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### **Wanted: Heroes of Past Stories**

A hero is a man of distinguished courage or ability that is admired for his brave deeds and noble qualities. At least that's the definition of what a hero is, but there's more to those individuals that draw strangers idolizing eyes to their heroic actions and precarious quests. However not all heroes travel the same path and are destined the same fate. Consider these two characters: Luke Skywalker-- a farm boy intended for greatness--from George Lucas's film *Star Wars: Episode IV A New Hope* and Antigone-- the daughter and sister to Oedipus the King-- from Sophocles's play *Antigone*. But what's the connection between the two? How do they relate? Luke Skywalker and Antigone are characters that are given the title of being mythological heroes of their stories.

Looking for that the character who is destined to travel the path of past myths and heroes and who are in line to receive the official stamp of approval for the title of hero? To answer that question, there are "traditional [patterns] of mythic adventure" (Gordon, 2) that can help pinpoint the hero of the story. A few of those traditional patterns being:

the hero is orphaned or royalty,

the hero is unaware of their true identity,

the hero has an encounter with a protective figure,

and the events that a hero experiences leads to the fulfilment of their fate (Gordon,2).

In a variety of myths the hero becomes an orphan or is a member of royal family, but the statement may or may not be known to them. That trait is shared by Luke Skywalker and Antigone. In

the film Luke is deprived of his uncle and aunt when he returns to see his home destroyed by storm troopers resulting in him becoming an orphan. Although Luke is technically not consider an orphan because he has Princess Leia-- his twin sister-- and Darth Vader-- his biological father-- as living relatives. Antigone on the other hand is considered royalty to the City of Thebes, but after the truth of Oedipus's-- her father-- mistakes she was stripped of her royalty. She could also be considered an orphan because her "mother and father [are] both lost in the halls of death" (Sophocles, 1003) along with her two brothers. Both characters may not have the exact characteristic, but they do share a traditional pattern of a hero in myths.

The unknowing of one's true identity. Luke and Antigone are conflicted by trying to gain the "knowledge" (Eliade, 6) of their true identity throughout their stories. Antigone struggled with her true identity as she fought to lay her brother to rest in a respected burial. When she meet Creon face to face to receive her punishment, she spoke out to her mother saying "mother...you with your own son, my father" (Sophocles, 951-953) showing confusion of her birth. There is no real way to disperse of all confusion when it comes to having your mother marry your brother and then having your brother become your father. It's a lot, but Antigone's quest to see her brother laid to rest pushes her to discover her true identity. Even though Luke's family tree isn't as complicated, he was unaware of his true identity. That true identity being the son of Darth Vader and possessing the ability to use the Force. It wasn't until two droids-- C-3PO and R2D2-- that entered Luke's life and lead him to Obi-Wan Kenobi, Luke would have never found out his destiny and found his family. When a hero is created they never know their true identity and that is another reason why Luke Skywalker and Antigone are alike in being titled mythological heroes.

Heroes never become who they are by themselves; it takes the influence of a protective figure or simple a person who truly cares to aid them along on their journey. Luke would have never left his

uncle's household if it weren't for Obi-Wan Kenobi and his advice and stories of Luke's father.

Although for Antigone, she did not have a protective figure that showed her what to do instead she had the actions of her sister, Ismene, to heed warning to her actions. Antigone had asked her sister to "bury [their brother]-- when a law forbids the city" (Sophocles, 52-53) to do it, but she received the response that were words of wisdom and for the sake of her own safety. The opinion of Ismene may have been against what made Antigone into a hero, it was her words that guide Antigone to pursue what she thought was right. Every hero has those who help them along. Obi-Wan Kenobi for Luke and Ismene for Antigone.

The experiences that heroes go through aren't just by chance-- it all has a purpose. What was the likely hood that R2D2 and C-3PO were to be sold to Luke and his uncle? It wasn't by chance, "it was...predestined for Luke's sake" (Gordon,2). Luke needed those droids to cross his path therefore he would be lead to discover his true identity. In Antigone's case it wasn't events that occurred, but Tiresia's-- a blind prophet-- message that was to set destiny in its course. Tiresia's message that there would major consequences if Creon pursued the punishment for Antigone was sent by the gods and goddesses to help Antigone finish her quest and end as a mythological hero.

Heroes come in all forms. They could be a character from a movie such Superman or Batman. They could be the individuals that keeps the public safe on a daily basis like a police officer or firefighter. Or they could be characters such as Luke Skywalker and Antigone who are looked up to as role models and those who do what is right. In many ways Luke Skywalker and Antigone are considered mythological heroes for the variety of characteristics that they share.

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