

# Not a Heroine's Journey

Writing Powerful Female-Driven Stories

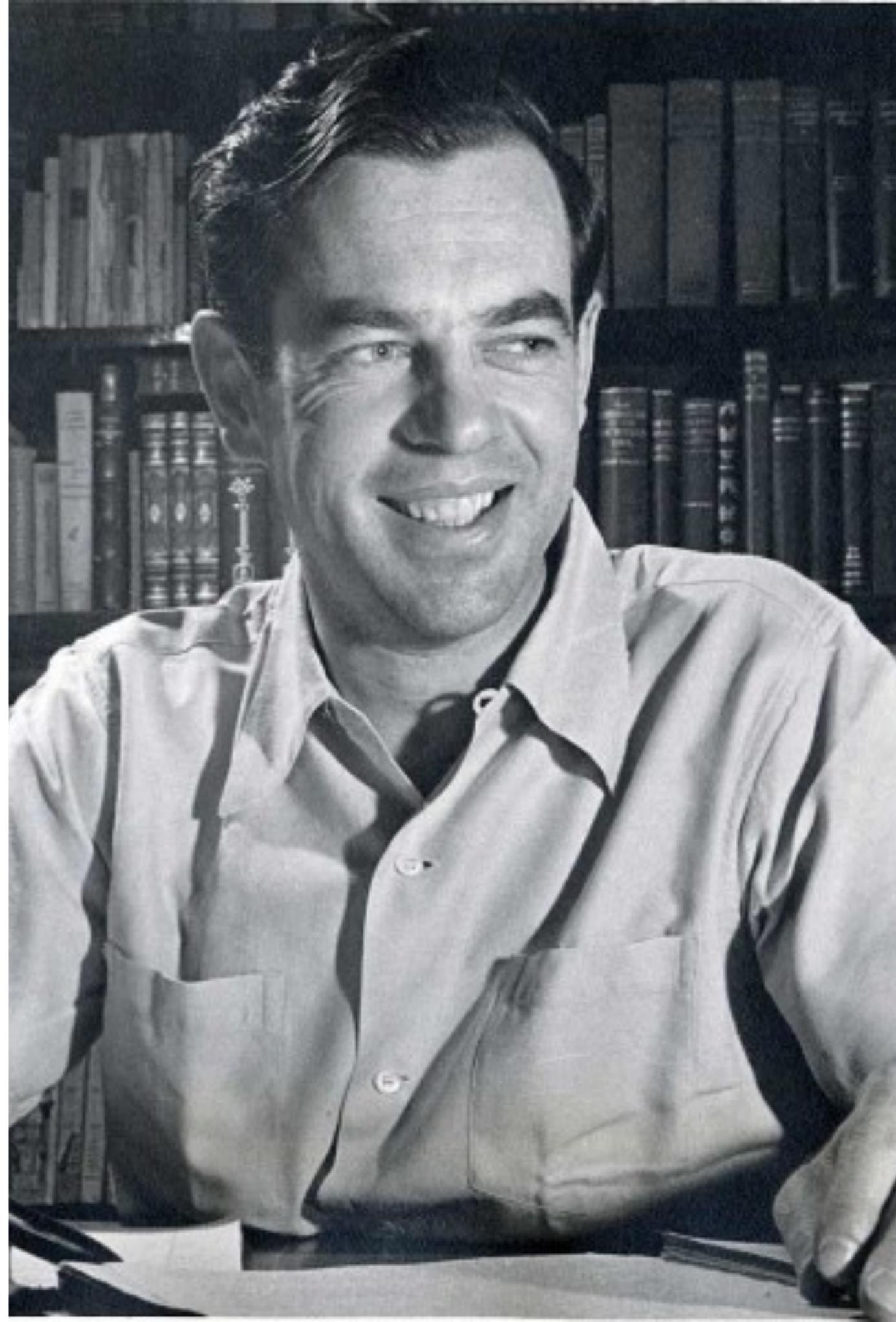
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Stacey Simmons, MA, PhD, LMFT

# Joseph Campbell

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Joseph Campbell first described the Hero's Journey in his seminal work, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (1949). In it he outlines how the myth of the hero has the same basic structure across stories and cultures. This archetypal journey has been adapted in psychology, and all manner of narrative story telling.





## Marie Louise von Franz

Marie Louise von Franz received a doctorate in 1934 from the University of Zurich, and worked closely with Carl Jung until his death in 1961. Besides being one of the founders and leaders of Jungian Psychology as a discipline, von Franz did extensive research into the origin of fairy tales and their psychological impact. She analyzed fairy tales as stories that demonstrated the continuity and inculturation of patriarchal domination. Her work continues to be relevant for her insightful examination of the symbolism in fairy tales and other foundations of the Western Canon.

# Maureen Murdock

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Maureen Murdock described the Heroine's Journey primarily as one where the heroine separates from her feminine self, and identifies with the masculine aspects of life. She goes on a quest, similar to hero, and encounters many of the same way markers as outlined in the Hero's Journey.

While there is value in identifying this as a manner in which women try to compete with men in patriarchy, it is insufficient to women's experience in patriarchal culture. It is not a stand-alone mythopoetic model for women's lived experience. To be fair, there is much similarity between Murdock's work and mine, but we came to our conclusions separately. I had not read her work before mapping out the Queen's Path and the Write Women method.



“Freeing yourself was one thing, claiming ownership of that freed self was another.”

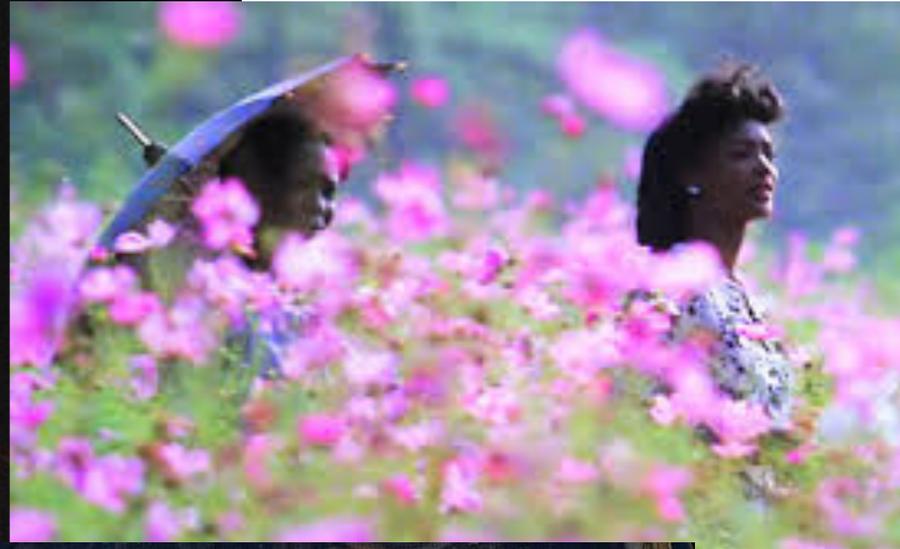
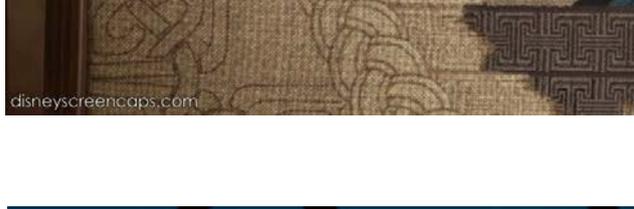
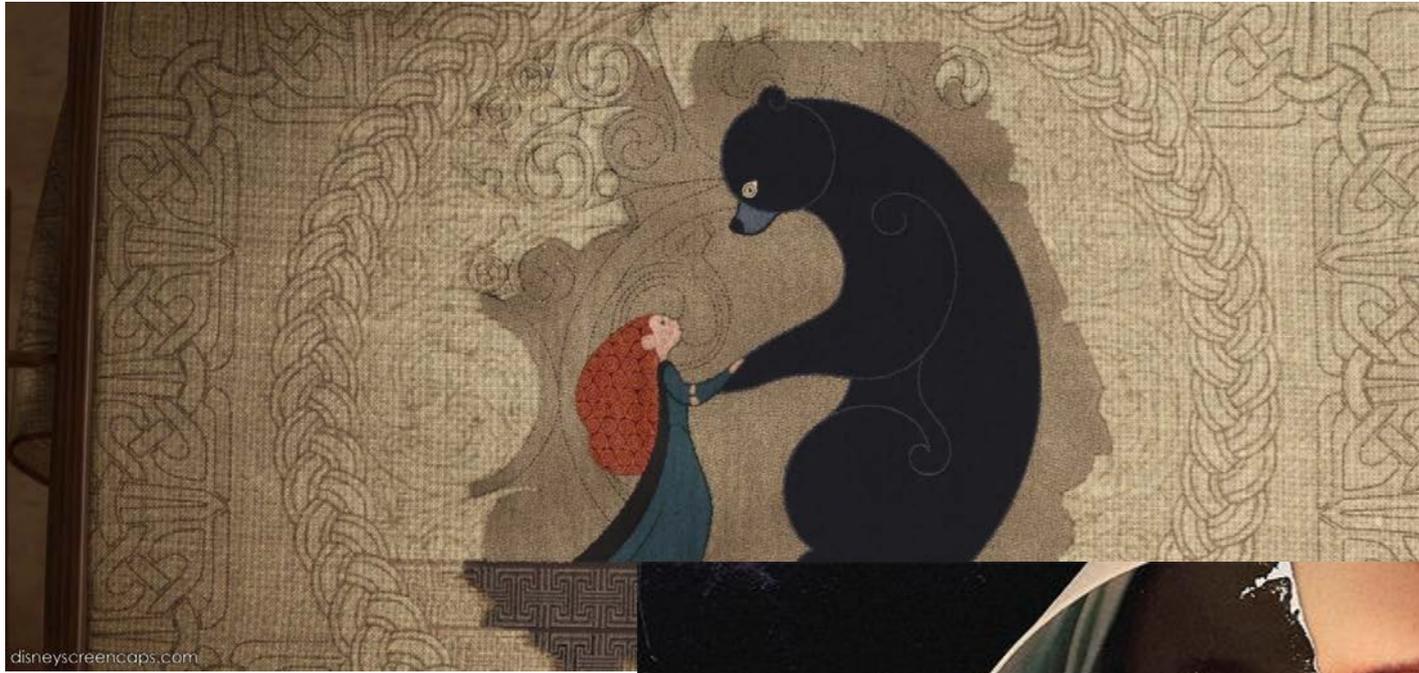
**-Toni Morrison**

## Definition of an Archetype:

An archetype is a collection of behaviors, qualities, attitudes, and attributes that are easily recognizable, and seen/experienced together across cultures.

Who is the Divided Woman?





# Every Story includes a tale of the Divided Woman

## Attributes on Either Side of the Divide

- Be Available
- Pretty
- Effortless
- Agreeable
- Objectified, but preferably asexual
- Intuitive & Understanding
- Needs Protection
- Allows others to have power & authority
- Is like-able
- Her power is attached to a man, or to her family
- Has domestic skills
- Depends on someone for money

- Be unobtainable/aspirational
- Serious
- Work Hard
- Mysterious
- Desirable & Dominated or Dominating
- Knowledgeable & Powerful
- Strong & Unprotected
- Holds her own power & authority
- Confident
- Can do anything before her
- Has worldly skills
- Makes her own money

# The Sovereign Queen



- The Sovereign Queen is a balance between the MIPE & MISOR, though she may lean more towards one than the other.
- The Sovereign Queen has learned that her power comes from uniting the two divided parts, and becoming whole.
- She does not participate in the struggle between dyads (work-life balance, magic and power, good vs evil, chaste vs wanton). Struggle is the domain of the forces of *Divide et Impera*, Divide and Conquer.
- The Queen does not allow anyone to treat her with disrespect, though that does not mean that she is haughty or brash. She quite simply knows her own value & worth. She defines her own *Impera*, her own reason for being.





# Five Core Principles

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## Once Upon a Time (OUT)

This period of the character's or characters' lives is marked by being undifferentiated. Pairs of young women, children or a single child, or young person; still somehow in the bosom of the family or tribe.



## Rendered

This period begins the path of the Divided Woman. The character or characters are divided against themselves. If a single character her inner conflict begins here. If pairs of characters, then this is the period where they are separated from one another.



## DANGER: Chase(d)/Hunted

The character either chases someone or is hunted. She may go on a pursuit to get someone back, or she may be in exile. This is the most dangerous part of her journey. Everything can end right here, fairytales end right here.



## Embodied Transcendence

Character sees her reflection and confronts her divide, either in herself or her sister. She engages in an act of redemption, and comes to an illumination or awareness through a physical circumstance.



## Crowned

Character or characters claims her role. In the story she can become an actual queen, or simply have sovereignty over her own life, actions, domain, etc.



## First Quadrant: Undifferentiated/Chimaeric

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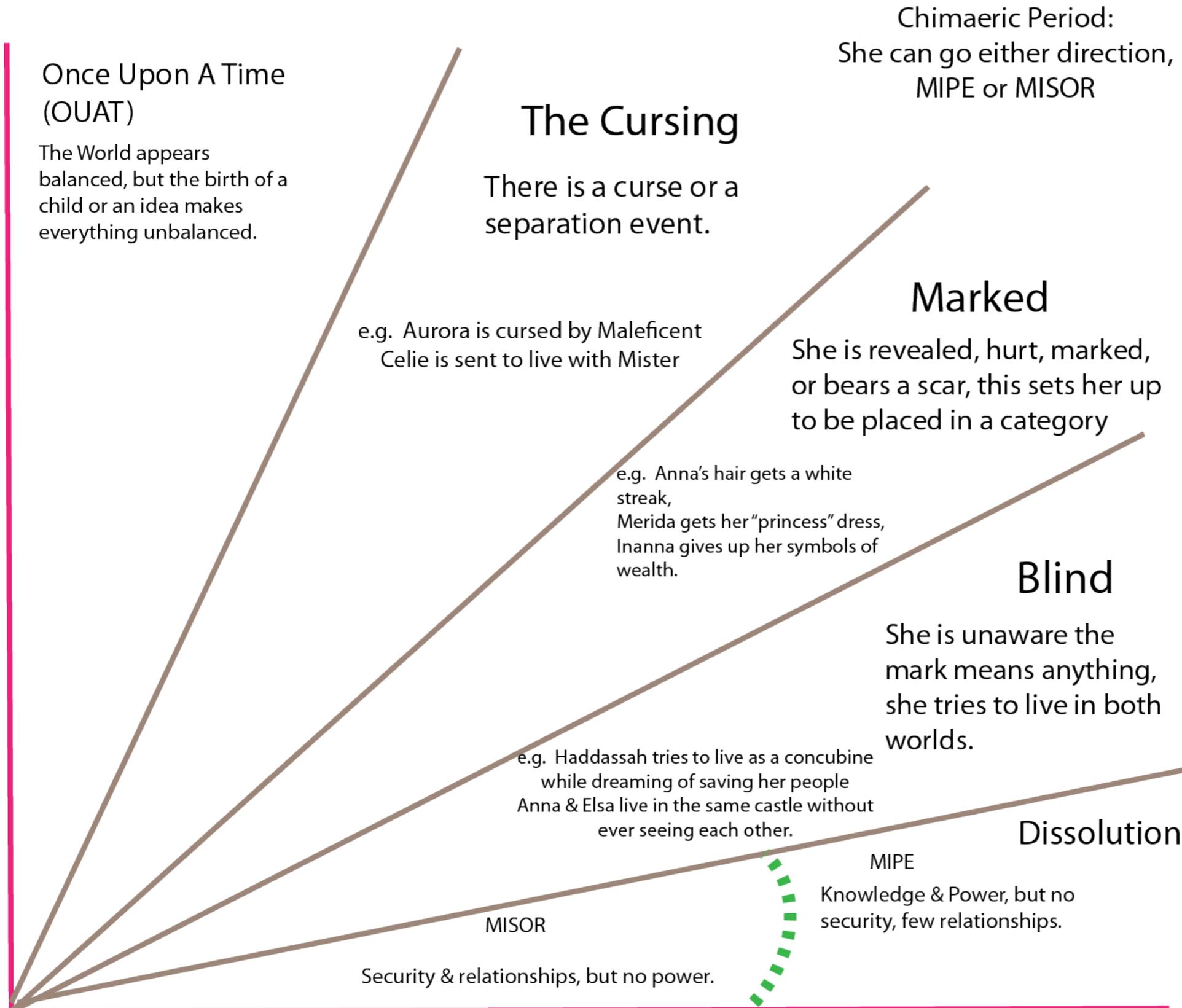
- Girl or Girls do not know that there is a separation coming.
- Things happen that indicate what is coming.
- In modern myth: marked, cursed, blinded, and ultimately divided.

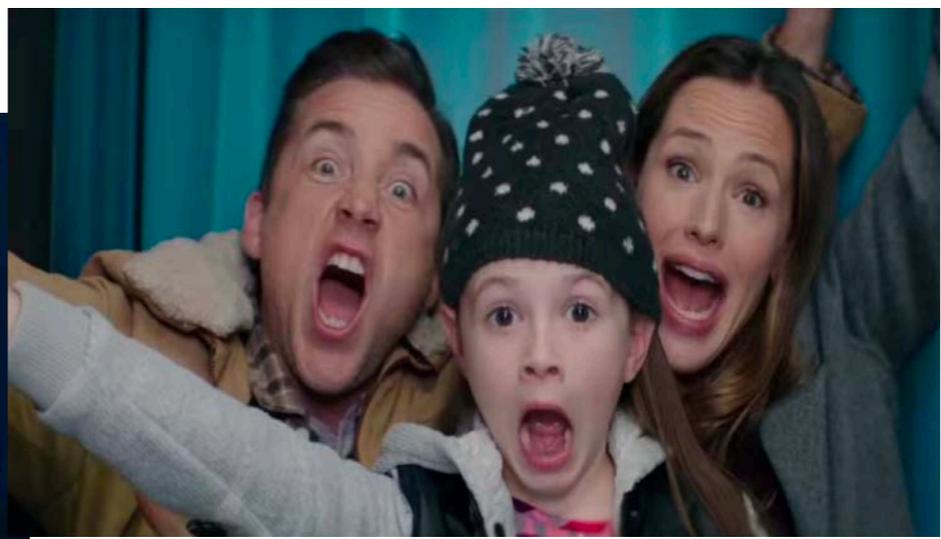


Life in Four Quadrants:  
Taking the Queen's Road to the Path of Power

Quadrant I:  
Undifferentiated

# Quadrant I: Undifferentiated World of Visible Power & Form





# Second Quadrant: Rendered

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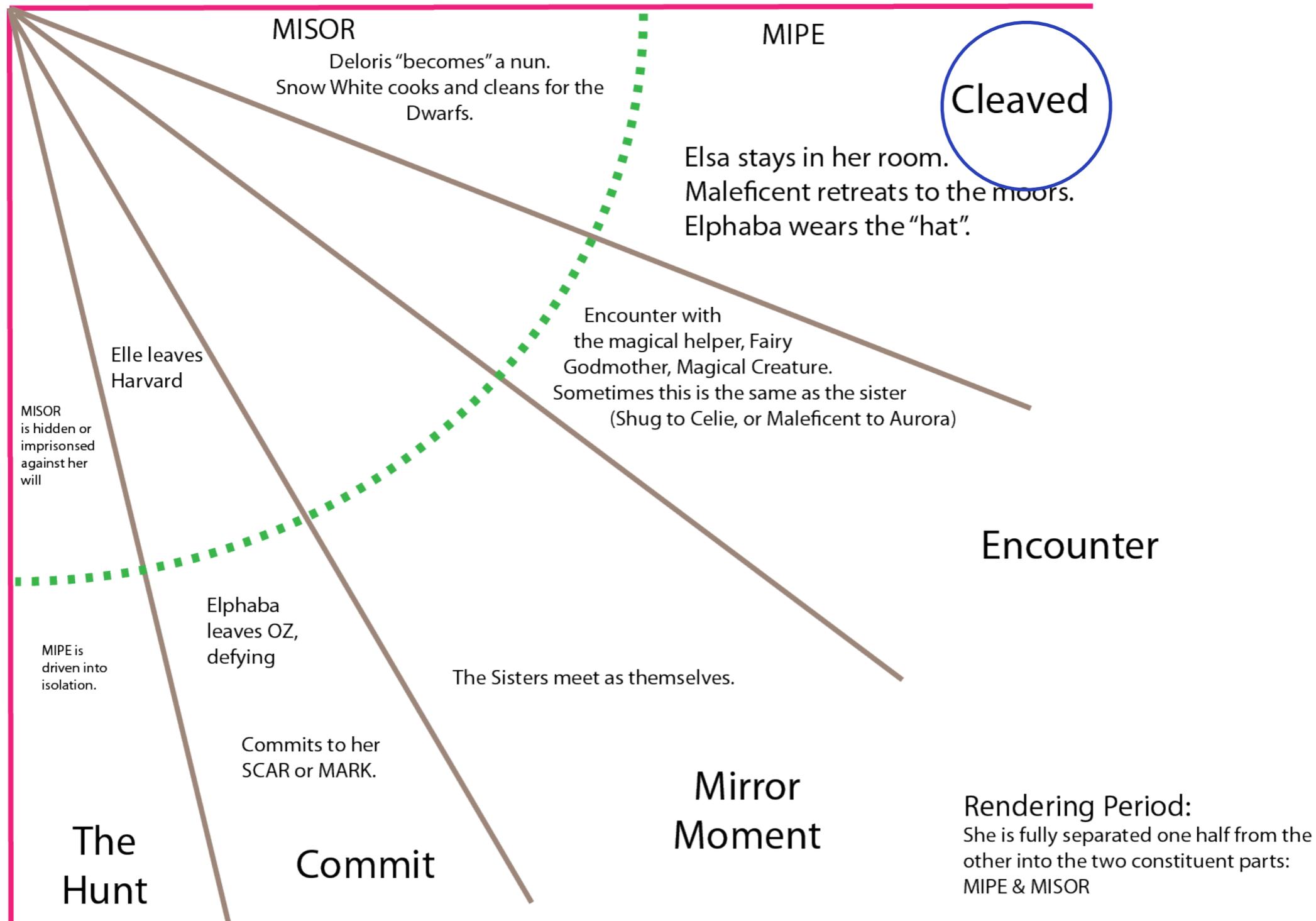
- Girl or Girls start to experience the separation..
- Powerful forces compel the separation.
- The rendered woman/women are forced in to the new role.
- Anger or acceptance can accompany the rendering.
- Turning away from the divide leads only to the other half.
- They experience the Hunt or the Pursuit.



# Quadrant II: Broken

## World of Invisible Forces & Mystery

She commits to her role



# Cursed & Marked

Assignment:

Describe her curse.

When was the first time she or others noticed it?

How was she marked?

# Divide et Impera

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Divide and Conquer  
Render and Rule

Phillip of Macedonia



# Every Story includes a tale of the Divided Woman

## Attributes on Either Side of the Divide

- Be Available
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- Intuitive & Understanding
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- Allows others to have power & authority
- Is like-able
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- Be unobtainable/aspirational
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# Rendered



# Two Sub Archetypes of the Divided Woman (not divided as Good/Evil or Light/Shadow)

Maiden in Search of Relationship (MISOR)

Magical Isolated Powerful & Endangered (MIPE)



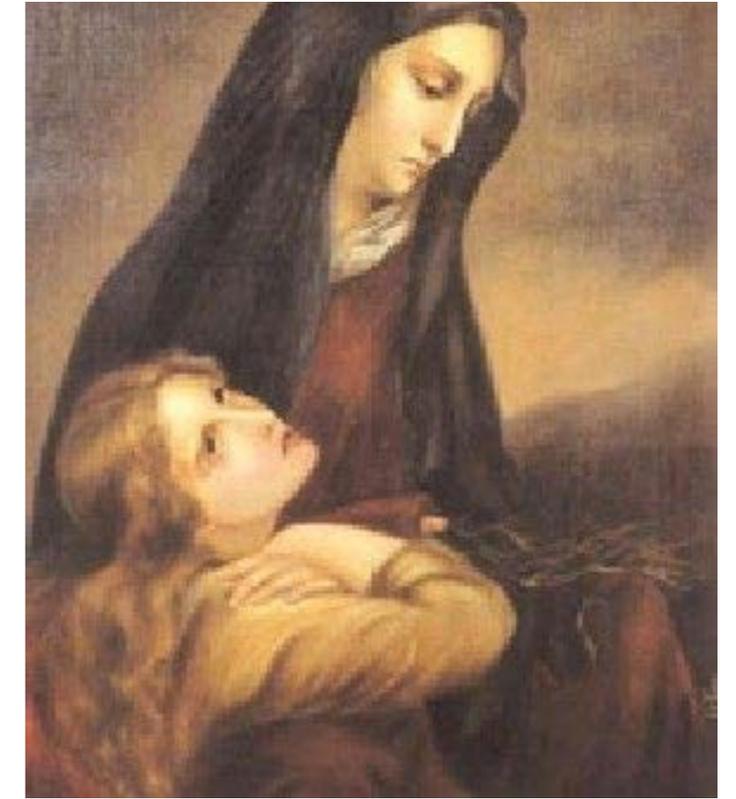
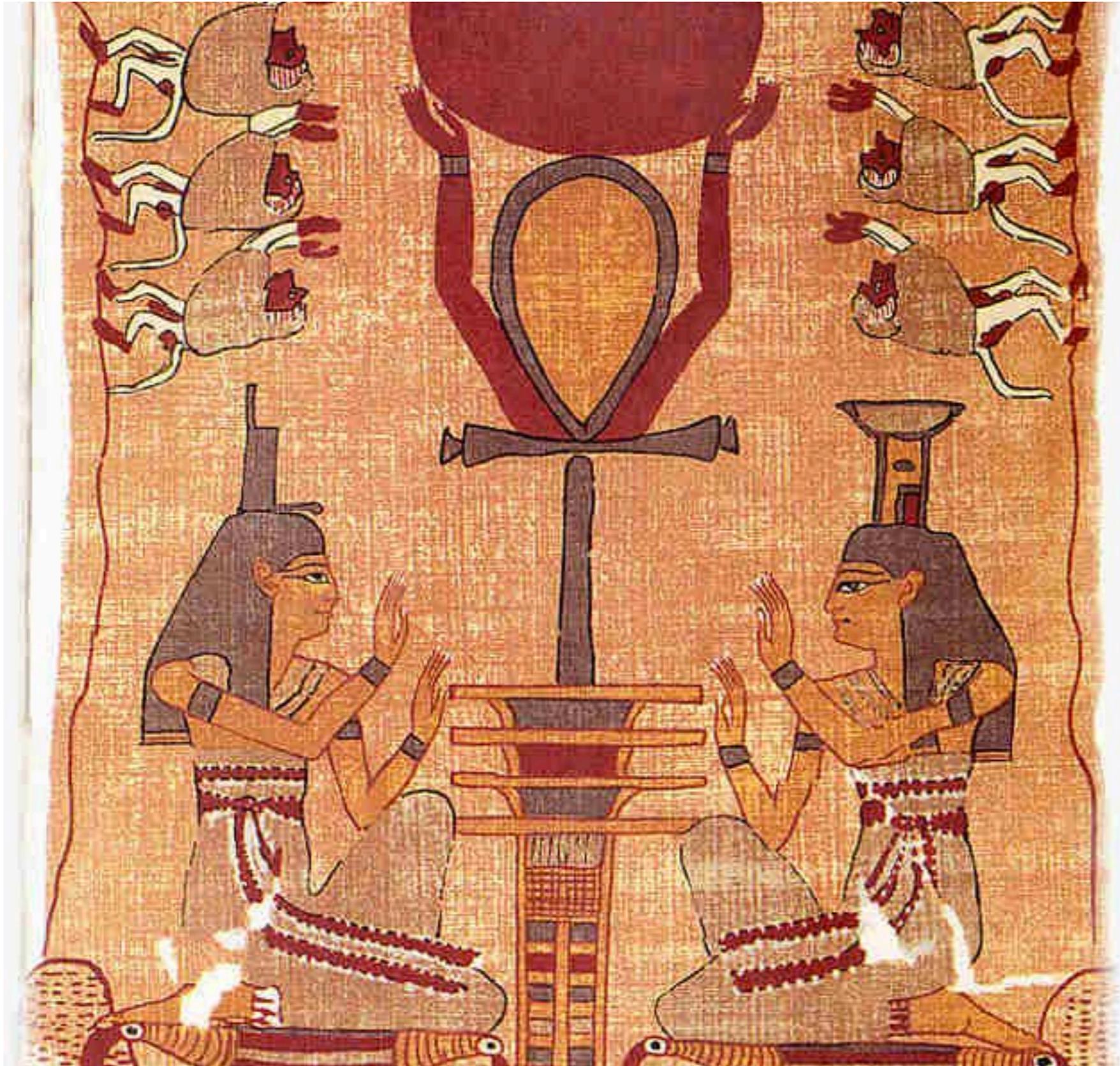
# MISOR

- Typically an ingénue
- Idealized passive feminine
- Seeks relationships with other women
- Is agreeable, and always available
- Objectified, but preferably asexual
- Intuitive & Understanding
- Needs Protection
- Has no obvious magical powers
- Is like-able
- Her power is attached to a man, or to her family
- In stories may be cursed
- May have magical contact with nature

# MIPE

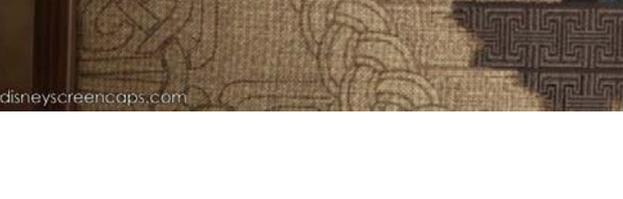
- Often a witch, warrior, or magical creature
- Struggles with relationships
- Isolated by choice or culture
- Born with magical power
- May be portrayed as sexual, but not desirable
- Knowledgeable & Powerful
- Isolated & Unprotected
- Can be angry and hold a grudge
- Often shunned
- May “feel” cursed
- Avoids connection, often believing it will keep her or others safe, or because she fears being misunderstood
- May have magical power over nature

# Divided Women in Mythology Across the Ages



Nephthys & Isis, Mother Mary & Mary Magdalene, Demeter & Persephone

# Modern Versions of the Divided Woman



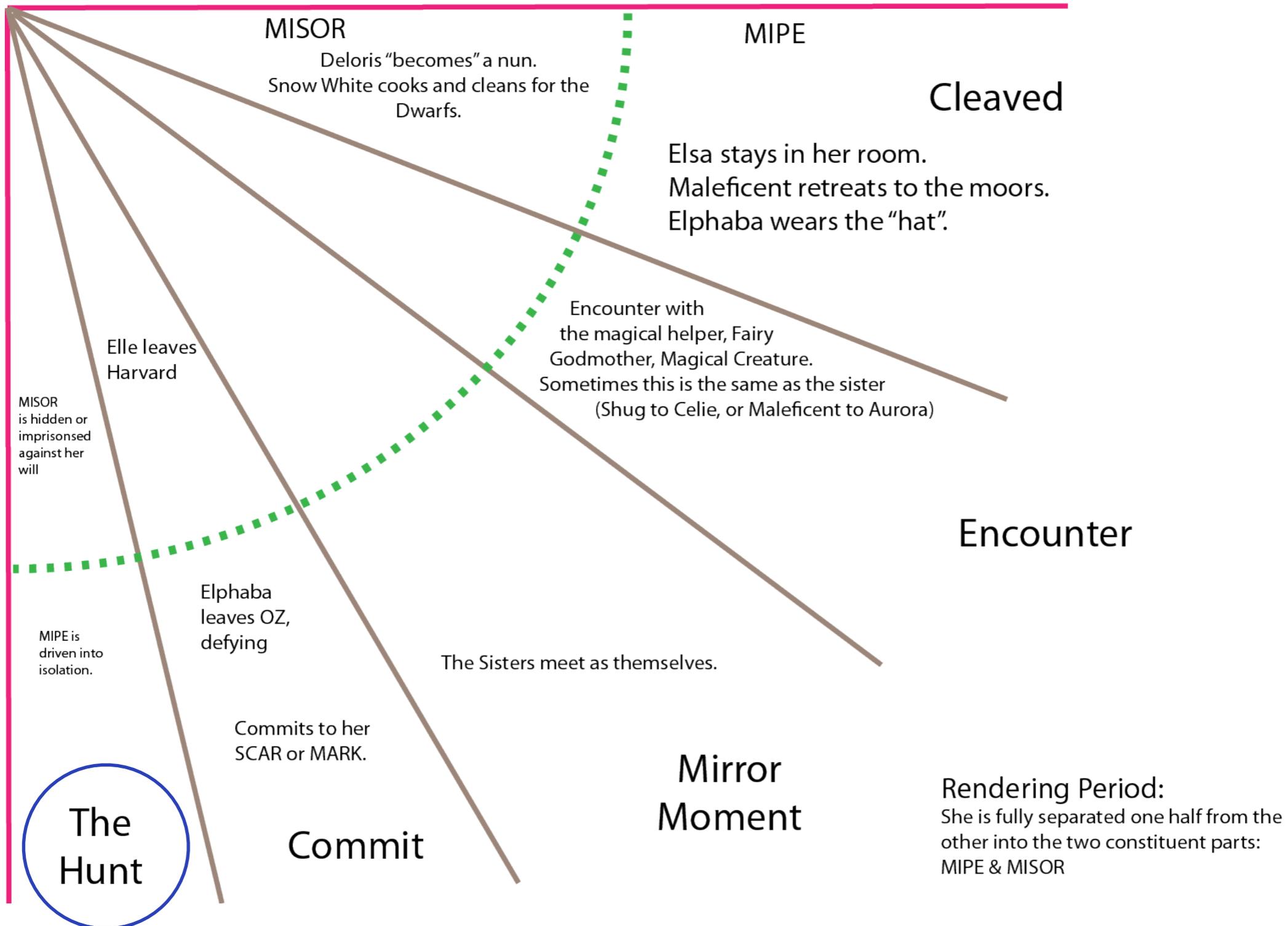
# Quadrant II: Rendered

How do you recognize the Divide?

# Quadrant II: Broken

## World of Invisible Forces & Mystery

She commits to her role



Quadrant III:  
Til Depth do us Part

# Intro to Danger: Isolation, Chase, Hunted, & HEA

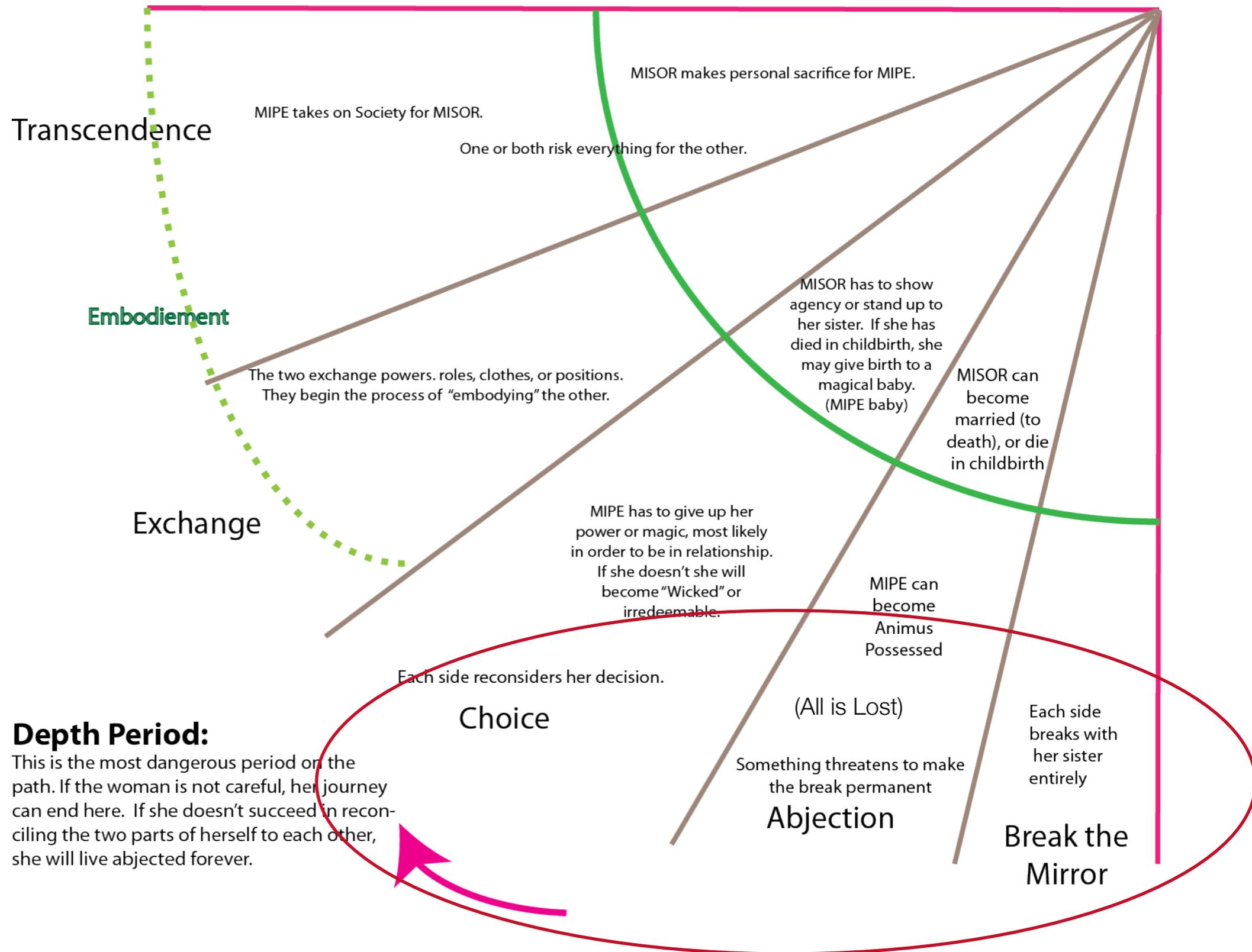
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- This is the danger quadrant, anything can happen here.
- MIPE can be killed, or banished forever.
- MISOR is forced into marriage, and/or Happily Ever After (HEA).
- Woman must confront herself, her reflection, and the divide itself if she is to transcend the limits put on her by the roles of MISOR or MIPE.



# Quadrant III: Danger & Oblivion

## World of Invisible Forces & Mystery



# Abjection

Assignment:

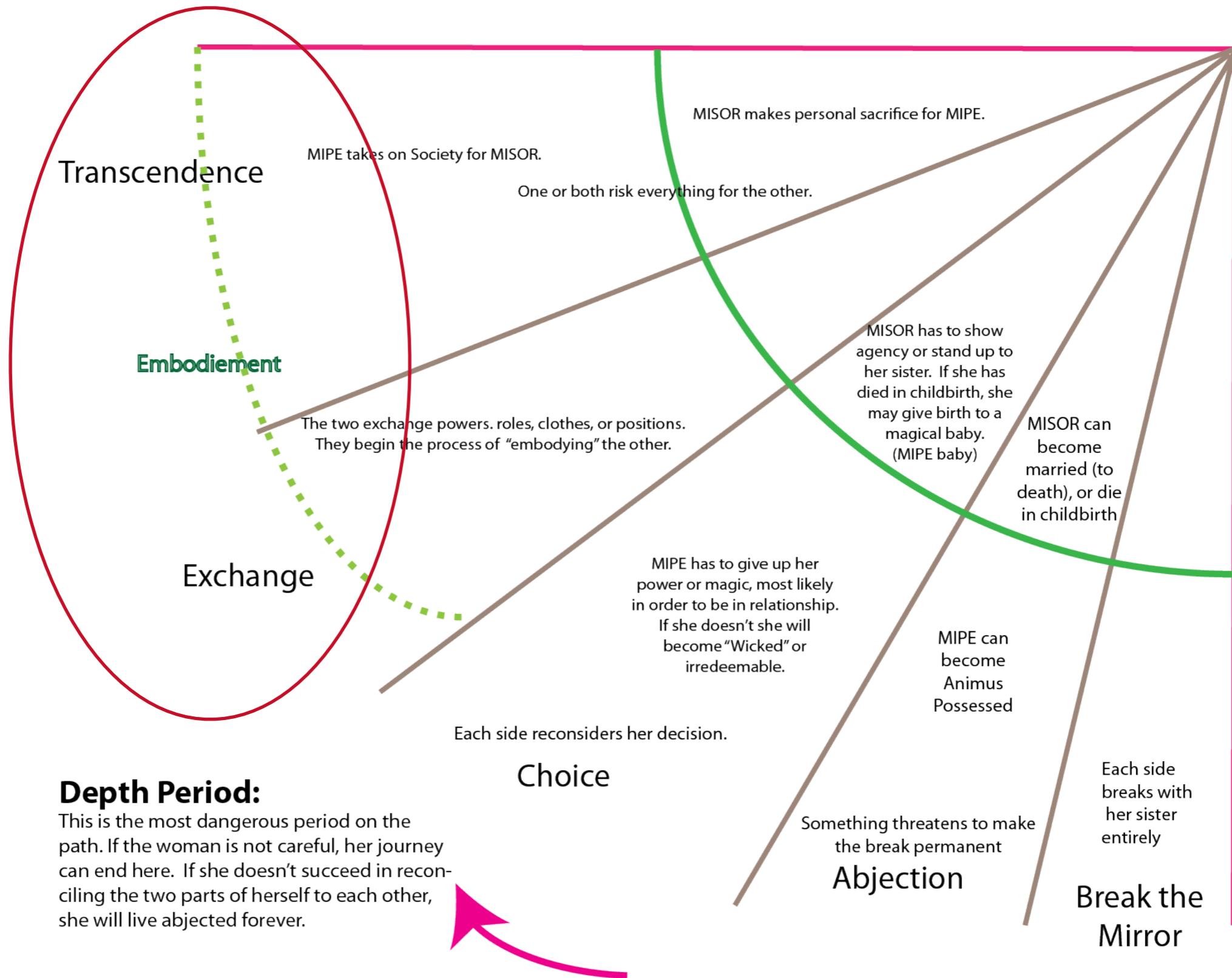
What pieces of have been torn away?

What did she do with them?

Where are they hidden?

# Quadrant III: Danger & Oblivion

## World of Invisible Forces & Mystery



# Embodied Transcendence

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- Sisters are reunited, through mutual sacrifice.
- Sisters or individual woman reunites powers.
- Transcendence happens in/of the female body.
- Can be as obvious as having a baby, or as unobtrusive as literally standing up for herself or her abilities.



Quadrant IV:  
Resplendent

# Quadrant IV: Power & Sovereignty

## World of Visible Power & Form



### Crowned

Both sides gain sovereignty over their own lives. One may actually be "crowned" as the leader of the domain.

### Integrated

The sisters realize that they need each other, or ARE each other. Each represents half of the sovereign whole.

### Resplendent

#### Period:

Power is restored to both sides. The land or domain is brought into balance.

### Claim the Territory or Crown

The sisters combine forces and fight for the crown or domain. One or both of them claim their birthright.

These lines are dotted because the two sisters share sovereignty, AND because these steps are especially non-linear.

This Period is marked by transcendent embodiment. E.G. it is Wonder Woman recognizing she is a Goddess and using her crossed arms in power, Jenna in *Waitress* realizing that motherhood is her power.

### Corporeal

Power in the body is restored

Maleficent's wings are returned to her.  
 Anna comes back to life  
 Deloris can sing "uncovered", not a nun  
 Celie confronts mister and curses him- healing is shown through Sophia

# Coronation/Crowned

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- The Queen does not allow anyone to treat her with disrespect, though that does not mean that she is haughty or brash. She quite simply knows her own value & worth. She defines her own Impera, her own imperative.
- She has gathered her tribe around her by the time she ascends.
- She knows what her domain is, and is not afraid to wield her power.



# The Sovereign Queen

- The Sovereign Queen is a balance between the MIPE & MISOR, though she may lean more towards one than the other.
- The transcendence of her “mortal” role of MIPE or MISOR is critical to her understanding sovereignty, it’s price, and its privileges.
- She does not participate in the struggle between dyads (work-life balance, magic and power, good vs evil, chaste vs wanton). Struggle is the domain of the forces of *Divide et Impera*, Divide and Conquer.
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# Dominion

Assignment:

What is her domain?

How does she live in her body?

How does she reign?

What is the boundary of her territory?

With whom does she trade?

What is the nature of her rule?

# End Game: Sovereignty

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The story of the Divided Woman is also the story of the United Queen.

In fairy tales, the end happens in the third quadrant. The MISOR's story ends with marriage; and the MIPE's story ends with isolation and banishment, or possibly death.

The end of the Queen's Path is actually the unification of the two sides, through an act of embodied transcendence. An individual goes through the trials of the divide to emerge as a sovereign whole, with no one to dictate to her who she should be, or how she should conduct herself.

She is not defined by a role, but rather defines the role for herself.



# Moana, Disney's first Sovereign Queen



# Other Queens in the Media:

the most common Queenly path is from MISOR to Sovereign Queen..



# Three Act Structure



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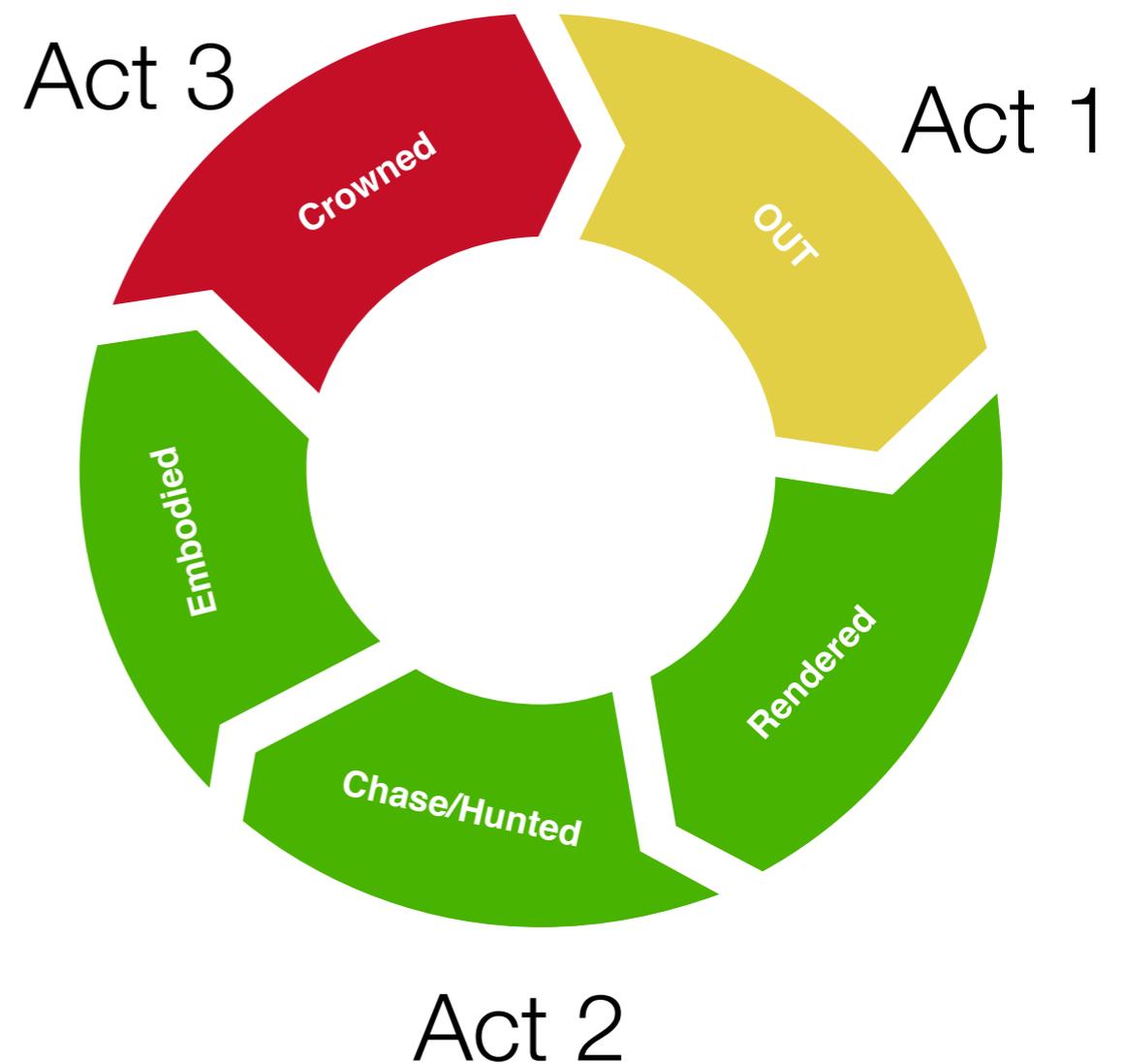
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## Crowned

Character or characters claims her role. In the story she can become an actual queen, or simply have sovereignty over her own life, actions, domain, etc.



# Five Act Structure



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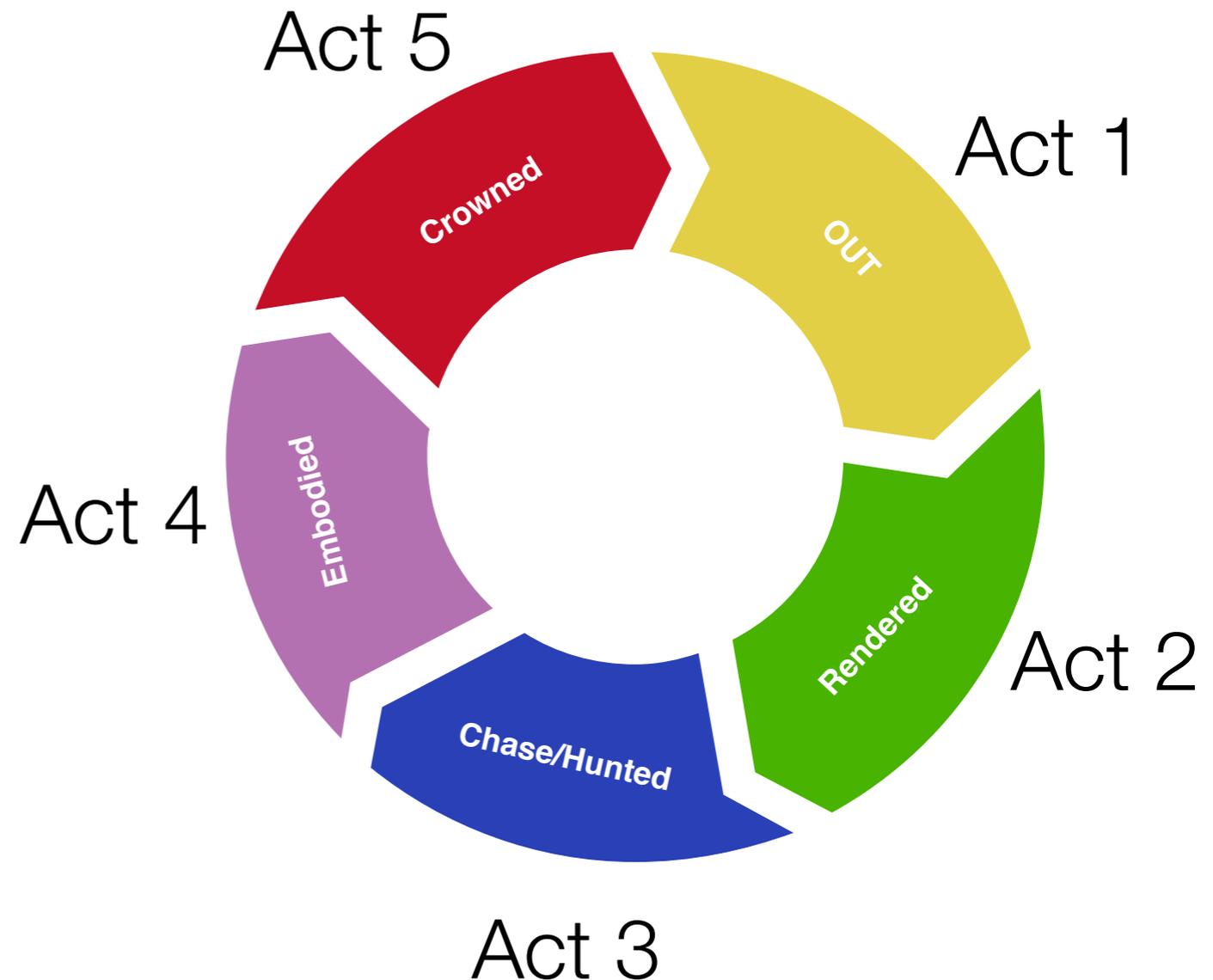
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