



Hero's Journey Analysis in Wish Movie (2023)

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Article Info	Abstract
Received: 2026 - 06- 01 Revised: 2026 06-18 Accepted: 2026 06-23	<i>This study aims to analyze the stages of the hero's journey theory within the Wish (2023) movie by highlighting hope, moral courage, and the power of emotions that drive change to people as the main strength of the heroism. It also aims to determine the presence of each stage as formulated by Joseph Campbell. Using a descriptive qualitative method, this research focused on Asha, the main character, and her transformation through the narrative structure. The data were collected through careful observation of the movie, transcribing relevant scenes, and identifying each stage based on Campbell's seventeen-stage model. The findings reveal that Asha's journey completed all the steps in the departure stage such as the call to adventure, refusal of the call, supernatural aid, the crossing of the first threshold, the road of trials, and apotheosis. However, Asha passed four steps in initiation stage which are the road of trials, meeting with the goddess, apotheosis, and the ultimate boon. In the return stage, she only passed several steps which are crossing the return threshold, master of two worlds, and freedom to live. Despite this, Asha's development and her efforts to bring back hope to the people of Rosas make her journey qualify as a hero's journey.</i>
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1. Introduction

Movies is a form of literary work that combines several elements such as sound, moving images and narrative to convey a story or issue in various concepts. In terms of literature, movie means a series of moving pictures recorded with sound that tells a story, shown at the cinema or movie (Hornby, 2006). Movies consist of several elements that work together to create a cohesive and engaging narrative. One of several elements is characters. In the character element, there are classifications of characters, such as the villain, helper, hero, and so forth (Propp,

2015).

A hero is typically portrayed as someone who shows courage and sacrifices for others (Syahputra & Kasprabowo, 2020), often experiencing transformation through challenges and conflict. Joseph Campbell (2004), in *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, introduced the concept of the hero's journey, a narrative pattern where the protagonist undergoes a transformative journey consisting of three stages: departure, initiation, and return. This structure has been widely used in analyzing both classic and modern stories across cultures.

Disney's *Wish* (2023) brings a fresh take on how the traditional hero's archetype reconstructed by shifting the essence of heroism from individual destiny to collective empowerment, changing the physical domination to moral resistance, and replacing inherited destiny with self-defined one. All of it shows through the journey of Asha, a 17-year-old girl from the magical kingdom of Rosas. Her story closely follows Campbell's hero model, as she fights to protect her people and restore hope.

Asha's journey begins in the peaceful kingdom, but things change when she discovers the unfair way King Magnifico controls people's wishes. Her choice to wish upon a star shows her step away from ordinary life and marks the start of her adventure. In the initiation stage, Asha meets Star, her magical guide, and together they face challenges like fear, rejection, and the king's power. These trials help Asha grow into a brave and inspiring leader. In the return stage, she comes back to her people with the "elixir"—hope, freedom, and belief in their dreams. Asha's journey fits Campbell's idea of a true hero who not only transforms herself but also brings positive change to her society (Campbell, 2004). This study aims to fill that gap by analyzing how Asha's journey follows the hero's journey structure using Campbell's theory.

There were several previous studies that used Campbell's hero's journey theory to help analyze this research. The first, Sari (2023) studied *Encanto* and found that Mirabel, although she has no magical powers, still follows the hero's path by helping her family and going through important stages like departure, initiation, and return. Fitriyah et al. (2023) explored *Alice in Wonderland* and showed how Alice's journey is filled with symbolic characters and follows all the hero's journey steps. Juanda et al. (2023) looked at *Aquaman* and found that Arthur Curry goes through many challenges, including fighting enemies and overcoming his own weaknesses, though not all stages are completed.

Rahman et al. (2021) studied *Thor: Ragnarok* and showed that Thor finishes most stages of the journey, especially in the beginning and middle, but not all at the end. Those previous studies have mostly discussed the hero's journey with physical strength, wars, or new world adventures. This study offers something new because in *Wish* (2023), the main strengths highlighted are hope, moral courage, and the power of emotions that drive change to people.

2. Method

This study employs a descriptive qualitative method to analyze the hero's journey stages in Disney's *Wish* (2023) focusing on key narrative scenes of Asha's heroic journey. The main data comes from the movie's scenes, dialogues, and visuals, supported by books, journals, and past research. As outlined by Kothari (2004), data often helps to refine both the problem and the techniques that might be used to address it in qualitative research. The researcher collected data by carefully watching the film, selecting key scenes that match Campbell's hero's journey, and narrowing them down for analysis of the scene that are relevant to the theory. The process involved classifying, interpreting Asha's heroic journey, checking the relevance to research goals, and drawing conclusions.

3. Result

Departure

The first stage in hero's journey by Campbell's theory is departure, where the hero leaves the ordinary world for a world of adventure. In this stage, Asha went through five steps which are the call of adventure, refusal of the call, supernatural aid, crossing the first threshold, and belly of the whale.

a. The Call of Adventure

The call of adventure is the first section of departure stage. At this section, the hero is called or pushed out of their comfort zone by an incident, message, or need. The example of the call of adventure is shown in the data below.

Table 1. The Call of Adventure

	Dialogue/Description	Scene
Asha	: The wishes you're not going to grant, you could just give them back. Then, I don't know, the people can try to pursue them themselves? You know, if they're dangerous, then they can be stopped, but if they're not...	
Magnifico	: You've completely missed the point. People come here because they know they can't make their own dreams come true. The journey's too hard. It is too unfair. They give their wishes to me, willingly, and I make it so they forget their worries.	
Asha	: You make it so they forget the most beautiful part of themselves. And they don't know what they're missing. But you do. And now I do. It's not	

Figure 1

fair. My Saba is good. The people of Rosas are good. They deserve more than...
Magnifico : I decide what everyone deserves!

(Wish, min. 00:19:40-00:20:46)

In this data, she initially went to King Magnifico to propose herself as an apprentice. However, upon finding out that the king did not actually grant the people's wish, Asha realized the unfairness, challenged the king's decision, and then sparked her desire to take action.

b. Refusal of the Call

Based on the Campbell's theory, after receiving the call, the hero rejects the call out of fear, doubt, unpreparedness, or responsibility which called as refusal of the call. The example of refusal of the call is shown in the data below.

Table 2. Refusal of the Call

Dialogue/Description		Scene
Asha	: Now I've got all of this freedom in my bones. But I've still got the lid on so it doesn't overflow. 'Cause I've got reservations and hesitations. On where I should even begin. I'm past dipping my toes in. But I'm not, no, I'm not past diving in. If I could just be pointed in any given direction. On where to go and what to do. My legs are shaking. But my head's held high. The way you always taught me to.	

Figure 2

(Wish, min. 00:27:12-00:27:42)

This data present doubts that are arise within Asha after getting rejection from Saba and her mother. Asha felt alone or unsupported, afraid to take a step, confused about the direction and first steps of what she should do.

c. Supernatural Aid

The essence of supernatural aid is that if the hero is willing to move forward, guidance will usually appear in the form of mentors, guides, or supernatural powers. This guidance can be in the form of objects or wise advice. The example of supernatural aid is shown in the data below.

Table 3. Supernatural Aid

Dialogue/Description	Scene
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Star comes for the first time. Then, approach Asha to help her.



Figure 3

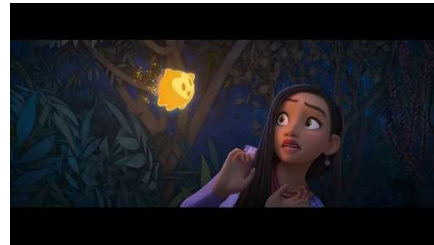


Figure 4

(*Wish*, min. 00:31:04)

The scene in data 3 showed when Asha first met Star. After Asha made her wish to the star in the middle of the forest, a ball of light fell to earth, shining brightly over the entire Rosas. Then came Star, a magical creature from the sky, who became a supernatural aid to Asha to carry out her mission of rescuing the wishes of the Rosas people.

d. Crossing the First Threshold

The crossing the first threshold is the moment when the hero steps over the boundary of the old or usual world and officially enters a new world, full of different rules and challenges. The example of crossing the first threshold is shown in the data below.

Table 4. Crossing the First Threshold

Dialogue/Description	Scene
Asha and Star go on their first mission.	

Figure 5

(*Wish*, min. 00:39:03)

From the scene above, it showed when Asha and Star began to take action to bring back the wishes of the Rosas, including the past wishes of the people. This marks the point and the first step where Asha leaves her comfort zone, exits her old world, and enters a new conflict.

e. *Belly of the Whale*

Belly of the whale is the moment when the hero completely leaves her old world, absorbed deeply in a world of adventure and enters into a world of obstacles and uncertainties. It is the point of no return, symbolic of death and rebirth. The example of belly of the whale is shown in the data below.

Table 5. *Belly of the Whale*

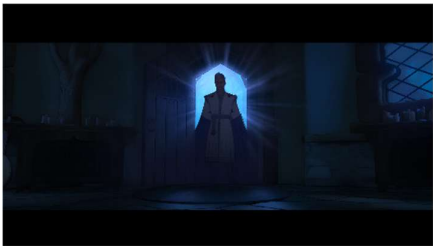
Dialogue/Description		Scene
Magnifico	: That's right, Asha. You've been turned in. Where is it? Where is the star?	
Saba	: There's nothing here for you!	
Magnifico	: How did you do it, huh? What sorcery did you use?	
Asha	: I know no sorcery.	

Figure 6

(*Wish*, min. 00:54:33-00:55:00)

From this data, Magnifico found out that Asha was the traitor after explained to the Rosas that there was a traitor among them while Asha succeeded in bringing back Saba's wish. From then on Asha became a royal fugitive and was also labeled as a traitor and a danger to royal power by Magnifico. Asha could no longer return to her old life. She is forced to move forward, drawn into a world of adventure that is uncertain, full of risks, and full of conflict with the system she used to believe in. Symbolically, this moment illustrates that Asha has been swallowed up by the great conflict.

Initiation

Initiation is the second stage in the hero's journey after departure. At this stage, the hero has entered the world of adventure and must face various tests, challenges, and crises that change the hero from within, emotionally, mentally, and spiritually. In this stage, Asha went through four steps which are the road of trials, meeting with the goddess, apotheosis, and the ultimate boon.

a. *The Road of Trials*

In the road of trials, there will be a series of physical, mental, or moral tests that a hero must face. Through these challenges, she becomes stronger, wiser, and more tested. The example of the road of trials is shown in the data below.

Table 6. The Road of Trials

Dialogue/Description	Scene
Magnifico : So, my dear Simon, are you ready to see your wish? To be the King's most valiant, courageous, and loyal knight!	
Gabo : Just not a loyal friend.	
Magnifico : It is my great pleasure to grant you your heart's desire.	
Simon : There are six more traitors, Your Majesty. Dahlia, Gabo, Dario, Safi, Hal and Bazeema.	
Magnifico : Find them, so they may pay for their betrayal. Find Asha, so you may be rewarded. But most importantly, find me that star, so I will have the power to grant all of your wishes!	

Figure 7

(Wish, min. 01:02:38-01:03:42)

In this data, Magnifico found out that Asha and her friends were traitors from Simon's statement in front of the Rosas. And in order to grant the wishes of all the people, Magnifico commanded the people to look for Asha, her friends and the Star, most of all. This moment shows that Asha and her friends faced many obstacles, starting with Simon's betrayal to becoming fugitives by all the people of Rosas.

b. Meeting with the Goddess

The hero meets an ideal feminine figure such as a goddess, mother, or lover who symbolizes compassion, kindness, or intuition in this section. In Wish movie, there is no literal goddess role, so meeting with the goddess is symbolically represented by the powerful Queen Amaya. The example of meeting with the goddess is shown in data below.

Table 7. Meeting with the Goddess

Dialogue/Description	Scene
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Amaya : I've seen too many bad things that I can't keep count. He loves one thing more than himself. His crown. Knowing what I know now. The good in him, I've watched it melt. I was fooled by the love I felt so profound.



Figure 8

(Wish, min. 01:07:32-01:08:00)

As shown in this data, Queen Amaya appeared and defended Asha, stating that what Magnifico was doing was out of line and the people had a right to their wishes. Queen Amaya reflects a strong and wise female figure who helps the hero, Asha, continue her fight.

c. *Apotheosis*

This section happens when the hero reaches the highest consciousness or enlightenment. She sees reality with a new understanding, sometimes feeling at one with the universe. The example of apotheosis is shown in data below.

Table 8. *Apotheosis*

Dialogue/Description	Scene
Asha saw something new, the power that grows from wishes. The wish of all the people of Rosas revived Asha's spirit.	A still from the movie Wish showing Asha, a young girl with dark hair, standing in a dark, cavernous space. She is surrounded by a large number of small, glowing, colorful lights that resemble wishes or stars, creating a magical atmosphere.
	A still from the movie Wish showing Asha, a young girl with dark hair, standing on a rooftop at night. She is looking down at a glowing object in her hand, which appears to be a wish or a small light source.

Figure 9

Figure 10

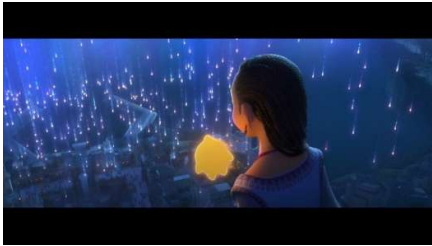
(Wish, min. 01:20:36)

As indicated in the data, Asha realized that her greatest weapon was her wish after seeing the people unite to fight back through hope, desire, and true strength. And this made Asha see the world in a new way and understanding.

d. The Ultimate Boon

In the ultimate boon, the hero succeeds in obtaining what he or she seeks such as truth, power, insight, or blessings for the people. The example of the ultimate boon is shown in data below.

Table 9. The Ultimate Boon

Dialogue/Description	Scene
Caged wishes are finally free to return to the people.	
(Wish, min. 1:21:40)	

This data infers that Asha and the people succeeded in destroying Magnifico's power through united wishes. The result of Asha's struggle brought "gifts", wishes and freedom, which succeeded in returning to Rosas after a long time of being stolen.

Return

The third stage of the hero's journey is when the hero returns to the ordinary world with changes. In this stage, Asha went through three steps which are crossing the return threshold, master of two world, and freedom to live.

a. Crossing the Return Threshold

Crossing the return threshold is the section when the hero transitioning back to everyday life with new understanding. The example of crossing the return threshold is shown in data below.

Table 10. Crossing the Return Threshold

Dialogue/Description	Scene
Asha saw happiness, freedom and hope return to Rosas.	
Asha : This is more than I could have ever dreamed possible.	
<i>Figure 12</i>	

(Wish, min. 1:24:15-01:24:19)

Drawing on the data, this stage of the movie implied that when Asha returns to Rosas society, not with power, but with the spirit to bring back wish to everyone, bridging the old world and the new world with the courage and wisdom she gained from her adventures. It is a transition from the world of adventure to real life, with values and changes brought into society.

b. Master of Two World

This section is where the hero achieves a balance between the spiritual world and the real world. She can live in harmony with both. The example of master of two world is shown in data below.

Table 11. Master of Two World

	Dialogue/Description	Scene
Asha	: W-W-W-W-Wait, is that a magic wand? Okay, thank you, but no thank you. I am no good with magic. I mean, I put a dress on a tree.	
Gabo	: I will take it for her.	
Dahlia	: Uh-uh. It's for Asha.	
Gabo	: Ugh!	
Asha	: But what am I supposed to do with it?	
Dario	: Be our fairy godmother. I mean, what else?	
Asha	: No, I couldn't be that. I could? Thank you.	

Figure 13

(Wish, min. 01:24:42-01:25:23)

This data reveals that Star gives Asha a magic wand to help the people of Rosas. Asha, who initially refused, eventually agreed to accept the wand with the support of her friends and the people. Now, all people have their own wishes, and Asha lives as a guardian, not a ruler.

c. Freedom to Live

Freedom to live is when the hero is no longer shackled by the fear of death, the past, or the future. She lives fully in the present moment. The example of freedom to live is shown in data below.

Dialogue/Description	Scene
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Saba : Oh, Star, how can we ever thank you?
Asha : **That's easy. Just keep wishing.**



Figure 14

(*Wish*, min. 01:26:08-01:26:18)

This data reveals All the people of Rosas regaining their wishes illustrates Asha's success in carrying out her struggle from Magnifico's authority. Asha and all the people are free and have the right to their own wishes. And Star asked all the people to continue wishing before it had to leave to continue its journey again.

5. Conclusion

This research explored how the hero's journey structure by Joseph Campbell appears in Disney's *Wish* (2023), focusing on Asha as the central figure of a modern hero. Through a qualitative analysis, the study found that Asha has successfully gone through the three stages required to complete her hero's journey. Thus, Asha's journey fulfills the hero's journey by Campbell's theory even though she did not go through all of the seventeen steps.

Based on the findings and discussion analysis, Campbell's hero's journey stages can be found in Asha's are the call of adventure, refusal of the call, supernatural aid, crossing the first threshold, and belly of the whale in departure stage, the road of trials, meeting with the goddess, apotheosis, and the ultimate boon in initiation stage, crossing the return threshold, master of two world, and freedom to live in return stage.

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