

The Heroine's Journey

Hero's Journey	Heroine's Journey	Differences
I: Departure		
The call to adventure	The call to adventure	Imprisonment in Domestic Environment
Refusal of the call	Refusal of the call	Take on the role of spiritual orphan
Supernatural aid	Supernatural Aid	Guides seen as captors
Crossing the first threshold	Crossing the First Threshold	Slay dragon of virginity myth; Treasure = freedom
The belly of the whale	The Fortunate Fall (Green World)	Released from captor(s)
II: Initiation		
The road of trials	The road of trials	Rape trauma; Dark v Light man Green World Lover/ Recognize the seducer Imprisoned in Domestic Enclosure Slay dragon of romantic love myth
The meeting with the goddess	Discovery of Mother	A woman is her own mother.
Temptation away from the true path	Temptation to Regressive Return	Tempted to return to the beginning without finishing the quest
Atonement with the Father	Search for Father	Failure of false father
Apotheosis	Discovery of Female Tradition/Community	Slay dragon of female inferiority
The ultimate boon	The ultimate boon	Discovers the qualities she needs are within her
III: Return		
Refusal of the return	Refusal of the return	
Magic flight	Magic flight	
Rescue	Rescue	Rescue by heroic mother
Return threshold	Return Threshold	Reconciliation with parents
Master of two worlds	Release of Creativity	
Freedom to live	World Transformed	New Family; Community of One

The **Separation/ Departure** stage has one (1) major difference: For the heroine, departure usually begins with some kind of domestic imprisonment, and ends with a **Fortunate Fall**, or a release from the captor(s) in the “belly of the whale” stage. This stage is labeled Fortunate Fall, because the heroine has more freedom than before departure. Even though the heroine experiences a “fall” or dramatic change, she has already slain the dragon of *virginity myth* and has at least temporarily escaped imprisonment. Innocence then is lost to control of self.

During the **Initiation** stage, there are four (4) major differences between stages:

- 1.) The road of trials may include a rape trauma, lover/ seducer, a choice between a dark and light man (one that imprisons and one that sets free: anima v shadow), or domestic enclosure.
- 2.) A difference is that instead of a “meeting with the goddess,” the female journey has a “discovery of a mother.” She may even realize that she is her *own* mother.
- 3.) The female path highlights a temptation to never finish her quest. Instead of “atonement with father,” the female hero conducts a “search for her father;” or a failure of a father.
- 4.) Instead of “apotheosis,” the female quest highlights the “discovery of a female tradition,” and slays the dragon of *female inferiority*. In the ultimate boon, usually the female hero discovers that she has qualities within her to succeed, which arguably is an apotheosis.

During the **Return** stage there are three (3) major differences between stages:

- 1.) The Rescue usually occurs with the heroine’s mother or mother-figure. Crossing the return threshold may involve reconciliation with parents in the female hero's journey.
- 2.) Instead of the “master of two worlds” stage, there is the “release of creativity” stage; in which the heroine finds a way to make an impact instead of ruling.
- 3.) Instead of “freedom to live,” there is “world transformed” stage; in which the heroine establishes a new family or close-knit community.

*Note: *Buffy* tends to shake Murdock’s form of the Heroine’s Journey by pushing the limits of the stages and questioning the feminine role as capable of being/ doing more than what is simply designated here. For example, Buffy is clearly a Master of Two Worlds and experiences a Release of Creativity in season six. Thus, it is her Duality that defines her as the androgynous rather than andocentric hero, and it is this that makes her clearly more universal and post-modern.