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The Heroic Return - Editor's Note

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THE HEROIC RETURN - EDITOR'S NOTE

Thank you for picking up the resuscitated Prairie Light Review. If anything, it is the readers and authors that breathe life into the journal. As far as thanks go, many thanks are deserved. Adam, Ronda, Wren and all the associate editors, thank you for the many hours you have put in. Thank you to the past advisors and editors for shaping the philosophies and values of PLR. Thank you for the continued support keeping the journal running and filled with quality content.

This journal, like the last, is organized thematically. As you read these pages, you will find that the pieces have been organized according to Joseph Campbell's presentation of The Hero's Journey. Individual pieces are categorized into Call to Adventure, Challenges and Temptations, the Abyss, Transformation and Atonement, and the Return.

The origin of the hero is PLR's setup for the Call to Adventure. Many of the first pieces in the journal fit the themes of identity and heritage. "Ode to My Hometown" vividly describes where the narrator grew up and the traumas they suffered there. "Personal" marks the threshold where the hero is being held back by a force that says "don't go." "Here in the Afterlife" is the introduction to the other world and the beginning of the challenges and temptations. Within the Challenges and Temptations section, the characters in the stories are faced with challenges like a winding river or a tempting lover. With the black pages in the journal, the void begins. The void for PLR holds death, despair, and political trauma. Transformation and Atonement, while separate in Campbell's version, are combined in PLR's version to show growth caused by peril. "Druid's Note" shows the anger someone feels after they've been hurt. This is placed earlier in the Transformation and Atonement section because they have not yet moved past the initial anger and fear caused by betrayal. The Return is symbolized by a return to origins and aging. "Benita" an aging woman who is very focused on heritage and relics. The hero has returned but they have changed. The reward the hero receives is love illustrated by the later pieces. "Deep Breathing" is the start of serenity. The changed hero can begin a new life in his home with the rewards they have earned. An exhale of triumph? A sigh of relief? With a final sigh, the journey has ended.

-Eleanor Zilius, *Editor in Chief*