

Hero's Journey Analysis – "Moonstruck"

Step 1 – The Ordinary World

Picture of the Moon
 When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie
 That's amore
 Signs come out for La Boheme at the Met

This film is going to be about romantic love (cf with
 When Harry Met Sally)

The Met

Brooklyn Bridge

Cher in a coat
 Walks down the street
 A Met Opera Scenic Shop truck drives past
 It backs into the Lincoln Centre
 La Boheme Act 1 is on the back of the scene

She goes into a funeral home
 Dead guy
 Loretta's life is dead

She's doing the undertaker's books
 She plays mother to him

3:45
 Now we go to the other end of the spectrum
 A florists

Red roses
 Loretta says they're a waste of money
 But then says she loves flowers
 And he gives her a rose
 Despite her protests she likes it
 She is that closed rose

Grand Ticino
 Johnny and Loretta at dinner
 No, you don't want the fish
 She is running the show
 You look after me – she is playing mother

John Mahoney is fighting with a younger woman
 5:28
 A man who can't control his woman is funny
 We're introducing a character who will play a role later

Johnny is going to propose

Good bachelor customer for 20 years
This is exposition – but it's funny

CALL TO ADVENTURE

Will you marry me?
I had bad luck
She wants to do it right

REFUSAL

Kneel down
She helped him pick it out
So she's trying to make this more romantic

Where is the ring?
Doesn't have one

CROSSES THE THRESHOLD

Yes, I will marry you
8:30

But is this the real call?
A more interesting call is about to come.

What about the wedding
When
How about we set a date
My mother is dying
A month from today
Johnny looks uncomfortable

CALL TO ADVENTURE

Johnny asks Loretta to call his brother, Ronnie
Invite him to the wedding
We haven't spoken in 5 years
There was some bad blood

A woman puts a hex on the plane
I don't believe in curses

Loretta doesn't call Ronnie
It's not a true refusal (because it's not driven by fear)
but it does still create a pause

Plane goes past the moon

MEETING WITH THE MENTOR

Loretta drops into a liquor store
Gets some champagne
This guy has been checking out women
You know what I see in you

A wolf
 You know what I see in you
 The woman I married
 There is romance there
 A heart on the window
 13:28

There is this recurring theme through the film of
 animals, meat, blood – it's visceral because passion is
 visceral rather than cerebral.

This is a MEETING WITH THE MENTOR scene – Loretta is
 being reminded what passionate love looks like. She's not
 going to pay any attention to it. It's a refusal of
 sorts.

She comes into the house
 Her father is listening to Vicki Carr

He can't sleep any more
 Too much like death
 I have some news

They go into the kitchen

She says she's getting married
 Again?
 You did this once more it didn't work out
 Don't get married again, Loretta

Johnny Camareri is a big baby
 He won't come to the wedding

No wedding reception
 He got down on his knees
 That's not like like Johnny – no, it's not, she made him
 Let's go tell your mother

So the Mentor figure is warning her she is doing the
 wrong thing – he is a flawed mentor, the more flawed of
 the two parents, but he speaks the truth.

THIS IS A VERY INTERESTING MEET THE MENTOR
 Because of its placement
 And because of his flawed nature

17:04
 They go in to see a sleeping Rose
 Who's dead?
 Loretta's getting married again
 Do you love him
 No

Good because when you love them they drive you crazy

Now he's going to play that damn Vicki Carr record and
when he comes to bed he won't touch me.

Rose is another MENTOR figure – the two mentors are
often giving different advice. Her father is saying don't
marry this guy because he's a goose, and the mother is
saying she should because he won't break her heart. This
is the central dilemma of the film.

The grandfather with his dogs and all the old Italian
guys

See la luna

The moon brings the woman to the man

Further demonstration of the theme's message

Rose with Loretta

Will you live here?

No

Because Dad doesn't like Johnny

She is saying she's 37

She won't have children

Pop don't like Johnny

She gets a call from Italy

Johnny

I am calling from the death bed of my mother

22:13

Did you tell her we're getting married?

No, I'm waiting til she's peaceful

Well don't wait until she's dead

Another CALL TO ADVENTURE

He reminds her to go see Ronnie

Reminds him to wear a hat in the sun

She issues a CALL TO ADVENTURE

She calls Ronny

He REFUSES THE CALL

Hangs up

Animal

What an animal – again this animal theme

Fire, sweat, muscles

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

She comes into the bread shop

She goes down into the oven

Leading down into a new world – an underworld, a fiery place. Even though she hasn't formally crossed the threshold in character's terms, we have a literal crossing of a threshold here and she has entered a world that is very different from her own.

Ronnie by the ovens sweating
Loretta in an overcoat buttoned up
CONTRAST

26:06

TESTS, ALLIES & ENEMIES

He tells his story
I have no life
My brother Johnny took my life from me
Bread is life
Bring me the big knife
I want to end my life

He shows his hand
He was engaged to be married
Johnny ordered bread
He put his hand in the slicer
His fiancé left him
That's the bad blood
Not Johnny's fault

Cassie bring me the big knife
No!

Man gives up his one dream of happiness

This is all exposition
There is no genuine conflict because there's nothing at stake, but he is clearly a very different man to his fiancé. It works because of the writing and the performance but it's still just exposition. It's therefore difficult to characterise. But Loretta has entered the special world and meeting new and challenging individuals – this guy is a shapeshifter. He's impossible but she's drawn to him.

Little Cassie says
This is the most tormented man I know
He could never love anyone

Loretta invites him upstairs
CALL TO ADVENTURE

He opens the door

She CROSSES THE THRESHOLD

Her pop does his plumbing spiel

I think we should follow Mr Castorini's advice, heart

He repeats it to his mistress, Mona.

He gives her necklace

We are learning more about their world

We're still orienting to their world

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

They are playing Donde Lieta usci from Boheme

In Ronnie's flat

She is making him a steak

He wants it well done

She's making it bloody to feed his blood

Again – this visceral theme

Primal

As he eats

Why are you talking to me?

34:36

Good question. Why? She's drawn to him.

Got any whisky?

She's fortifying herself for an ordeal

Pop says goodbye to his mistress

ORDEAL

She was right to leave me, Ronny says

They talk about love

She held out of love

She met him

I got no man, no baby, no nothing

She says she can see the true story

I see everything

You are a wolf

The big part of you has no words

She trapped you

You chewed your hand off to get out of the trap

She is the wrong woman

Why are you marrying Johnny

He's a fool

He clears the table

Kisses

REFUSAL OF THE CALL

Wait a minute, wait a minute

CROSSES THRESHOLD

The she kisses him
Takes her to the bed

ORDEAL

I was dead
Me too
What about Johnny
Take out your revenge on me
They make love

We have witnessed the death of Loretta's old self here
A figurative "death" from poetry
This puts it in the class of an ordeal

Back on Tests, Allies and Enemies
People are over for dinner
Marriage is happy news
I've never seen anyone so in love like Cosmo
One time I woke up
Bright light
It was the moon as big as a house
I looked down, it was Cosmo
Because he was so in love
You were dreaming
He doesn't want to talk about it

This is more exposition
Hard to classify

Cosmo is asleep in bed
41:38

Mother looks out at the moon
Sheds a tear

REWARD

Loretta looks out at the same moon
Perfect
I never seen a moon like that before

Rita look
It's Cosmo's moon
43:22
It's that moon I was talking about
This is the herald of a big love
In that light, you look about 25 years old
He comes back for some loving

Grandfather is out with his dogs
 Guardate la luna, la bella luna
 Howl at the moon

REFUSAL

She wakes up next to Ronny

46:23

You ruined my life

No, you ruined my life

She says that she's still going to marry Ronnie

Loretta's true self knows what she should do
 But she's afraid
 So having crossed the threshold into the special world,
 She's trying to back-pedal. But that's difficult.

CALL TO ADVENTURE

He says that he won't go to the wedding if she agrees to
 go to the opera with him tonight

REFUSAL

She resists.

CROSSES THE THRESHOLD

I'll see you at the Met

Where's the Met?

So she is about to enter another SPECIAL WORLD — a
 romantic land that is alien to Loretta.

MEETING WITH THE MENTOR

She goes to confession

I slept with the brother of my fiancée

48:57

Be careful Loretta

Reflect on your life

MEETING WITH THE MENTOR

She meets her mother in church

Where you been

Cosmo is cheating on me

This is a warning to Loretta of the pursuit of passionate
 love.

MEETING WITH THE MENTOR

Raymond and Rita

You were a tiger last night

You were a lamb

That moon, that crazy moon
 See that moon last night
 She denies having seen it

You got a date?
 Isn't it romantic

So having been warned off it by her mother
 Here we are seeing a reason to pursue romantic love

I got a lot on my mind
 I don't want to talk about it

APPROACHING THE INMOST CAVE

Loretta goes into a hair salon
 Gets the grey taken out
 Eyebrows

She emerges a new woman
 Guys wolf whistle

She looks at a dress in a store window
 She runs into nuns
 54:00

A little niggling warning

She arrives home
 Pours herself a glass
 Puts on some music
 Lights a fire
 Open all the things she's bought
 Holds her beautiful shoes
 Her dress
 Looks at herself
 Applies lipstick

THE ORDEAL

She goes to the opera
 Meets Ronnie
 55:42

The music reinforces the scene

She meets up with Ronnie
 They look at one another

You look beautiful

REFUSAL

She won't kiss him
I said I'd go to the opera with you but that's all

CROSSING THE THRESHOLD

They go in
57:46

It's been a long time since he's been to the opera

Pop and his mistress take their seats as well
He's nervous he'll be seen

Loretta watches the lights go up

Here we go
As the music starts

TEST

Mother goes into the Grand Ticino
John Mahoney is there again with a woman

She throws the drink in his face
She's just too young for you
Too young. Ouch.
She invites him over for dinner
Don't shit where you eat

Why do men chase women?
Nerves
Because they fear death
1:03:05

He started out wanting to share something
Now it's all rote
When he looks out and sees a young woman
It doesn't last long
She catches on that he's just a burned out old gasbag

Intermission at the opera
Pop is at the bar with Ronnie

Loretta says she doesn't really get it

Mum walks home with John Mahoney

Grandfather takes the dogs out
1:06:00

They run into one another
He thinks she's having an affair

Act 3 La Boheme

Donde liete usci
Loretta is crying

She holds his hand
They look at one another

Addio senza rancor
On stage they hold hands

She died – common association of the Ordeal

She runs into her father
What are you doing here
Mona
He points the finger at Ronnie
What are you doing here
What are you doing here

Mother arrives
You can't invite me in
Because of people
No, because I'm married, I know who I am

She is an evolved individual
But her views are still flawed
A flawed Mentor

I'm too old for you
I'm too old for me

He kisses her on the cheek
1:11:05

She passes her test

Loretta and Ronnie in a bar
What do you want to do now
I want to go home

They walk down the street
Very cold
1:12:22

She wants to go
He wants her to come up

Playing it safe is just about the most dangerous thing a
woman like you could do
Why didn't you wait for the right man

1:14:10
Love don't make things nice

It makes things a mess
 We aren't here to make things perfect
 We are here to ruin ourselves
 I want you to come upstairs with me and get in my bed

Che gelida manina
 My tiny hand is frozen
 He holds out his hand
 As the snow starts
 She goes in

SHE CROSSES THE THRESHOLD AGAIN

So, she has entered the ordeal
 And the old Loretta dies once for all here

THE ROAD HOME
 Johnny arrives back at the airport

This is classic
 Loretta is at a high romantic point of her life
 But here we are being reminded that her journey is not
 over. There is some rocky stuff up ahead.

A very good example of The Road Home

Johnny goes to Loretta's
 She's not there
 1:17:40

Wake up Loretta
 She's not home yet
 Where is she?
 Out
 There has been a miracle
 My mother has recovered
 1:19:05

The grandfather comes in with dogs

Why do men chase women?
 Maybe men chase women to get the rib back
 A man isn't complete as a man without a woman

Why would a man need more than one woman
 Because he fears death
 Thank you

Father comes home
 Where you been

I don't know

You should have your eyes open my friend

Doesn't matter what you do, you're going to die like
everyone else

He doesn't like you
1:21:47

REWARD

The opera is playing on the record player

O soave fanciulla

Loretta is kicking a can down the street

Ronnie sits listening to the music

Loretta walks into the house
Dancing

Your hair is different
Ma, everything is different

That is a typical comment after an ordeal
The hero is changed

More ROAD HOME

She has a love bite
Your life is going down the toilet
So she's going to find it hard to deny something has
happened. She's marked.

THE RESURRECTION

Johnny arrives at the house
It's Ronnie
Good we can get this out on the table

You've got a love bite on your neck
They are now paired

She says Ronnie has to get out of here
But he says he's staying
There is going to be a confrontation

You're Johnny's brother?
Father looks at Loretta
Oh, oh

Grandfather says he must pay for the wedding

It's OK
 If she gets married I'll pay for the whole thing
 Let's eat

She confronts her husband
 Have I been a good wife?
 I want you to stop seeing her
 1:27:48
 Gets up stamps the table
 OK
 And go to confession
 A man understands one day that his life is built on
 nothing
 Your life is not built on nothing
 Ti amo
 Anchio ti amo

Rita and Raymond arrive
 She forgot to make the deposit
 Shows she was not herself

What are we doing
 Waiting for Johnny

Johnny arrives
 Have you come to make peace with me

I told my mother we were about to get married
 She could get better

Johnny says he can't marry her
 If I marry you, my mother will die

Loretta complains that he is breaking a promise
 Johnny hasn't changed
 He's still a Mummy's boy who's not ready for a grown up
 relationship.

Ronnie proposes
 Loretta will you marry me
 Yes, I will

Do you love him
 Oh, Ma, I love him something awful
 Oh, that's too bad.

The Mentor is warning her that this is not going to be a
 smooth passage, but deep down she knows that she is doing
 the right thing – she is doing what she did.

Grandfather is confused

SHARING THE ELIXIR

They pour champagne

Literally sharing the elixir

Alla famiglia

Soaring music

Quando men vo

1:34::39