

# 17 Stages of the Monomyth

## Departure

### 1. The Call to Adventure

The hero begins in a normal, mundane situation, then receives information that propels the future hero into the unknown world. The information may be a problem, a challenge, or a request. It triggers a desire in the future hero, such as the desire to win the hand of a lady, to recover a lost object, or to defeat a powerful enemy.

### 2. Refusal of the Call

The hero may initially hesitate or refuse the Call to Adventure. The refusal may stem from a variety of reasons, such as fear, insecurity, inadequacy, a reluctance to leave a comfortable life, or a sense of obligation to stay.

### 3. Supernatural Aid

The Supernatural Aid is the hero's mentor. This guide usually presents the hero with a talisman, map, or weapon that will aid him or her in the quest. The Supernatural Aid is often the one who finally convinces the hero to accept the call. At this point, the hero may also be joined by a companion or group who will assist the hero.

### 4. The Crossing of the First Threshold

This is the point of no return for the hero. He or she leaves the known world and ventures into the unknown. The unknown world is a dangerous realm where the rules and limits are not known.

### 5. Belly of the Whale

The hero enters the zone of danger. This may start immediately after crossing the first threshold or may require some travel. Like Jonah of the Old Testament, the hero undergoes a metamorphosis in the Belly of the Whale. The transformation is often internal: the hero understands that he or she cannot go back, and accepts the journey that lies ahead.