

**Creating a Compelling Plot by Using the  
Mythic Hero's Journey by Caridad Pineiro**

**1. Ordinary World:**

Show the hero in her customary element  
This sets the tone and suggests the dramatic question of the story  
Make the Ordinary World as different as possible from the Special World  
State the theme of your story

**2. Call to Adventure:**

Establishes the stakes of the game  
Makes the hero's goal clear  
Hero is presented with a challenge or adventure to undertake and cannot remain in her Ordinary World

**3. Refusal of the Call (the Reluctant Hero):**

Hero has not committed to the journey  
Requires the assistance of a Mentor  
The Mentor is one of the most important themes in mythology. It stands for the bond between parent and child, teacher and student, god and man.  
Meeting with the Mentor provides the hero knowledge, confidence, etc. to undertake the Journey

**4. Crossing the First Threshold:**

Hero agrees to face the challenge of problem posed in the Call to Adventure  
Crossing into the Special World is an act of will  
Often illustrated by showing the hero crossing a physical barriers, i.e. door, bridge.  
This is the turning point in which the adventure actually begins

**5. Tests, Allies and Enemies:**

Hero is presented with challenges and tests  
Makes allies and enemies  
These tests show us the hero's character as she and her companions respond to the tests  
Tests prepare the Hero for greater ordeals ahead  
This is our first view of the Special World which should strike a sharp contrast to the Ordinary World the hero has just left  
"Getting to know you" scenes common at this point

**6. Approach to the Inmost Cave:**

Hero confronts and prepares for achieving her goal  
May suffer setbacks or reversals of fortune

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**7. The Supreme Ordeal:**

Fortunes of the hero hit rock bottom  
 This is a critical moment and is the major source of the heroic myth  
 Will the hero live or die, or appear to die so that they may be born again  
 This is the crisis. The central event of the story.  
 Hero faces her greatest fear

**8. Reward (Seizing the Sword):**

Having survived, the hero celebrates  
 Hero takes possession of the Reward  
 Sometimes the Reward is Knowledge  
 Often a place in the story where the hero and his allies recall what has happened and how they have reached this place  
 These quiet moments allow us to get to know the characters better

**9. The Road Back:**

Decision to return to the Ordinary World  
 Special World is left behind as the hero returns to a starting point or continues on her journey  
 This can be another moment of crisis or a reversal of the Hero's good fortune  
 The change in the hero's character must be shown at this stage

**10. Resurrection**

A second life-and-death moment (a la Supreme Ordeal)  
 Death and darkness get in one last shot before finally being defeated  
 Opportunity to show how the hero has absorbed lessons from the Mentor, Allies and Enemies  
 The stakes are at their highest here and you must show the awareness the hero has reached on his journey  
 The change should not be abrupt, but should have been gradually becoming obvious to the reader

**11. Return with the Elixir**

Hero returns to the Ordinary World  
 Hero brings with her some Elixir -- the lesson or treasure from the Special World  
 That elixir can be some treasure or love, freedom, wisdom, knowledge or sometimes, just coming home with a good story to tell.

ARCHETYPE	CHARACTERISTICS
Mother	The nurturing side of our personalities that seeks a relationship where we care for someone else.
Father	Symbolized by a guide or an authority figure
Persona	Your public image. The mask that you present to the world. Not necessarily your true self.
Shadow	Unconscious side of our personalities. Usually a dark side that we tend to project onto others and deny in ourselves. This Archetype derives from our uncivilized past and the evil that we are capable of is often stored there.
Anima/Animus	Anima is the female; Animus is male. This is the Archetype that makes us seek out our other half. The Anima is deeply emotional and a force of life. The Animus is logical, often rationale.
Hero	A source of spiritual power. She is the Ego – that person with whom we most identify. She is the figure who defeats evil and is often engaged in fighting the Shadow.
Trickster	Generally is the one who stirs things up and tries to hamper the progress of the Hero. Also someone who may give insight to the Hero by showing her just how unimportant she is.
Mentor	“The Wise Old Woman” The Mentor is usually a source of wisdom, support and/or provider of a moral barometer for our Hero. She can also help the Hero overcome her fears.
Threshold Guardian	Act as a test for the Hero. She makes sure the Hero is worthy of passing the first threshold and continuing on the journey. Usually “henchmen” or “secret helpers”. Can be good or evil
Herald	Serve to invite the character to answer the Call to Adventure and signal that a change has either happened or will happen.
Shapeshifter	Someone who is not what they appear to be. Generally will attempt to confuse or lie to the Hero causing delay. See also Trickster above.

**GODDESSES IN MYTHS.** As mentioned before, Goddesses often contain several of the above Archetypal traits. Following is my brief analysis of the character traits for the goddess Diana, the goddess of the hunt and the moon. Diana is an “I-can-take-care-of-myself” warrior who is self-confident and independent. In fiction, some excellent examples are Lauryll Hamilton’s Anita Blake, J.D. Robb’s Eve Dallas and even, Margaret Mitchell’s Scarlett O’Hara. The Zodiac sign for Diana is Pisces.

DIANA’S CHARACTERISTICS			
Self-confident and independent spirit	Ability to concentrate on what is important to her and to not be distracted	Competitive	Concern for the victimized, animals, powerless women and the young
<i>Suppresses feelings of dependency. Avoids expressing vulnerability. Relationships are secondary. Emotionally distant</i>	<i>Single-mindedness may damage and hurt others. Contempt for vulnerability. Cold and inhuman (like the moon)</i>	<i>Can’t deal with competitive men. Seeks a man who is a nurturer. Merciless at achieving her goals or avenging wrongdoings. Angry.</i>	<i>Not an Earth Mother but a protector. Wants an independent child which results in rejection fear in a child that is passive.</i>

**HOW DOES DIANA EVOLVE?** To grow as an individual a Diana Hero must discover that the love and trust of another person is special to her. She needs to learn to be vulnerable. Often, this happens to a Diana personality after she has reached/failed to reach her goals, or is tired of the competition/fight. At that point, Diana may look inward to reflect on what is important.

# VARIOUS RESOURCES ON ARCHETYPES AND THE HERO'S JOURNEY

## ONLINE RESOURCES:

- Hero's Journey Deconstruction Site** : <http://www.clickok.co.uk/index4.html>
- The Stages of the Hero's Journey** : [http://members.tripod.com/~ma\\_belle69/stages.html](http://members.tripod.com/~ma_belle69/stages.html)
- The Hero's Three-Part Journey** : <http://faculty.gvsu.edu/websterm/Hero.htm>
- The Hero's Journey at TV Tropes** : <http://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Main/TheHerosJourney>

## RECOMMENDED BOOKS:

- Bolen, Jean Shineda**, GODDESSES IN EVERYWOMAN: A NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF WOMEN, HarperCollins (paper); ISBN: 006091291X; Reprint edition (September 1985)
- Bolen, Jean Shineda**, GODS IN EVERYMAN: A NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF MEN'S LIVES AND LOVES, HarperCollins (paper); ISBN: 0060972807; (April 1990)
- Bullfinch, Thomas**, BULLFINCH'S MYTHOLOGY, Various Publishers
- Campbell, Joseph**, THE POWER OF MYTH, Anchor; ISBN: 0385418868; Reissue edition (July 1991)
- Este, Clarissa Pinkola**, WOMEN WHO RUN WITH THE WOLVES: MYTHS AND STORIES OF THE WILD WOMAN ARCHETYPE, Ballantine Books; ISBN: 0345409876; (January 1997)
- Hamilton, Edith**, MYTHOLOGY, Back Bay Books; ISBN: 0316341517; (September 1998)
- Tannen, Deborah**, YOU JUST DON'T UNDERSTAND: WOMEN AND MEN IN CONVERSATION, Quill; ISBN: 0060959622; (July 24, 2001)
- Vogler, Christopher**, THE WRITER'S JOURNEY, Michael Wiese Productions; ISBN: 0941188701; 2nd edition (November 1998)