

**The Hero's Confrontation with "Lamia" in the  
Animation Film *Tangled* and the Trilogy Movie *White  
Forehead***

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**Introduction**

This research focuses on the analysis of why and how "Lamia" appears as a monster-woman in the animation film *Tangled* (2010), directed by Nathan Gerno and Byron Howard, and the trilogy movie *White Forehead 1, 2 and 3* (2012, 2018 and 2019) directed by Seyed Javad Hashemi, and the way the protagonists of these movies react to it. In both narratives studied, a "woman" with special characteristics (Lamia), captures the hero who has a special power because she needs the life-giving power to continue her life. Heroes, Rapunzel in *Tangled* and a deer with a white forehead in *White Forehead*, are stolen in infancy; therefore, they are deprived of the love of their mothers in childhood. According to Jung, the positive aspects of anima or the female psyche appears and emerges in the figure of the mother, and its

negative aspects are manifested in the figure of the witch in dreams or stories (2006: 44-47).

This research will try to answer these questions: How and why does the witch who appears in these two narratives represent “Lamia”? What is the behavior of the heroes when confronted by Lamia?

### **Methodology, Purpose and Review of Literature**

The research is based on the legend of the hero's journey that Carol. S. Pearson presents in her book, *Road Map* (2017), and the stages of the heroes' journeys in these narrative are compared with Pearson's model. Generally, there is no previous study in Persian on the appearance of Lamia and the hero's confrontation with her; therefore, this research is original and innovative. *White Forehead 1* and *White Forehead 2* have not been studied and analyzed from the perspective of the emergence of the monster-woman (Lamia). The story of Rapunzel has been addresses in the articles "From myth to mysticism" by Seyed Mohammad Rastgoo (2007) and "Deciphering the mythical pattern of saving the sun in *Haft Khan*" (2015), since the main theme of the movie is the story of Rapunzel, but the subject of Lamia is not mentioned.

The purpose of this study is to pay attention to the presence of the monster-woman Lamia and the way the hero overcomes her. According to Jungian psychology, the emergence of Lamia in these two stories may indicate a maternal complex. In these two stories, after encountering Lamia, which here is a symbol of awareness of the defects of human existence, the hero enters the path of the heroic journey and in the end achieves happiness.

### Discussion

Why does Lamia (or other mythical monsters) appear in stories? Dowden in *Applications of Greek Mythology* believes that “the charm and importance of monsters is psychological” (1992: 133), in the sense that monsters have never existed but the characteristics of monsters, rather than their external forms, depict the internal and mental systems of human beings. It can be said that myths, like dreams, try to represent the dark sides of humans. Accordingly, female monsters refer to the mother and the maternal complex in the psyche, and male monsters refer to the father and the paternal complex in the psyche (Dowden, 1992). Based on this, the appearance of Lamia as a female monster in the stories of *Tangled* and *White Forehead* refers to the maternal complex and the stage of transition and separation from the mother. As Murdoch writes based on Jung's theories, in order to separate from their mother, many young women portray their mothers as archetypes of spiteful, domineering, and destructive women who must be rejected in order to survive (Murdoch, 1393).

In the narratives studied, the outside world is in opposition to the castle. The outside world and achieving it is a symbol of reaching higher levels of consciousness. It is by reaching out to the outside world that Rapunzel recognizes her princely identity and true self, and this self-knowledge is the beginning of her success in overcoming her existential flaw, namely Lamia, because she who knew her true self achieves special knowledge and ability in accepting, recognizing and overcoming her existential defects. The characters who take this inner journey see the flaws in their psyche, recognize them, accept them and then at the end of their heroic journey, achieve individuality.

Gatel and Octopus are similar in appearance, habitat, and action; arguably, these similar features are compatible with the characteristics of Lamia. Rapunzel and the deer with white forehead also have similar characteristics. In the narratives of *Tangled* and *White Forehead*, the appearance of Lamia is considered as a maternal complex. In both narrations, the heroes pass the stages of the hero's journey which are becoming orphan, seeker, warrior, protector, innocence, and encountering witchcraft. Rapunzel and the deer, in their confrontations with the Octopus and the Gatel, which are Lamia or defects in their own psyches, enter the heroic journey and at the end of the story they defeat Lamia.

### **Conclusion**

According to the study, the appearance of Lamia in these two stories represents a maternal complex and refers to a defect in the psyche. According to Jung, maternal complex is a disorder that develops in the child's psyche during childhood in relation to the mother. If this disorder is not recognized and treated, it will lead to behavioral disorders in adulthood. In the two stories studied, Rapunzel and the deer are active and dynamic characters. They know their Lamia and go on a heroic journey to free themselves from her captivity. Rapunzel and the deer both represent characters who become aware of a defect in their psyche, accept that defect and then turn the defect in the psyche into a strong point in their character. In the two stories studied, the maternal complex is recognized, accepted, treated and then at the end of the story, after going through different stages of the heroic path, the negative side of the anima which is seen by Jung as a wizard or a monster, changes to

the positive side of the anima, the mother. At the end of both *Tangled* and *White Forehead*, Rapunzel and the deer return to the warm embrace of the family. In these stories, the heroes destroy the witch, which means that the negative half of the anima, Lamia, turns into the positive half of the anima, the mother.

**Keywords:** Lamia, *Tangled*, *White Forehead*, maternal complex, Heroic journey, Carol S. Pearson, Yung

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