at it. “From my birth parents?” I ask.

“Yes.”

“What is it?” I ask.

“A baby blanket,” he tells me.

Mom takes my hand now. “Please don’t be sad,” she says. “We love you, Helen. We aren’t your birth parents, but that doesn’t change anything.”

But she’s wrong.

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LOOKING BACK

1 Check your answers to ***Before you read*** on page 4.

ACTIVITIES

2 Complete the sentences about Chapter 1 with the names in the box.

Helen (x3)	Mom (x2)	Dad	Mom and Dad

1 It's Helen 's birthday.
2 ..... is 12 today.
3 Helen doesn't understand what her ..... says.
4 ..... is shouting.
5 ..... gives Helen a baby blanket.
6 ..... love Helen.
7 ..... is wrong.

3 Who do the underlined words refer to in these lines from the text?

1 They're happy people. (page 5) Mom and Dad
2 But they aren't smiling today. (page 5) .....
3 He smiles. (page 7) .....
4 I look at them. (page 8) .....
5 "I think it comes from . . . them." (page 8) .....
6 "Please don't be sad," she says. (page 9) .....

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4 Underline the correct words in each sentence.

1 This is an interesting story about *Helen* / *Helen's mom and dad*.
2 Helen hears a noise in her *head* / *ears*.
3 *Helen* / *Dad* reads about the baby.
4 Helen's dad finds a baby *in* / *behind* the taxi.
5 Helen's mom and dad *know* / *don't know* about her birth parents.
6 Dad *looks* / *doesn't look* happy when Helen asks about her birth parents.
7 The baby blanket is from Helen's *birth parents* / *adoptive parents*.

5 Match the questions with the answers.

1 Why is today an interesting day for Helen? [b]
2 Who isn't smiling? [ ]
3 What is Helen doing in the taxi? [ ]
4 Why is Helen's dad sad? [ ]
5 What does Helen's dad give her? [ ]

a She's crying.
b It's her twelfth birthday.
c A baby blanket.
d Helen's mom and dad.
e He doesn't know about her birth parents.

LOOKING FORWARD

6 Check (✓) the things you think are true in Chapter 2.

1 Helen finds her birth parents. [ ]
2 Helen doesn't find her birth parents. [ ]

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