*Snowpiercer*:

Curtis Everett, played by Chris Evans, looks back and sees the trail of blood left behind by both his allies and his foes as he continues to venture forward to a doubtful glimpse of victory. His efforts to be someone of power in his revolution has assisted in him proving his strength gradually. However, in the film *Snowpiercer,* it is evident that heroes aren’t always characters that are unstoppable and invincible, but can exist in other forms as fragile and insecure. In this film Curtis plays the role of a hero as he represents that a protagonist can be weak and fragile at times instead of the traditional, masculine figure of a hero without struggle or failure. Through the course of the film, Curtis is portrayed as a hero willing to expend his efforts and accept the losses he will inevitably face. He leads his tail section allies through the train hesitating to take complete command after every step and letting his weakness show. His interactions with Edgar, played by Jamie Bell, and Gilliam, played by John Hurt, helped expose all of Curtis’ weaknesses as he attempted to lead the revolution in the train. This exposure of doubt painted a unique image to the hero that Curtis portrays in the film.

Curtis can be seen to be strong and physically fit compared to his allies, but expresses weakness as he approaches enemies that he can’t defeat himself. As Curtis approaches someone double his size he is portrayed as small and weak as the camera was angled from atop the colossal officer. Curtis was hesitating to attack as he wasn’t capable of winning this fight. However, someone of Curtis’ size rushes forward and disposes of the officer in less time than Curtis took to eliminate an officer of his size. Curtis may not be the strongest in the train but he has his allies to assist in his cause. He is weak when he is alone and heavily relies on his allies.

Curtis heavily relies on his allies for situations that he can’t possibly handle himself. As the door for another compartment opens he inspects the army of men standing in front of him. His dark silhouette seems insignificant in front of all the armored men with axes and spears. He is hesitant to step forward due to the overwhelming strength of his enemy. The camera focused on the army illuminated by the light entering from the windows as Curtis stood in a darker alley as the camera solely focused on his small back. Curtis seemed weak and insignificant in the dark as the army in front of him stood proud and strong. Curtis would have been murdered in cold blood within the next second if he was alone. Curtis can be seen as weak if he were as alone as the camera angle portrayed him to be. His actions were strong only with the help of his allies. Edgar threw himself at a soldier that nearly killed Curtis in order to save him. Curtis was in much need of assistance. This wasn’t something that he could do without the assistance of his allies. This proved that he can’t accomplish everything by himself. Not even in his past was he able to rid of his weaknesses by himself.

Curtis’ dark history in the tail section presented his weakness in mind. The close camera on his face greatly expressed his emotions as he recalled these events. The look in his eyes and the tone of voice significantly portrayed a certain sense of pity for the hero. The anecdote further validates Curtis’ emotional weakness. He is displayed as a human. A human that is weak and fragile that only lives to eat. The anecdote expressing his grief of his past of cannibalism truly expressed his emotional weakness he experienced as a tail section passenger. Curtis was portrayed as a human with insecurities and weaknesses as opposed to the traditional hero. Curtis could fight for the revolution, but he had a parasite from the past eating his strength away any time someone saw him as a leader. This dark past was of his first encounter with Edgar. Curtis’ cannibalistic tendencies signified his mental weakness to the environment he had to adapt to. Gilliam was the one who opened Curtis’ eyes to the pitiful state he has reached as he offered his arm to Curtis and his group as he saved the life of infant Edgar. The anecdote Curtis shared in front of the main engine was particularly powerful as it described these events in immense detail. The camera was able to capture Curtis’ emotion really well as it defined the emotional impact he was facing. The dark lighting signified Curtis’ dark past. His dark past expressed his weakness of spirit at the toughest of times. Curtis himself wasn’t aware of this weakness until Gilliam offered his arm to save Edgar. Consequently, Edgar became a character of significance to Curtis’ true nature.

Edgar was a key character that entirely conveyed Curtis’ nature. Curtis was a hero, but the film portrayed him to have a limit to his capabilities. He couldn’t save everyone and he couldn’t overcome every situation by himself as a strong hero would. Curtis exposed his weaknesses in two circumstances. One was where he had to make a decision to either hold Minister Mason hostage to prevent the loss of more of his allies, or save Edgar who was being held to provoke Curtis. Curtis’ hesitation to act as he stood in between Mason and Edgar illustrated his indecision. This indecision depicted Curtis’ struggle as he is reminded he can’t save everyone. Another instance was when Edgar suggested that Curtis should be the leader after the revolution. Curtis replied with, “I’m not a leader.” Curtis knew that Edgar idolized him. However, his dark past prevents him from being the strong leader Edgar wants him to be. Curtis is engulfed in too much regret and insecurities to be a mentally strong hero. His insecurities and regret manifested in the beanie he always wore.

Curtis’ emotional weakness manifested itself as he wore a beanie that covered his features. He took off his beanie as he was out of sight from Edgar or anyone else. This beanie was an integrated part of his appearance. However, Curtis’ appearance changes immediately after Edgar’s death. The beanie covering his face was present as to convey Curtis’ insecurities in front of Edgar. He knew Edgar didn’t know who he really was and wanted to keep it that way. Curtis didn’t want to expose himself of his past and mistakes that make him appear weak in front of Edgar. He knew that Edgar looked up to him and concealed some insignificant information from him. These insecurities prevented him to be a strong and confident hero. This insecurity disappears as Edgar dies. The hero removes the beanie and begins to take initiative. The loss of his allies, however, shook Curtis’ confidence to be a leader.

The loss of his closest and precious allies exposed his weak composure in the revolution. Upon Edgar’s death, Curtis is shown in the light as he drops to his knees with his head tilted down. This fragile posture exposed Curtis of his lack of strength as he couldn’t save the one kid that always looked up to him. He was grieving the loss of his dear comrade of this revolution. His grieving is expected at the loss of Edgar, but he merely exposed his weakness to all the remaining survivors. This exposure makes him seem unfit to lead. Later as Gilliam is shot, Curtis has the expression of true loss of hope. His shocked expression on his face and heavy breathing combined with the dark, suspenseful music expressed his breaking point. Curtis was weak in the mind as he couldn’t cope with loss. As he lost the most important people in his life, he was faced with a sense of desperation and grief. If it weren’t for Tanya, played by Octavia Spencer, slapping Curtis in the face, Curtis would never have escaped this trance.

Curtis was weak by himself. The elements that made him strong were the allies he had around him. Without his allies, Curtis seems to be lost and powerless. Both Edgar and Gilliam kept Curtis alive for so long. Edgar looked up to Curtis, and Curtis looked up to Gilliam as his motivation to keep living. His hopes and dreams to achieve victory for this revolution would never have existed if it weren’t for these two key characters. Curtis was mentally weak through the entirety of the film. His decisions were affected by his mentor and the kid that always looked up to him. He never let go of his dark past that engulfed him in regret and sorrow as he remembered his mistakes. This grudge he held against himself for his past mistakes made him weak in his self-esteem and promoted his lack of self-acceptance.