

## HEROISME IN MOVIE “TAKEN” BY LUC BESSON AND ROBERT MARK KAMEN

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### *Abstract*

*A hero is a figure who always defends the truth and defends the weak. The hero in this case is not someone who wants to win in war, but the hero is how he solves the problems he is facing. According to Christopher Vogler, there are twelve stages of the journey that a hero must go through. The purpose of this research is to identify and understand the depiction of heroic traits in the film "Taken (2008)" written by Luc Besson and Robert Mark Kamen through the twelve stages of the Hero's Journey theory by Christopher Vogler, as well as finding out what kind of journey of heroism is depicted by the character Bryan Mills in the film "Taken (2008)".*

*The method used in this research is qualitative description. The data source used in this research is conversational dialogue from the film script "Taken (2008)". The data collection process in this research is by watching films, reading and understanding film scripts, and analyzing the hero stages carried out by Bryan Mills. The data analysis process in this research is by watching films and analyzing the data using the Hero's Journey and Archetype theory according to Christopher Vogler.*

*The results of this research state that Bryan Mills as the main character is a hero, seen from his life journey which is in accordance with the twelve stages of the hero's journey in Christopher Vogler's theory, even the twelve stages can be randomized according to the author's wishes so that the story is not monotonous and boring.*

*It can be concluded that Bryan Mills is a hero, this has been proven through analysis of the stages of the hero's journey and based on Archetypes theory. This research also proves that the hero's journey theory can be used to analyze modern literary works with modifications, not only to analyze fantasy stories or legends.*

**Keywords:** *Heroisme*

### **INTRODUCTION**

Heroism is a description of a person's heroic attitudes or actions in fighting. In English, a hero is called "hero" which means a legendary figure in mythology who is gifted with extraordinary strength, courage and ability, and is recognized as a descendant of the gods. A hero is a figure who always defends the truth and defends the weak. A national hero who wholeheartedly loves his nation and

country so that he is willing to make sacrifices for the preservation and glory of his nation is also called a patriot. A hero is someone whose actions are successful for the benefit of many people. His actions have an influence on other people, because they are considered noble and beneficial for the interests of the nation's community or humanity (Sriwulandari, 2021). The hero in this case is not someone who wants to win in war, but the hero is how he solves the problems he is facing (Noviana, 2019).

Based on the book by Christopher Vogler, there are twelve stages of the journey. These twelve stages are also called the hero's journey. Based on the statement above, there are twelve stages that the hero must go through, namely: Ordinary World, Call to Adventure, Rejection of the Call, Meeting the Mentor, Crossing the First Threshold, Test, Ally, Enemy, Approach to the Deepest Cave, Trial, Reward, The Path of Return, Resurrection, And The Last One Is Returning with Elixir. Moreau as quoted in Satrio and Zulkarnain, the epitome of the Hero's Journey story structure is the Hero's adventure in facing his fears and changing into a better and new person, this is what makes this story structure very close emotionally to humans. When we enter a story, whether it is a fairy tale or a myth, we will wonder about the role played by each character. According to Vogler, understanding the role each character plays in a story is called archetype.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Research methods are strategic methods used to collect and analyze data responding to problem formulation. This chapter consists of types of research, data collection, and data analysis.

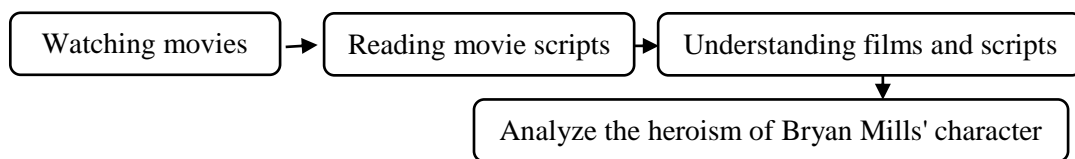
### **Research Design**

This type of research is qualitative where the data is reported in the form of sentences or descriptive methods. The data in this research is presented in the form of words, phrases or sentences, prologues, dialogues or monologues, quotations or paraphrases, not in the form of numbers.

### **Source of Data**

Primary data in qualitative research is in the form of sentences and manuscripts. The primary data from this research is the dialogue form of Bryan Mills as the main character obtained from the film script "Taken (2008)". Secondary data was taken from the film "Taken (2008)", journals, electronic books, websites and articles related to research.

### **Technique of Data Collection**



**Picture 1. Technique of Data Collection**

### **Data Analysis**

The final step of this research is analyzing the data. It is a technique in which data is analyzed and reported. Researchers used qualitative methods by watching films to analyze data. The Hero's Journey and Archetype theories were used by researchers to analyze and record data.

## **RESEARCH FINDING AND DISCUSSION**

In this chapter the results and discussion begin by analyzing the structure of the Hero's Journey, namely by describing the twelve stages of the Hero's Journey for the main character Bryan Mills in the film Taken (2008) based on the heroic journey pattern in the Hero's Journey theory. Then the analysis continues with an explanation of Archetypes or the roles played by the main characters in this film.

### **The depiction of heroic traits in the film "TAKEN"**

Christopher Vogler identifies twelve stages of the Hero's Journey. The stages are Ordinary World, Call to Adventure, Rejection of the Call, Meeting with Mentor, Crossing the First Threshold, Trial, Allies, Enemies, Approaching the

Deepest Cave, Trial, Reward, Way Back, Awakening, and the last one is Return with Elixir. These stages of the hero's journey are structured flexibly "think of these twelve stages as a map of the Hero's Journey, one of many ways to get from here to there, but one of the most flexible, durable, and reliable" (Vogler 7). "The sequence of stages given here is just one of many possible variations. Stages can be removed, added, and shuffled drastically without losing their power" (Vogler 19). In this way, the structure of the hero's journey can be adapted to various literary works so that each action can give a different impression.

### 1. Ordinary World

The first stage of the Hero's Journey is the Ordinary World. So this stage is when the Hero is introduced to the audience and begins his journey. Vogler states "The Ordinary World is the context, headquarters, and background of the Hero" (87) (Maslahatin, 2022). The usual world stage performance in the first scene of the film: when Bryan Mills, who lived alone in his house in the United States, remembered celebrating his son's 5th birthday before he divorced his wife and still lived together. Furthermore, the introduction to Ordinary World can be seen in the following film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:03:05 - 00:03:30. Bryan Mills attended Kim's 17th birthday party at his ex-wife's house, but he wasn't there for long before returning home. The next scene is Bryan Mills partying at his house with Sam, Casey, Bernie, his fellow former CAI members, to fill his retirement.

From some of the dialogue and monologue above, we can see that before starting his heroic journey, Bryan Mills had a life that was very different from other people in general. Bryan Mills, a retired CAI member, lives alone because he is divorced from his wife and children who he still loves, because his wife doesn't like the work that Mills does, and is too protective, worried about the safety of his family. But Mills still has good friends who still cheer him up and support him. Even though he has retired, Bryan Mills and his friends still have a side job as supervisors of artists at concert events.

Even though he has a life that is very different from other people in general, this is what we can call the main character's Ordinary World, which then becomes a contrast to the special world he will enter in the later stages of his heroic journey.

## 2. Call to adventure

The second stage in a hero's journey is the call to adventure. This stage is when the hero is faced with a conflict or problem that makes him start his journey and that is what makes the story roll (Maslahatin, 2022). The call to adventure that Bryan Mills received can be seen in the following film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:13:45 - 00:19:23.

At this stage the hero experiences events that will disrupt his Ordinary World. The Call of Adventure for Bryan Mills was when his 17 year old daughter Kim asked for approval to go to Paris with her friend Amanda. Kim and Amanda will follow U2's European tour dates or a rock band around Europe, before leaving Kim asked her father for approval by inviting her mother to help get approval, Kim only said she would go to Paris to see the museum, but still Bryan Mills didn't agree because she was worried for her daughter's safety. Bryan Mills' decision made Kim sad, and his ex-wife was angry because Bryan Mills' habits were considered too paranoid, this made Bryan Mills finally agree to his daughter going to Paris. Furthermore, the call to adventure can be seen in the following film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:29:56 - 00:30:00. It was at this stage that Bryan Mills had to make a decision and accept the challenge. Will he be able to keep his daughter Kim safe or will he lose his daughter.

## 3. Call rejection

Can be seen in the film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:14:32 - 00:14:42. The dialogue excerpt above shows the Refusal of the Call stage in Bryan Mills' heroic journey. This stage is the initial stage of rejection, which is after Bryan Mills' conversation with Kim and his ex-wife while having

lunch together. Bryan mills does not approve of his daughter's desire to go to Paris. Feelings of fear and insecurity made him decide to remain in the ordinary world.

From the description above, it can be proven that Bryan Mills initially rejected his hero's call. The rejection started when Kim wanted to ask for approval to go to Paris with her friend Amanda. His daughter's rejection was the reason he was reluctant to continue his heroic journey.

#### 4. Meet with a Mentor

According to Vogler in this stage “the hero gains the supplies, knowledge, and confidence needed to overcome fear and gain profits”. Bryan Mills' meeting with his mentor can be seen in the following film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:29:25 - 00:32:02.

Bryan Mills has gained knowledge from Sam about the people who kidnapped his daughter, who the foreigners with a strange language are who kidnapped Kim, why they kidnapped a woman. Sam also tells Bryan Mills that he only has 96 hours to find his daughter before she is sold in the women's trade. After receiving instructions from Sam, Bryan Mills became more confident and enthusiastic about trying to save his daughter. Finally, Bryan Mills decided to go to Paris, which meant he was ready to leave the Ordinary World for the Special World.

#### 5. Crossing the First Threshold

Can be seen in the film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:19:00 - 00:19:27. Crossing the First Threshold, Bryan Mills discovered that Kim had lied about why she wanted to go to Paris. The hero begins to worry about his daughter and wants to go on a trip to accompany her in Paris. Further crossing the first threshold can be seen in the following film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:29:56 - 00:30:42. In the scene, Bryan Mills finally makes his own decision to go to Paris, by asking Stuart for help in getting an immediate flight to Paris. Bryan Mills dared to take on the challenge, leaving his comfort zone in

the ordinary world into a special world. This attitude of courage is known as the Leap of Faith, namely a leap of courage to start a heroic adventure.

#### 6. Tests, Allies, Enemies

The test for a hero aims to see whether he is able to continue his journey. The test of the main character Bryan Mills can be seen in the following film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:39:50 - 00:41:00. Bryan Mills meets Jean Claude, his friend who lives in Paris. He hopes that Jean Claude can help him. Instead of helping him, Jean Claude asked Bryan Mills not to cause too much trouble in Paris so that he could be returned to his home country without any problems.

Then after passing several tests, the Hero also needs allies who will accompany and help him on this journey. Allies are part of the levels of the hero's journey. In this film, Jean Claude turns into an ally for Bryan Mills, which can be seen in the following film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:54:53 - 00:55:48. In the scene, Jean Claude tries to find Bryan Mills by bringing his men to arrest and send Bryan Mills back to America, but they all fail to find Bryan Mills' real whereabouts.

After meeting allies on their journey, heroes can also create bitter hostility at this stage or what are called enemies. In this film, Jean Claude becomes Bryan Mills' enemy. Bryan Mills has learned that the Paris police led by Jean Claude have collaborated with Albanian kidnapers, and Jean Claude knows about Patrice Sint Clair and the Albanians who kidnapped Kim.

At this stage we have seen how Bryan mills overcomes the various Trials that arise, how he gathers his Allies, and also what attitude he shows towards the Enemy. So, at this stage we can find him knowing more about the character of Bryan mills.

#### 7. Approach to the Deepest Cave

Bryan Mills approached the place where Patrice Sint Clair was trafficking women, then he found Kim, his daughter being offered, which

shocked him so he forced the buyer in front of him to buy her daughter so he could take her, but it turned out that Bryan Mills was caught by Patrice Sint Clair. Can be seen in the film Taken (2008), film scan at 01:11:28 - 01:15:15.

#### 8. Trial

This stage is the stage that makes the hero face the toughest challenge or biggest fear, namely losing his daughter forever (Vogler, 2007). The film conversation below shows the conflict between Bryan Mills and Patrice Sint Clair.

Bryan mills was caught by Patrice sint clair, he lost his daughter again because he was taken by her daughter's buyer. In the scene above, Bryan Mills experiences defeat when he wants to save his daughter. This stage is not the climax of the heroic journey but is the crisis event of the Second Act. Bryan mills tries to catch up with his daughter's buyer, forcing himself to go on a mission, to save Kim.

#### 9. Reward

Can be seen in the film Taken (2008), film scan at 01:25:20 - 01:25:45. The conversation above shows the Reward stages of Bryan mills' hero's journey. The conversation centers on the dialogue between Kim and Bryan Mills that occurred after their fight. The reward that Bryan Mills got after completing the Ordeal stage was successfully saving his daughter. Then he took his daughter back to America. But after this stage, the Hero will be faced with many orders in the future and it is time for him to face the next stage: The Way Back.

#### 10. Way Back

After Bryan Mills and Kim arrived at the airport, Lenore, his ex-wife and Stuart, her husband, welcomed Kim back. Then Kim was taken back home with Lenore. Can be seen in the following film Taken (2008), film scan at 01:26:20 – 01:27:23. Bryan mills is separated from his daughter who lives with her mother and stepfather. Bryan mills continues his normal life living alone without his wife and child.



## 11. Resurrection

This stage is a stage to retest the hero. Thanks to the hero's brave actions, the conflict that arose at the beginning of the story was resolved. At this stage, the change in the hero's personality is obvious. Here are several scenes Taken (2008) that show these stages film scan at 01:27:43 - 01:28:05.

The conclusion at this stage is that Bryan Mills finally returned to his main goal of helping Kim realize her dream since childhood of wanting to become a singer and she succeeded in doing it. The main conflict in the story is finally resolved.

## 12. Back with Elixir

After resurrection, the hero returns to his normal world. Bryan Mills is happier because he can see his daughter often even though he doesn't live in the same house and always ensures her daughter's safety. In this way the audience can feel a very significant difference from their previous lives. Everything Bryan mills

and Kim went through on this journey, it has all come back but it will never be the same again. There were definitely some changes due to everything they had been through together. Not returning to the ordinary world is not a bad decision.

With all the explanations above, it shows that Bryan Mills as the main character of Taken (2008) has gone through all twelve stages of the journey based on Christopher Vogler's theory.

## **The journey of heroisme**

### A. Hero

The Hero's learning or growth is another story function of the Hero archetype. Sometimes it's hard to tell who the main character is, or who they should be, when analyzing a script. The best answer is usually: the person who learns or grows the most during the story. Heroes not only overcome obstacles and achieve their goals, but they also learn new knowledge and

insights in the process. This is what makes the main character a hero. Can be seen in the film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:29:20 - 00:30:00.

When the reality of Bryan mills' words hit them, great devastation struck Lenore. And then, within seconds, Lenore as Kim's mother was crying, snot coming out of her nose and tears streaming down her face. Grieving openly and deeply, it was like something out of a Greek Tragedy. Can be seen in the film *Taken* (2008), film scan at 00:30:15 - 00:32:05.

Bryan mills is the main character in this story. He is the character who has the most problems. From the various problems that befall him, he must be able to overcome them and also learn valuable lessons from each incident. As in the quote from the incident in the story. Bryan Mills conveyed the news that his son had been kidnapped while in Paris to Lenore. He transformed into a strong and straightforward figure for the sake of his ex-wife so that she would be more calm in entrusting Kim's safety to him.

According to Vogler, most heroes are group-oriented: they are part of a family. Bryan Mills as the main character in this story is a hero who comes from a family background where one day the main character receives a quest in the form

of a journey to leave home where it is an ordinary world for him to go to a special world where the quest must be carried out (Vogler 36).

In the story in this film, Bryan Mills is the main character, which means he is the hero. Based on the various types of heroes available, he is a hero who comes from a family. The heroic story begins with Bryan Mills who received a call from his daughter who was in Paris with her friend, then Kim, his daughter, saw a stranger enter her accommodation and take her friend. And the kidnapper also tried to take him. Bryan Mills made various efforts to save his daughter. Starting from leaving his comfort zone in the Ordinary World to the Special World where many disturbances and challenges arise. Facing various kinds of trials, forming allies, and also facing enemies. He faced all of this until he entered the Ordeal. Feelings of wanting to give up

and anxiety mixed into one. However, in the end, Bryan Mills managed to overcome everything. He finally received a reward in the form of several insights and experiences that made him more protective of his daughter's safety. Bryan Mills finally returned to the Ordinary World, but he still tried to keep his daughter safe from afar, even though he wanted to be able to look after her up close, because his family's condition had been different since the divorce.

#### B. Mentor

The mentor archetype serves many functions; such as teaching or training, gift giving, motivation, cultivation, and sexual initiation. Like the Hero archetype, the Mentor archetype also has many types, namely; Dark Mentor whose role is to mislead the audience because it sometimes endangers the hero (Vogler 44).

"In some Western stories or film noir, the hero is an experienced and hardened character who does not need a Mentor or guide. He has internalized the archetype and it now lives within him as an inner code of behavior" (Vogler, 2007). Bryan mills doesn't need a mentor in the form of a wise old man or woman like most stories where the Hero meets a mentor who is an old man or woman, he just needs the help of his old colleague or friend Sam to help find out some information, after that for his actions Next, Bryan Mills uses his own abilities. The mentor is an inner mentor. Bryan mills is a trained person, he is the most experienced former CAI member, he has learned a lot from various things he has experienced in his life, and this makes him have a strong character mentally and physically, he is a person who is able to make his own decisions in his life.

### **CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS**

Based on the results of the discussion above, it can be concluded that the Hero's Journey is experienced by the main character Bryan Mills in the film Taken (2008). In his book, Christopher Vogler explains the stages a hero goes

through on a heroic journey. These stages have twelve parts where these stages can be fully experienced by a hero on his journey. However, not all of the twelve stages are fulfilled or even the twelve stages can be randomized according to the author's wishes so that the story is not monotonous and boring. As we learned in chapter four that the stages of the hero's journey are a flexible set of guidelines. After that, archetypes help determine the role of the main character in this film.

In Archetypes, Bryan mills has two roles: Hero and Mentor. The presence of Bryan Mills as the protagonist in this story is a hero. Then, the role of the Mentor is that he acts as an advisor to himself. Although in most stories the Mentor is a wise old man or woman, in this story we find a different Mentor, namely the Inner Mentor where the Hero is someone who is knowledgeable and experienced so he does not need the presence of a figure to be a mentor, he only needs himself.

The hero's journey doesn't have to be a grandiose journey like Spiderman fighting evil villains, but can be a simpler journey. Like a father who fights for his family, a figure who is ordinary and stiff at the beginning of the story becomes a mature and wise figure at the end of the story. With emotional or physical changes in the Hero from the beginning to the end of the story, as well as the presence of character archetypes, the story is included in the Hero's Journey structure.

Based on this research, there are several suggestions for readers. First, readers can analyze other films using the Hero's Journey theory because this theory is flexible and can be applied to any literary work. Second, the film Taken (2008) can be analyzed using another approach.

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