

The Hero's Cycle, the story of Ungrown

The myth

Life, spins into ceaseless coils. In constant flow we walk our destiny.
This world exists through an endless cycle of life and death.
The old makes place for the new.

I have watched this cycle endless times before, every time as important as the next.
It starts with a seed, planted by one before.
The seed is nurtured, fed, protected.
Then, when its time has come the seeds grows, inherits a living soul.
The seed walks wearing the mask of its name.

The acts in the life of a Mask are vital.
Every Mask awakes in a world, dry and desolate, sheltered by a lone tree.

His first task is, and should always be the same, to open the well of Veden.
The well will spread life spurring water, starting the growth of all around,
But most important, the growth of the seed of the son.

The Mask will now travel to the second well, the well of Lian.
This well will spread minerals, feeding the new life, turning twig to tree.
The son will have grown to a small tree, merely a twig to what he will be one day.

The last well that the Mask will free is the well of Uuden.
This well will barely effect life as it is at that moment, but might be the most important of all.
What this well brings into this world is the chance of a future.
It will lay the seed after the son to rest in the fertile dirt, to wait until its time has come.

The tidal wave that follows, washes the old away.
The tree of awakening is washed from the pedestal, and cast away to make space.
In the open space now formed, in the sun's glow, the son grows ever larger.
After all the wells are opened, a time of great risk ensues.
The land will flourish and live in great prosperity,

but the abundance of water will turn the sky black with clouds.

The Mask will protect the son, sheltering it from rain, wind and fire with his own back.

The Mask will stay there until the cycle starts anew,

And the son arises under his sheltering back,

Wearing a Mask of his own..

The experience

The the story of Ungrown describes the cycle of birth, rise, and sacrifice of the hero with the mask.

(Image tree house)

*(*sounds of water*?)*

The hero awakes, not knowing the cause of this. (As he opens his eyes, it is clearly visible to the player that his face is a mask.) He finds himself in a big, hollow tree. In the middle of the tree there is a shape in the floor, filled with dirt. On the dirt, there is a seed. A crack in the side of the tree shines bright light into the room, and provides a door to a deserted valley. The hero steps outside and finds himself alone.

(image of hub)

The hero starts his journey on an elevation at the center of three lower valleys. It functions as a hub, connecting three dried up streams coming from three mighty mountain peaks to the three lower valleys.

(Why does the hero start wandering?)

The landscape shows signs of destruction. In the valleys, which the hero explores as he wanders through them, he occasionally finds big, hollow trees and masks resembling his own. They seem to have been taken along currents long gone.

On his journey, the hero will release the water of three springs. Each time a stream will flow to the hub and from there to the valleys.

The first stream will bring the element of water, forming small rivers, and irrigating the dry dirt.

*(*time passes? landscape shows some repair? player starts again at hub? jumps into stream to hub? hub looks nicer, more like a home? HOME! The player will start feeling more and more at home instead of alone.*)*

The seed will have grown a germ.

The second stream will bring minerals, fertilising the lands and bringing a flourishing green.

(The corresponding spring would very well fit the sketch of the dried of mineral falls.)

The seed will have grown into a sapling.

The third stream will bring new life. Its spring has a beautiful tree hanging over it, which has visibly dropped seeds into the water that resemble the seed found in the tree at the beginning of the story.

After the third stream has formed, the hub will be full of water. Clouds are forming. Rain is coming. The storm that follows is very destructive. The treehouse sinks and collapses from all the water and is taken with the current. The sapling will remain. The hero saves it by swimming towards it and assuming a protective posture. This is where the cycle ends.

The meaning (of life)

During the cycle the hero grows from someone alone into someone at home, into someone who has found his place in an infinite cycle of life and death, securing a future for generations to come. The process started when a seed called to him. This woke the hero. However, at first he does not know that he is living for this seed. As the hero discovers the world he lives in, and brings life to 'his' world, he releases streams that grow and prepare the seed for its own future. It is already a living plant, but some day it will need the power of water and stone, just like the powers that allow the hero to transform. By releasing the first two streams, the hero grants the seed these powers, as it grows into a sapling. The third stream however, does not provide any powers directly to the sapling. It is the stream of life, and as part of that also of death. The stream destroys the old treehouse, allowing the hero to become the new protector of the sapling and over time grow into a big old tree himself. At the same time the third stream has placed a new seed, in time to be found by the hero that will grow from the sapling.

The story symbolises the story of life. This story transcends the story of parent and child by including the grandparent and the grandchild, symbolising the generations that came before, and the generations that will come after those one is directly connected with.