

Hero's Journey Analysis – "Casablanca"

ORDINARY WORLD

Voiceover

People come to Casablanca looking to get to Lisbon
And then to the new world
Need to get a visa
But many are left waiting, waiting ..

CALL TO ADVENTURE

Hear about the murder of two German couriers
Important document stolen – THE MACGUFFIN
Round up the usual suspects

The whole film will revolve around these stolen documents
- Hitchcock called this device the MACGUFFIN

Guy with wrong papers is shot
So we see immediately that we are playing for keeps here

This place is full of vultures, a guy tells an English couple – he's stolen their wallet

A plane flies in
A young woman tells her husband – perhaps tomorrow we'll be on the plane

Major Strasser arrives – Nazi

ANTAGONIST

Wants to know what progress has been made on murder of German couriers
French head of police, RENAULT (Paul Henreid), a SHAPESHIFTER< says that whoever did it will be at Rick's tonight
Everyone eventually comes to Rick's

FORESHADOWING

Eventually Rick's true love will also come to Rick's

Rick's Americain Cafe

7:12

Everyone in the café is doing a deal to get out of Casablanca

A guest asks to drink with Rick
We are told Rick never drinks with customers
I've never seen it

SET UP

Later when Rick does drink with Lazslo and Ilsa we'll know his world has been shaken

Finally see Rick

9:54

Playing chess by himself

We don't meet the hero until we're ten minutes into the film – and he is clearly a Loner

CALL TO ADVENTURE

UGARTE (Peter Lorrie) comes in to see Rick

He is really a HERALD – without him the story doesn't begin

Tries to engage in conversation

Says that Rick is cynical

You hate me, don't you?

I don't mind a parasite

I object to a cut rate one

So he's a man of principle

He has a letter of transit

Asks Rick to keep it for him

REFUSAL

Says he won't keep it for more than a few hours

Ugarte agrees

CROSSING THE FIRST THRESHOLD

Rick knows that Lorrie has killed the German Couriers to get this letter of transit

Sing song at the bar

Rick slips the letter of transit under the music on the piano

Having done this, Rick's life is about to be changed

TESTS, ALLIES & ENEMIES

Ferrari (Sidney Greenstreet) comes in

How's business at the Blue Parrot?

Wants to buy Rick's

Wants Sam the piano player

Sam likes it fine here

Even for twice the money

Ferrari is Rick's SHADOW

They are both bar owners in Casablanca

Ferrari has traded in humans

Rick hasn't

Also establish here that Rick engenders incredible loyalty

Girl sitting at the bar
 He's clearly been involved
 She says she was a fool to get involved with a man like
 you

Sees her off

16:24

So he's a lady's man

But he's clearly not giving himself emotionally

Rick chats with Renault

The French policeman

Wants to know why he came to Casablanca

Rick doesn't give anything away

Is told that an arrest is going to be made in his bar
 tonight

Don't be tempted to warn anyone

I stick my neck out for nobody, says Rick

BIG CHARACTER CLUE HERE

Rick's flaw — he's withdrawn

Having spent his life fighting for good causes

He's sitting on the fence

The film will be about him getting back in the game

Renault tells him that Victor Lazslo, one of the major
 figures in the Resistance, is coming to Casablanca

Rick, for once, is impressed

Renault insists that he cannot leave Casablanca

Points out that Rick has never sold an exit visa

Unusual

Separates him from the rest

A cynic but principled

Says Lazslo will need two exit visas

One for his woman

FORESHADOWING

They make a bet that Lazslo will get out

Rick bets that he will

Rick ran guns

He fought for the losers in the Spanish Civil War

EXPOSITION

Tells us that he was once engaged

Major Strasser arrives

Renault prepares for arrest

Ugarte (Peter Lorrie) arrested

Tries to make a run for it
Fires a gun

Pleads to Rick to hide him
Rick does nothing

I stick my neck out for nobody he repeats
22:40
Again, stressing that he is a cynic

Strasser asks Rick to join the table
Nationality?
A drunkard
Rick is completely neutral
Again, his patriotism is dead
He is the antithesis of Lazslo at this point

Cannot return to his country
We know what you did in Paris
And why you left
FORESHADOWING, hinting at his past

CALL TO ADVENTURE
Strasser says Lazslo published lies in Prague

REFUSAL
Rick reiterates he won't help him

CALL TO ADVENTURE
Lazslo arrives with Ilsa Lund (Ingrid Bergman)
Sam the piano player sees her
Disturbed
25:36

Lazslo is looking for Ugarte

A guy, BERGER, a Norwegian identifies himself to them
Is at his service
Establishes Lazslo's standing

Renault introduces himself

Ilsa recognises Sam
Finds out he is with Rick
She doesn't know she is in Rick's
Henreid says if he was a woman he'd be in love with Rick
Strasser says Lazslo is now a German subject
Lazslo will only agree to meet Strasser if Renault insists

Ilsa says she fears for Lazslo

A girl sings

Lazslo says he must find out what Berger knows
Leaves Ilsa
29:28

Berger tells Lazslo that Ugarte has been arrested

Tells him of a meeting tomorrow night

Ilisa asks Sam to come over to see her
A lot of water under the bridge
Where is Rick?
He went home
He's got a girl at the Blue Parrot
Leave him alone, Miss Ilisa

Without telling us directly, Sam is making it clear that
Ilisa has hurt Rick

Play it, Sam. As time Goes by
31:51

CALL TO ADVENTURE
Sam starts playing the song
A tear comes to her eye

REFUSAL
Rick arrives furious
Told you to never play that song

Then he sees Ilisa
Sam runs for it

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD
Oh, you've already met Rick?, says Renault
Rick agrees to drink with Lazslo
Rick congratulates Lazslo
Lazslo is a MENTOR to Rick – he is what he once strove to
be

Ilisa recalls when they last saw one another in Paris
Renault observes that Rick is being humanised by Ilisa
She is beginning the process of RESURRECTION

Rick picks up the tab

Ilisa says noone can play As Time Goes By like Sam
He hasn't played it in a long time

Rick has been hurt by this woman

He sits in the bar dinking

35:24

He wants to embark on this adventure

Sam tells him should go to bed – a REFUSAL

Never going to bed

He's waiting for a lady

He thinks she'll come

36:22

Of all the gin joints ...

She walks into mine

You played it for her, you can play it for me

Sam plays As Time Goes By

He's a tortured soul

We FLASHBACK to the two of them in Paris

A different looking Rick

Almost smiling

38:03

Flowers and champagne

He asks questions of her

Here's looking at you, kid

They dance

She says there was a man in her life

But he's dead

(We've already been told that Lazslo has been "dead" 5 times)

The Nazis invade Paris

He's already on their blacklist

Sam plays in the bar

As Time Goes By

They have champagne

Here's looking at you, kid

41:57

The Nazi will be in Paris tomorrow

Bad timing to fall in love

Where was she ten years ago?

Having a brace put on my teeth

They kiss

Cannon fire, or my heart pounding?

Rick is in danger

You must leave
 We must leave
 She says she'll meet you at the station
 She's clearly dissembling
 He wants to marry her in Marseille
 She cries

If something should keep us apart ...
 44:43

Kiss me as if it was the last time

Rick waits at the train in rain
 She doesn't show
 Sam brings a note saying she can't ever see him again

Rick gets on the train
 Looking forlornly around
 Tosses the note

The reminiscence is over
 46:27

We have just witnessed Rick's Ordeal
 We have seen the DEATH of his heart
 The DEATH of his idealism and heroism

He has been resurrected – but not in a better form
 He has come back as a cynical, withdrawn, neutralist

Ilsa comes in
 46:40

She wants to deliver the ELIXIR
 I have to talk to you
 Says she wouldn't have come if she knew he was here
 Says his insides were kicked out
 She tells of meeting Lazslo after arriving from Oslo
 How her life opened up
 Rick gets nasty
 Slumps forward

He REFUSES

49:08
 Renault and Strasser meet with Lazslo and Ilsa
 Strasser says he will never leave Casablanca
 Renault says he won't sign an exit visa
 Strasser says he can leave if he reveals who the leaders
 of the Resistance are
 Lazslo refuses
 Says if they killed, others would rise up

Strasser says that noone could replace him
Establishing clearly his MENTOR credentials

Tells him that Ugarte is dead

52:08

Renault helps young ladies with "visa problems"

Rick comes into the Blue Parrot
Talks with Ferrari
Says that he will take the Letters of Transit
Handle the transaction for a fee

Lazslo arrives to talk to Ferrari
54:44

Rick comes up to Ilsa
She's not happy with him
She says he's changed
He wants her to come up to his place
Says she was married to Lazslo – even when they were
together in Paris

REVELATION

Ferrari says he could organise for her to go on alone
But she won't do it

Lazslo loves her very much
58:13

Ferrari tells Lazslo that Ugarte left letters with Rick

Waiter observes that Rick is becoming his best customer
He is at a low here

Rick's former girl, Yvonne, has gone over to the enemy
A French guy has a go at her for collaborating
A fight breaks out
Rick breaks it up

Strasser says it might be too dangerous to let Lazslo
leave, maybe too dangerous to let him stay

1:02:20

TEST

A woman approaches Rick
Can she trust Captain Renault?
Her husband is at the roulette table trying to win enough
money for an exit visa

They have come from Bulgaria
 Only been married 8 weeks
 Renault has offered to sleep with her for the visas
 Can she trust him?
 Yes.
 She asks what would he think if someone he loved did this
 to him
 He says no-one ever loved him that much

Rick is seeing here a woman who is like Ilsa
 Willing to sacrifice herself for a higher casue

1:05:17
 Lazslo and Ilsa arrive
 Tells Sam to play As Time Goes By

Rick goes to the roulette table
 And tells him to put his money on 22
 He wins
 Renault watches
 He wins again
 Cash it in and don't come back

The girl thanks him

His staff think he's done a beautiful thing
 As I suspected, a rank sentimentalist, says Renault

Rick has passed the TEST
 He has started the climb back up

1:08:33
 APPROACH TO THE INMOST CAVE
 MEETING WITH THE MENTOR
 Lazslo comes to Rick
 Rick says that he's not interested in the problems of the
 world
 Wont' give the letters to Lazslo at any price
 Why not?
 Ask your wife

A REFUSAL
 Rick is being offered the chance to do something great
 for the world but he has knocked it back. He's still
 being selfish.

MEETING WITH THE MENTOR
 Germans sing together
 Lazslo leads them in singing La Marseilles
 With Rick's approval
 (So much for sticking out his neck for no man)

Even the traitor Yvonne sings

Ilsa looks at Lazslo
She sees the man she married
Everyone cheers
1:11:44

We've raised the STAKES here
Rick loves Ilsa and we love Rick
But Lazslo is a worthy RIVAL

Strasser says that they must close the café
Renault does as he requests

Strasser warns Ilsa

Lazslo tells Ilsa what Rick said
1:14:38

He asks whether she was lonely in the concentration camp
She was
But she doesn't have anything to tell him

He goes off to meet someone

Rick finds out he can stay closed for a couple of weeks
Everyone to stay on full salary

ORDEAL

She goes to Rick's
She says he must give her those letters
He must put his feelings aside
One woman has hurt you and you take out your revenge on
the rest of the world
If he doesn't give her the letters Lazslo will die
She pulls a gun on him
Go ahead and shoot
You'll be doing me a favour
But she can't do it
She cries
1:19:46

REWARD

They hug
If you knew how much I loved you, how much I still love
you
They kiss

He hears the story
She thought Lazslo was dead
She was lonely
Then she met Rick

She and Lazslo didn't tell anyone they were married
 Too dangerous for her
 She only found out that Lazslo was still alive just
 before Rick left
 She says she can't fight it any more
 She can't leave him again
 She can't think
 He'll have to think for all of them
 Here's looking at you, kid

1:22:27

THE ROAD HOME

Lazslo arrives downstairs at Rick's
 Rick gets Carl to take Ilsa home

Lazslo has cut himself in getting away
 SACRIFICE

Their meeting was broken up by the Nazis
 Says Rick is trying to escape himself
 Says he knows about him and Ilsa
 He says that if he won't give him the letters, give them
 to Ilsa

THE MENTOR has been willing to make a huge sacrifice

Lazslo is arrested

Rick is now faced with a decision
 While Lazslo was free, he could defer his decision
 But now the fate of the world is in Rick's hands

RESURRECTION

Rick pleads Lazslo's case to Renault
 Rick admits that he has the letters
 Says he is going to get on the plane to Lisbon with Ilsa
 that night

Rick says they should release Lazslo
 He'll get him to come to collect letters of transit
 Then they can arrest him and throw him back in the
 concentration camp

Rick arranges a deal with Ferrari to take over his café

Rick looks at the letters

1:29:07

Ilsa says Lazslo thinks she's going with him
 Says they will tell him at the airport

Renault comes in to make the arrest

But Rick pulls a gun

Gets Renault to call the airport
(But he's called Strasser instead)

TICKING CLOCK

1:31:55

Airport

Rick arrives with Lazslo and Isla
He gets Renault to fill out the forms
With Lazslo and Ilsa's name

Ilsa is shocked
He says that she has to get on the plane with Lazslo
Otherwise she'll regret it
He says what he's got to do she can't be a part of

Rick has responded to the HIGHER CALLING

We'll always have Paris
ELIXIR

Strasser drives to the airport

Welcome back to the fight, Lazslo says
This time our side will win

1:35:20

She gets on the plane
Rick watches

Strasser arrives
Rick says he's willing to shoot him
Shoots Major Strasser rather than see Lazslo stopped

At this point, Rick's fate is in Renault's hands

SHARING THE ELIXIR
Round up the usual suspects

Rick's SACRIFICE has so affected Renault that he has in
turn stuck his neck out

The plane takes off

Louis, I think this is the beginning of a beautiful
friendship – the ELIXIR