

Once Upon a Time Simon Went West

By Simon Pelletier

Simon drove west after graduating from university. It was his calling. It was his *Hero's Journey*.

The Hero's journey is a concept popularized by Joseph Campbell. It's a basic narrative structure that almost all myths follow. No matter the culture, every story told by humans contains the same basic structure.

There are three portions of this story. The Departure. The Initiation and The Return.

The Departure

Here there is an initial call to action; to forge out into the great unknown. But our hero at first is timid and refuses the call. Eventually he submits and takes up the challenge and dives into the unknown where a metamorphosis begins.

Simon graduated high school and his parents moved back to Manitoba. He was given the chance to forge out on his own in Victoria but he choose to follow the family to Winnipeg. But on his second call out west – he was offered a job to tree plant in British Columbia – he answered it and set out on his own. .

The Initiation

On the hero's path there is a series of tests that must be undergone to begin the transformation. And then a bequeathing of items or tools (the *boon*) to help on his journey. There are grand revealings of his true nature on that equip him to find and conquer the ultimate goal.

Simons quest was of becoming an epic rock climber, of making all the cash as a proficient tree planter, of leaving the "boring" prairies. And this he did. He met his adventurer on his path, Eric, who bequeathed onto him the skills of *doing*. Of building and taking chances. Of making plans with people. He showed him that running impossible distances could be as simple as one foot in front of the other. And Simon achieved his journeys ultimate goal. To realize that BC isn't as cool as he thought it was...

The Return

The path homebound is not without its perils. Here the hero encounters his lack of desire to return to the village. He may encounter resistance from enemies who won't let him take the *boon* back with him. There may be guides and friends that help him on his return. And, ultimately, the hero returns with new wisdom gained from his forays out in the world.

Simon on his return had to survive the trails of a Calgarian girl that almost knocked him off his path home. He had many friends who helped him on his travels back to Winnipeg: Eric, Simon, Emma, Tone, Mark. And with his return to the prairies he brought back new found wisdom. That the west isn't the best. That doing things with people you love is all that matters and that he doesn't need a fancy degree but could be a simple carpenter. And this new Manitoba man found a freedom of living that wasn't there before.