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Liminality in Constructing the Hero in R.A Salvatore's Dark Elf Trilogy

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ABSTRACT

Tutkimukseni tarkastelee liminaalisuutta sankarin matkassa ja kuinka se rakentaa sankarin identiteettiä. Tarkasteluni kohteena on R.A Salvatoren *The Dark Elf Trilogy* – teosten päähenkilö Drizzt Do'Urden. Sankarin matka on siirtymäriitti, johon liittyy universaalisti rajojen rikkominen ja rajamailla oleminen, ja osittain juuri tämän takia matkaa ja siihen liittyvien tilojen merkitystä sankarin identiteetin rakentumiselle voidaan tehokkaasti tutkia liminaalin kautta.

Pääasiallinen teoriani koostuu Victor Turnerin tutkimuksista liminaalista. Viittaan myös Joseph Campbellin monomyytin "The Belly of the Whale" –vaiheeseen, joka kuvailee osuvasti trilogian toista osaa. Tähän vaiheeseen liittyy olennaisesti sankarin symbolinen kuolema ja uudelleensyntyminen. Lisäksi tarkastelen liminaalitiloissa esiintyvää *communitas*-käsitettä; hiljaisuutta, yksinäisyyttä ja passiivisuutta; labyrinttia; Drizztin toista persoonaa eli "metsästäjää" eläimellisyyden ja alitajunnan ilmentymänä; sekä metsästäjää ja sen mahdollista pahuutta Jungin varjo-arkkityypin kautta. Lopuksi tarkastelen rajamaita sekä toiseutta että myös sankarin matkaa *the odyssey experience* – käsitteen sekä pyhiinvaelluksen kautta.

Tutkielmani tulokset osoittavat, että liminaalitilat liittyvät sankarin matkaan perustavanlaatuisesti. Sankarin liminaalitiloihin liittyvät vaaralliset koetukset, mutta niissä korostuu olennaisesti voiman löytäminen, itsensä kehittäminen sekä muodonmuutos symbolisen kuoleman ja jälleensyntymän myötä.

KEYWORDS: liminal, hero, journey, fantasy, Victor Turner, The Dark Elf Trilogy

1 INTRODUCTION

> Honor the space
> Between no longer
> and not yet
> (Levin 2016: 10).

This thesis aims to identify instances of liminality in the hero-journey of Drizzt Do'Urden in R.A Salvatore's *Dark Elf Trilogy* and discuss how the liminal constructs the hero-character. The hero-journey as a whole can be considered liminal, as it often goes beyond social structures, typically journeying into remote lands or, for instance, to the Underworld. The liminal was first briefly introduced by Arnold van Gennep in his seminal work *The Rites of Passage* (1960), but only later fully developed by Victor Turner in his early works: *The Forest of Symbols: Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (1967) and *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (1969). The concept has its roots in anthropology and ritual studies and is particularly useful in studying rites of passage and change, but its worth has been seen well outside anthropology. According to the OED, the word "liminal" has its root in the Latin's word *limen*, which denotes "threshold" and means, firstly, "Relating to a transitional or initial stage of a process, and secondly, "Occupying a position at, or on both sides of, a boundary or threshold". Turner (1969: 95) characterizes liminal subjects as "neither here nor there; they are betwixt and between the positions assigned and arrayed by law, custom, convention, and ceremonial."

Liminality can be found in many areas of life, and one can go as far as to argue that a person's earthly life is nothing but a temporary, intermediary liminal phase. For the hero, however, liminality is often the intrinsic phase of that which creates the hero in the first place: the journey. Liminality can be most explicitly observed during a certain period in the journey, metaphorically represented in the image of "The Belly of the Whale" (see chapter 4), where the hero goes through symbolic death and rebirth, great ordeals and growth.

The hero's journey, a form a rite of passage, is a re-occurring story of growth, change, self-discovery, and ultimately, becoming the hero. These vital stages take place in the middle of the story, and in fact, the hero is as good as his journey, for "the journey is the story; the story is the journey" (Drewery 2011: 31). The hero's power and identity originates from the transformative liminal states. There are countless, famous heroes who go through liminal phases during their adventures, such as Luke Skywalker's training under master Yoda in the swamps of Dagoba. Also, the gap where Bruce Wayne becomes Batman after his parents are murdered is liminal, and Frodo's lengthy adventure to Mordor.

The hero in fantasy typically embarks on his journey in the liminal landscapes that are located in the "far out", in the unknown borderlands–places outside or between the structures of society and quotidian. Furthermore, by examining all kinds of fantasy, not only liminal, it is possible to understand processes that one "would otherwise ignore" (Klapcsik 2015: 82). Therefore, the liminal journey of the hero in fantastic settings, through certain liminal landscapes, allows us to observe the concept of liminality under a lens that would not be so easily available in the real world. However difficult to categorize and define, liminality is deeply rooted in the hero-journey, and analyzing the journey through liminality provides fundamental and interesting insights into the construction of the hero.

Liminality is innately something that is not easily defined. Since by definition, liminality has to do with being between categories, and as such, it naturally resists definition. Miller (2002: 297) has identified this fundamental problem of the liminal: he refers to the Aristotelian modality, in which correct category and specificity are stressed in logical thinking. Thus, something that is between categories is regarded as dubious by nature and is thus identified as a lesser or inferior entity. However, Miller sees that power can be greater in the liminal stage especially when the categories are clear, and even when the categories are vague power can be identified, although with possible difficulty. Liminal stages that are sources of power are naturally significant to the hero. Douglas (1984: 97) says that being in contact with margins, to which liminality closely relates, involves a sense of danger, but it also means "to have been at a source of

power". These transitional stages are dangerous, because change itself cannot be defined, as it is "neither one state nor the next" (Douglas 1984: 97).

In addition to the hero-journey as having liminal features, the hero himself is practically always a liminal character that resides between categories: life and death, man and god, secular and profane, poor and rich, man and animal etc. According to Poulos (2012: 488) the antihero is a hero that is explicitly liminal. Horvath, Thomassen and Wydra (2015: 26) see that tricksters and liminality are closely related. Tricksters, in essence, are "obscure, ambivalent, shadowy" (Horvath et al. 2015: 26), qualities that often are in close connection with liminality. Thus, at least the trickster-hero and the antihero are heroes that manifest liminality somewhat explicitly (in fact the antihero is often a trickster and vice versa), for their nature is often ambivalent, as in being between good and evil. However, all heroes are bound to have at least some aspects of the liminal in them. Although Drizzt is neither an antihero nor a trickster-hero, but as classic hero, his journey is abundant with liminality.

Why the hero-journey is plenteous in liminality is partly explained by Richard Rohr's (2011: 15) theory of *transrational phenomena*, which relates to instances that "resist or defy rational analysis." These types of phenomena reveal truths and life patterns that our limited minds have difficulty understanding using our best logic or rational thought. Transrational experiences can be found in stories that involve "*suffering, sacrifice, meaning, love, paradox, mystery, God, and eternity."* (Rohr 2011: 15) These types of experiences often involve liminality. Rohr (Rohr 2011: 15) explains that the utmost of such experiences is often the fight between good and evil, a topic found in all human literature and a "universal characteristic of the human condition". Transrational phenomena "beg to be understood" but cannot be truly comprehended via usual reasoning of the human mind. Hero stories help to observe the transrational through more concrete terms. (Rohr 2011: 15)

Joseph Campbell's *monomyth* represents the standard, mythological and universal adventure of the hero that has the three-phased rite of passage at its core: separation-initiation-return. The hero embarks on a journey from the mundane into the supernatural

where fantastic ordeals are faced and won, after which the hero returns with a power to bestow boons on his people. (Campbell 1968: 30) Such a pattern appears, for instance, in the myth of Prometheus, where he ascended to heavens, stole fire from the Gods, returned and gave it to mankind. Campbell (1968: 256) believes that the classic hero monomyth unmasks psychological, deep truths. Allison and Goethals (2015: 5) define *deep truths* as not only profound and fundamental but also hidden and nonobvious, when considering human nature and motivation. Rohr (2011: 17) argues that these deep truths are constructed in two ways: first, invoking a sense of *deep time*, which means that the story is a timeless one and therefore links us with "the past, the present, and the future". Deep time is referred to in phrases such as "Once upon a time", or "A long time in a galaxy far, far away." Second, hero stories emphasize *deep roles* in the social dimensions of humanity, which manifest themselves in the form of archetypes, such as mother, child or wise old man. (Rohr 2011: 18) Ultimately, it can be argued that the transrational nature of the hero is one of the profound reasons for the hero to be closely connected with the liminal, since the liminal is naturally ambiguous and it can even be seen as irrational when examined through the aforementioned Aristotelian modality. The deep truths that hero stories contain are often disguised in symbols and metaphor, which make understanding them more difficult (Campbell 1968: 256). Liminal phenomena can be approached with similar thinking, as they often emerge through the imagery of symbol and metaphor.

The liminal as a concept is a powerful instrument in conducting many types of analysis, as has been seen in the abundance of research also outside the sphere of anthropology. Horvath, Thomassen and Wydra argue in their study *Breaking Boundaries: Varieties of Liminality* (2015) that it should be in fact regarded as a master concept in the wider social and political sciences. Especially in contemporary world, liminality is necessary in understanding experiences that are represented by constant change and uncertainty. (Horvath et al. 2015: 39) In their aforementioned study the authors examine the range of application of the concept of the liminal in concrete social and political issues. Liminality has also been used in a great deal of literary works. A recent study was conducted by Sandor Klapcsik in *Liminality in Fantastic Fiction: A Postculturalist Approach* (2012), in which he discusses how liminality manifests in scifi, detective

fiction of Agatha Christie and the fantasy stories of Neil Gaiman (www.macfarlandbooks.com).

For the theory part of this thesis, Victor Turner's (1967, 1969, 1974, 1982) studies on the liminal will serve as the primary theory, but other scholars' theories of liminality or theories that deal with related issues, will also be employed. Parallels will be drawn with the stages in Campbell's representation of the heroic journey as the "monomyth"–a timeless, re-occuring hero-story–since Campbell's trifold structure of *departure*, *initiation* and *return* are closely linked with the three stages found in the ritual process of van Gennep and Turner. The stage of The Belly of the Whale is most closely examined in this thesis, since it serves as an extremely liminal phase marking a significant time and space for the transforming hero-character.

1.1 Material

The material of this thesis consists of R.A Salvatore's *Dark Elf Trilogy*, which includes the novels *Homeland* (1990a; hereafter *H* in references), *Exile* (1990b; hereafter *E* in references) and *Sojourn* (1991; hereafter *S* in references). Drizzt is a dark elf, also known as "drow", which is a race of dark-skinned elves living mostly in the subterranean world of the Underdark, in the city of Menzoberranzan. On the surface live the good, light-skinned elves. Young drows are falsefully told by their teachers that the elves on the surface, in fact, are evil and that all misfortune that has ever happened to the drow race can be blamed on the surface elves. The drows and the surface elves were one nation during ancient times but were separated, which resulted in the banishment of a group of elves to live underground, today known as the drow race.

Drizzt is a misunderstood outcast and a loner, equipped with two scimitars and accompanied by his animal sidekick, Guenhwyvar, a denizen of the astral plane. The cat is also the supernatural helper, whom the hero meets before entering the Belly of the Whale. He is a classic, morally pure and extremely competent in swordsmanship. From his very birth Drizzt is different from other drows due to his lavender eyes, in contrast

to red. Furthermore, he does not seem to be bothered by light in the same manner as others: “Briza moved the candle near Drizzt, and Malice gradually slid her hand away. “He does not cry,” Briza remarked, amazed that the babe could quietly accept such a tingling light” (*H* 46). Excluding Drizzt and his father Zaknafein, the drows are generally evil and fanatically worship the “Spider Queen”, the drow goddess of chaos, Lolth. The drow society is abundant in misogynist associations, as, firstly, Lolth can be seen in connection with “Lilith”, who was Adam’s first wife in the bible and according to Patai (1990: 32) “the queen of demons” in the mythology of the Kabbala. Secondly, the fact that the drow society is a matriarchal one, in which the women occupy the highest positions, while the male are often oppressed, suggests misogyny. Thirdly, one of the meanings of Drizzt’s mother’s name, Malice, is “the intention or desire to do evil” (OED). The society, consisting of the ruling council of the ten greatest houses, is heavily militaristic and one where position and power is everything. The different houses in the city constantly try to ascend into more powerful positions in the ruling hierarchy, which often results in war. In Menzoberranzan, where evil is ubiquitous, Drizzt is able to see through the evil of his kin and not succumb to it: an act that is heroic in itself.

1.1.1 Homeland

The first book in the series, *Homeland* (1990) depicts Drizzt’s early life in Menzoberranzan: growing into an outstanding swordsman, meeting his animal companion Guenhwyvar, the magical panther and questioning the evil practices and views of the drow race. One of the more notable events in the book involves a drow raid to the surface, during which Drizzt learns the truth about his kin, as they slaughter innocent surface elves. Drizzt, however, saves an elf child by hiding her under her mother’s mutilated corpse, an act that puts his house out of the Spider Queen’s favor.

Learning of Drizzt’s sacrilege, his family wants to sacrifice him to Lolth in order to restore their honor and status, but Zaknafein offers his own life in Drizzt’s place. When Drizzt returns to home from the tunnels, to which he went in order to think through the

turmoil that takes place in his house, he finds his family preparing war and learns about the death of his father, which causes him great grief. He then deserts his house and escapes into the tunnels of the Underdark, accompanied by Guenhwyvar, in search of a different life.

1.1.2 Exile

Exile (1990) represents Campbell's "The Belly of the Whale" and the *departure* part of the hero-journey. In the rite of passage, this book depicts the "separation" part of the ritual. In *Exile,* Drizzt has spent a decade in the endless dungeons of the Under Dark with only Guenhwyvar by his side. His failure in Menzoberranzan and losing Zaknafein troubles his mind constantly. He lives alone in a small cave inhabited by himself and a number of relatively peaceful creatures, called "Fungus-men", who allow him to live there too, since Drizzt is a mighty adversary.

A notable event in the book takes place when Drizzt, in his overwhelming solitude, lets himself be captured by the deep gnomes, the "svirfneblin". He is taken to their city and is sentenced to death. However, Belwar—a deep gnome whom he saved in Homeland by preventing his killing in the drow raid by having only his arms cut—saves his life. They become great friends.

In the meanwhile, Zaknafein's dead body is resurrected by Drizzt's mother, Matron Malice in a ritual of "Zin'Carla" as a final chance to kill Drizzt. The father, who is controlled by Malice, and son eventually meet in a final battle, which ends in Zaknafein regaining control of his mind and jumping into a pool of acid. The failure of Zin'Carla marks the complete destruction of House Do'Urden, as House Baenre, the first and most powerful house in Menzoberranzan, annihilates the Do'Urdens. Realizing that the next step of his search for different life is not in Under Dark, Drizzt ascends to the surface.

1.1.3 Sojourn

Sojourn (1991) depicts Drizzt's life on the surface world. He tries to adapt to his new environment where the bright sun causes great pain to him. The sun is a symbol of his rejection of the dark subterranean world, painful, yet it promises positive change. He lives on the outskirts of towns, in the forests. He experiences guilt for the death of a farmer family and for those he has killed in the past. The farmer family was killed by a demon and Drizzt feels responsible for not having been able to prevent it. However, his burdens are lessened when he meets Montolio, his new mentor, who guides him in the ways of the surface world and teaches him about the principles of the goddess Mielikki, who becomes Drizzt's true deity.

Drizzt is rejected everywhere he goes, but at least after discovering his true goddess, he gains some comfort and does no longer feel so alone. Through a chain of events he settles in Icewind Dale, where he befriends Cattie-Brie, the human daughter of the dwarf Bruenor Battlehammer. He is finally welcomed in the Battlehammer clan's home, something which Drizzt has been searching and longing for a long time. Finding home represents the "incorporation" part of the rite of passage, where the person returns into the structures of society as transformed. In Campbellian terms, this stage marks "The Ultimate Boon" (Campbell 1968: 172), where the hero finds the goal of the quest.

2 FANTASY LITERATURE

This chapter provides theory, firstly, on the quality of *the fantastic,* and secondly, *fantasy* as a genre. It will also briefly discuss the hero in fantasy and, on a general level, the need for fantasy.

2.1 The Definition of the Fantastic

Tzvetan Todorov's *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1975) is a pioneering work that provides a definition for the element of *the fantastic.* The fantastic is closely associated with the neighboring concepts *the uncanny* and *the marvelous.* The fantastic is the effect that results from hesitation, when a person who is only familiar with the laws of nature, comes across a supernatural event. The relation of the fantastic with the real and the imaginary forms the definition of the concept. (Todorov 1975: 25) Todorov (1975: 44) provides the definition of the fantastic with the help of the following four categories: *uncanny*, *fantastic-uncanny*, *fantastic-marvelous* and *marvelous*.

Todorov explains that the line between the fantastic-uncanny and the fantastic-marvelous represents the fantastic in its pure state. The sub-genre of the *fantastic-uncanny* consists of supernatural events that are rationally explained at the end of the story, such as in the *Saragossa Manuscript* (1815), where all the "miracles" are provided a rational explanation at the end. (Todorov 1975: 44) The *uncanny* is part of the world of the frightening and something repressed that was well known and familiar in the past (Freud 2003: 124). Todorov says that the uncanny can be found in horror literature, for instance. The uncanny deals with the emotions of characters, especially with fear, and is not connected to a material event. (Todorov 1975: 47) In an uncanny experience, we compare the inexplicable with known information from previous experience (Todorov 1975: 42). In the *fantastic-marvelous* supernatural events are eventually accepted as supernatural (Todorov 1975: 52). The *marvelous* consists of supernatural phenomena, to which there is no reaction from the characters or the

implicit reader. The marvelous is largely present in fairy tales. In contrast to the uncanny that refers to the past, the marvelous is connected to an unprecedented, unknown phenomenon, never seen before, which refers to the future. (Todorov 1975: 54, 42)

2.2 Characteristics of the Fantastic

According to Jackson (1988: 5) Todorov's post-Romantic critical study *The Fantastic: A Structural Approach to a Literary Genre* (1975) of the fantastic is "the most important and influential" work in the field. Todorov seeks to establish "a more concrete definition of the fantastic" through comparing the commonalities of different texts in a structural analysis (Jackson 1988: 5). However, Jackson (1988: 61) criticizes Todorov's work because of its failure recognize the social and political implications in fantastic literature. Jackson finds it interesting that Todorov discusses the themes of "I" and "not-I", which according to Jackson, are intrinsically connected with the unconscious, and therefore psychoanalysis is needed in understanding the fantastic. Todorov has explicitly stated his reluctance to accept psychoanalysis as a viable means to analyze the fantastic, as "psychosis and neurosis are not the explication of the themes of fantastic literature." (Jackson 1988: 61) Jackson, on the other hand, sees the obvious reoccurrence of the unconscious material in the fantastic, and trying to understand it without the framework of psychoanalytical ideas is absurd in her opinion. Jackson argues that Todorov sees Freudian psychoanalysis as inadequate or irrelevant in examining the fantastic, and that it is the most significant blind-spot in his work, as he neglects political and ideological problems. In order to examine the connections between individual and society, one must consider the unconscious, because it reserves the capability of creating social structures and norms. (Jackson 1988: 6) Jackson (1988: 6) further refers to Mitchell in stating that, instead of looking at the conscious mind, we should direct our attention to the unconscious, which, in fact, is the medium through which society emerges. Fantastic literature is particularly inclined towards psychoanalysis, for it often demonstrates in concrete forms "a tension between the 'laws

of human society' and the resistance of the unconscious mind to those laws". (Jackson 1988: 6)

Sandner characterizes the fantastic as a genre "notoriously difficult to define" (Sandner 2004: 9). However, he sees certain essential features to the fantastic, as that of displacement, which means that fantastic, in a sense, does not "point, even superficially, to any clear signified", so the reader is left with an interpretation after experiencing "lack" or "disruption" (Sandner 2004: 9). Displacement has to do with not understanding clearly all that is communicated via fantasy, and in fact, the purpose is to make one's own fantasy. Sandner connects the fantastic with the term "sublime", as they both demonstrate excess. The fantastic and sublime present the reader with images that are incomprehensible for his capacity. However, he states that "not all that is sublime is fantastic, but every fantastic image contains the possibility of encountering the sublime." (Sandner 2004: 9)

Rabkin (1979: 16) sees that, in a sense, the fantastic is found in all art, since we are given worlds where a certain order, whatever it may be, dominates. Jackson (1988: 13) characterizes the fantastic too large as a genre, since the fantastic quality can be found in so many genres. The fantastic includes a variety of conventional genres, such as fairy tale, detective story and fantasy.

Semantically, the fantastic establishes its narrative qualities on the mimetic, which means that it presents "an object world objectively" and manifests as "marvelous" through describing "the unrealistic" and "its apparent impossibilities" (Jackson 1988: 22). Jackson (1988: 22) refers to Russ (1967) in stating that the real world is in fact continuously present in fantasy by negation, which supports Jackson's idea of fantasy as a literature of inversion and subversion. Since fantasy builds upon polarities, it gives information on the limits of the "real" (Jackson 1988: 23). The relationship between "real" and "imaginary" is one of the fundamental characteristics of the fantastic, discussed by many scholars, including Todorov and Jackson. Jackson says that fantastic works are in fact found in an in-between space of "real" and "imaginary", changing the

way the two relate to each other through ambiguous nature of the fantastic (Jackson 1988: 35). This view parallels with Todorov's characterization of the fantastic, where the fantastic is situated between the marvelous (supernatural) and the real (uncanny).

Jackson says that fantastic narratives move the reader into "a *marvelous* realm", which is a different, secondary universe. This world has its own autonomous order and connects to the "real" solely with metaphoric meaning and seldom intrudes into or questions it. Such place are found in works such as William Morris's *The Wood Beyond the World* (1894), Frank Baum's *Wonderful Land of Oz* (1904), C.S. Lewis's *Narnia* (1939), Fritz Leiber's *Nehwon*, Tolkien's Middlearth in the *Lord of the Rings* (1965), Fran Herbert's *Dune* (1965) and other faerie worlds and in most science fiction. Jackson argues that these marvellous stories connect with the "real" through retrospect and allegory. (Jackson 1988: 42–43) Speaking of allegory, Todorov says that in certain stories the reader does not question the supernatural phenomena, because he/she understand that they are not to be taken in the literal sense. They must be taken in another sense called *allegorical*. (Todorov 1975: 26, 31) According to Sandner (2004: 5) Tolkien does not want allegorical readings to be applied to *The Lord of the Rings*, since, for example, the "One Ring", crafted by the Dark Lord Sauron, has been read as the atomic bomb.

2.3 Characteristics of Fantasy

Mendlesohn (2013) argues in his book *Rhetorics of Fantasy* that the discussion for the definition of fantasy has existed for a great deal of time, and does not even try to define it. A consensus has appeared, which states that fantasy is a "fuzzy set". (Mendlesohn 2013: 11) In spite of discussions when exactly fantasy has emerged, there is, however, a general acceptance, as Ekman and Rabkin (2013: 17; 1979: 8) argue that Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* has had a great influence on contemporary fantasy literature. Ekman (2013: 17) says that it was not until the U.S paperback editions Tolkien's work appeared in 1965 that fantasy gained a market identity and was introduced as a genre to the general public. Ekman (2013: 17) characterizes Tolkien as the genre's "central

ideological lynchpin". Tolkien's work is "a prototype for the fuzzy set of fantasy" (Ekman 2013: 17). People started to see fantasy as a genre when Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings* was published, which resulted in the shaping of modern fantasy and what readers expect from the genre (Ekman 2013: 18).

Jackson (1988: 1) accounts fantasy's elusiveness of definition for its association with imagination and with desire and sees that its value is indeed in this resistance to definition and escapist qualities. She parallels fantasy with in-between concepts, such as "on the edge, through, beyond, between, at the back of, underneath" and with adjectives "topsy-turvy, reversed and inverted"—the areas of concealed desire (Jackson 1988: 65). Fantasy in literature has emerged as "free" from many of the limitations of the more realistic texts. Fantastic texts break against concepts of time, space and character. Many concepts, such as self and other, life and death gain new distinctions through fantasy. (Jackson 1988: 21)

Jackson sees that fantasy literature is formed inside the context of culture, as all texts are. It cannot be comprehended without the social framework in which we live, even though fantasy goes past the limits of that context. Fantastic literature reveals the limitations of the real world, of cultural order, as it goes into dimensions of, for instance, "disorder" and "illegality", that which is outside our world, law and "dominant value systems". Fantasy embarks on a search of the "unsaid and the unseen of culture: that which has been silenced, made invisible, covered over and made 'absent'." Jackson sees the two functions as recurring motifs of fantastic stories, where as we move from "expression as manifestation to expression as expulsion." In a way, fantasy manifests itself as a list of items that define the limits of the dominant order, introducing the "unreal" against the "real", which it then questions with its differing nature. (Jackson 1988: 3–4)

Speaking of the structure of fantasy, Jackson employs the use of the term "mode". Mode is not linked to the characteristics of a particular genre, nor to a specific time or language, rather existing as a mode of expression across time, such as the ironic or the satiric mode. She sees fantasy as literary mode in relation to its structures and forms,

which has given birth to certain related genres, such as romance literature or the marvelous, which includes fairy tales and science fiction, fantastic literature, such as the works of Poe, Dinesen, Maupassant, Gautier, Kafka and Lovecraft. Other stories include themes, such as abnormal psychic states of delusion and hallucination. She concludes that "there is no abstract entity called 'fantasy'", as there are simply a variety of texts that have certain similarities, which are created by unconscious desires. (Jackson 1988: 6–8)

Jackson (1988: 8) compares fantasy with dreams, as fantastic literature consists of material that is "re-combined" and ultimately the material available is the totality of all the elements the author/dreamer has access to. Jackson (1988: 8) refers to Freud in stating that the imagination cannot invent anything, since it can only combine known elements that are "strange to one another". Jackson sees that fantasy is not transcendental in the sense that the purpose of it is not to create "another non-human world": it combines the already familiar material through the process of inversion and subversion in order to create something "strange, unfamiliar and *apparently* 'new', absolutely 'other and different." (Jackson 1988: 8)

2.4 The Need for the Fantastic and Fantasy

Todorov (1975: 22) raises the question "Why should literature exist at all?" and states that the reason for its existence lies in its ability to say "what non-literary language does not and cannot say." Regardless of the fact that fantastic worlds are fictive, Rabkin (1979: 4) argues that they establish narratives that are important in reflecting the problems of the real world. The dragon dramatizes a problem that exists in the real world. This simplistic allegory is a satisfying alternative to the complex ways of the real world (Rabkin 1979: 5). Dragons are one of the many allegories commonly found in fantastic works. Since ancient times, Rabkin (1979: 5) argues, certain cosmic questions have been troubling the human mind, such as "Why must there be death?" or "Is there an afterlife?" Fantastic worlds can facilitate the process of seeking answers to such questions through dramatizing the answers. Rabkin states that

> in their oldest forms, these answers are the myths that cultures live by; in somewhat more modern forms, these answers become the folktales by which cultures entertain themselves; and in yet more modern forms, these answers become the fairy tales through which cultures amuse—and thereby educate—their young. (Rabkin 1979: 5)

Rabkin explains that the taproot texts of mythology and folktales have had their parts in the forming of the fantasy we know today, and all three have similar functions in answering questions on which mankind has always contemplated. Myth, folktale and fairytale form the three categories from which the narrative sources of the fantastic derive. (Rabkin 1979: 27) Fantastic worlds function as ideal platforms for the examination of cosmic questions, since, as Rabkin argues, they often form a world, in which individuals are cared for and their needs and desires taken into account. This world suggests the illusion of central position by dramatizing the omnipotence of thought. (Rabkin 1979: 33) Rabkin (1979: 33) refers to Freud in stating that in fantasy "should one think of something, it will come to pass." Hansel and Grethel is an example of a story that has the omnipotence of thought (Rabkin 1979: 33). In this way, fantasy presents us with scenarios that would not take place in the real world, offering a "fantastic" opportunity to gaze into the imaginary "what if" that helps us to give meaning to things in the real world.

2.5 The Hero's Relation to the Fantastic

Todorov (1975: 11) refers to Frye's list of "the modes of fiction" as one of the categories in an attempt to define the fantastic genre. These modes describe the connection between the hero and the laws of nature. They are as follows:

I. The hero is by *nature* superior to the reader *and* to the laws of nature; this genre is called *myth.*
II. The hero is by *degree* superior to the reader *and* to the laws of nature; this genre is that of *legend* or *fairy tale.*

III. The hero is by *degree* superior to the reader *but not* to the laws of nature; this is the *high mimetic genre.*

IV. The hero is *on a basis of equality with* the reader *and* the laws of nature; this is the *low mimetic genre.*

V. The hero is *inferior to* the reader; this is the genre of *irony.*

Frye's categorization is relevant for this thesis, since it provides clear distinctions between different types of heroes in relation to the laws of nature. Since Drizzt is superior to the reader and to the laws of nature by degree, not by nature, as Gods are, for instance, he represents the genre of legend and fairy tale. His superiority "by degree" refers to his almost superhuman fighting ability.

3 LIMINALITY

Liminality has its origins in anthropology and ritual studies, mainly in the theories of Victor Turner (1967, 1969, 1974, 1982). This chapter provides a description of liminality by presenting Turner's, and other scholars' views. The concepts of *ambivalence* and *borderland* are also briefly introduced, as they share great similarities with the liminal and are also significant topics in *The Dark Elf Trilogy*.

3.1 Anthropological Origin

The creator of the term *rite de passage* is the French anthropologist Arnold van Gennep. In his seminal book, *Les Rites de Passage* (1909: *The Rites of Passage*) Van Gennep introduced the idea of liminality to the scientific world. The liminal phase is located in the middle of a ritual process, and Turner (2007: 106) says that van Gennep defines rituals that mark a transition from one state to the next as rituals that have to do with change taking place in every place, state, social position and age. According to van Gennep (1960: 2–3), the life of an individual in all societies consists of transitive periods, in which the individual passes from one state to the next. Turner explains that rites of passage can be observed in all societies from tribal to contemporary cultures. It is only the form of the ritual that changes. (Turner 1970: 93) Turner observed the ritual behavior of the Ndembu tribe in Zambia for two and a half years. He states that liminality emerges most noticeably in smaller societies, where change is linked to "biological and meteorological rhythms and recurrences rather than with technological innovations." (Turner 1970: 93)

Eriksen (2004: 282) provides a general definition of ritual, stating that it is any regular public event that depicts the relationship between the secular and the religious. However, ritual produces ambiguous meanings, which makes understanding it difficult. Eriksen claims that ritual functions as a means of processing great existential problems and mysteries, such as life, death or the purpose of existence. The ritual is a form of presenting these types of topics, even if the problem would never be solved. Rituals are

seen as processes that are part of religion, which create a concrete form for the sacred and supernatural concepts that the religious system is based on. (Eriksen 2004: 282) Turner, however, connects the concept of ritual with religious models of behavior that express social transition, and separates it from the concept of *ceremony*. Ceremony has to do with religious social states, while ritual expresses social transition. Ritual is action that changes the individual's state, while ceremony only confirms the current state of the individual. (Turner 1970: 95)

Eriksen refers to the theories of van Gennep and Turner and states that the rite of passage is a vital ritual in the regeneration of society, where individuals can reach a new status while the public aspect of the ritual binds them to society and its social context (Eriksen 2004: 185). Van Gennep says that rites of passage can be found in many religious traditions, such as the ecclesiastical rituals of confirmation, funeral and marriage; in tribal settings we find rituals of circumcision and coming of age, for instance. Other common rites of passage of the human life are birth, paternity, ascension to upper class and death, he lists. Van Gennep believes that rites of passage are closely connected with religious customs. These customs he considers magical, as he uses the term "magico-religious" in describing the connection between the practical aspect that is magical, and the theoretical that is religious. (van Gennep 1960: 13–14) In *The Dark Elf Trilogy* the rite of passage becomes an integral part of the hero-journey, as the hero moves from one state to another. On a wider scale, the journey presents the passage from an "ordinary man" to a man of heroic status.

Before Turner, the concept of liminality was only briefly introduced in the theories of van Gennep (Turner 2007: 7). Turner himself deals with the liminal most extensively in the books *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (1970) and *Forest of Symbols*: *Aspects of Ndembu Ritual* (1970). In his research, Turner has mostly concentrated on the ritual behavior of the Ndemdu tribe. He often refers to the person in a liminal state as a liminal subject or as "initiate" and "neophyte", meaning "beginner" (Turner 1970: 96). Turner, like van Gennep, sees the rite of passage as a threefold structure consisting of: *separation*, *transition* and *incorporation* (or *reaggregation*) (Turner 1970: 96; van Gennep 1960: 11). Van Gennep equates transition rites with

liminal rites, calling the *transition* period liminal period. Also, he paraphrases the tripartite structure of the rite of passage as *preliminal, liminal* and *postliminal*. (van Gennep 1960: 11) Turner says that *separation* in van Gennep's ritual theory refers to the separation of the individual or a group from society's social structure, cultural space or both (Turner: 2008: 94). The *transition* part involves a liminal space that does not have the characteristics of the previous nor the next state; it is highly ambiguous. In *incorporation* the liminal subject reaches his destination and returns to the stable, normative state as a person who, often, has attained a higher status. (Eriksen 2004: 186; Turner 2008: 94–95) Rites of passage describe the transition from one state to another best, because their liminal phases are prolonged and easy to identify (Turner 1970: 95).

Turner thinks that society is a framework built of positions, a structure where liminality is located in-between the structures as a space or situation. Liminal subjects are, therefore, "interstructural" persons. (Turner 1970: 93) The important question is not necessarily that of being in an ambivalent situation between structures, but ultimately of anti-structure (Turner 1970: 98). Turner (1982: 28) refers to Sutton-Smith's definition of the term *anti-structure* as a "the latent system of potential alternatives from which novelty will arise when contingencies in the normative system require it." The ritual subject is both part of the structured society as well as separated from it in the anti-structure. Liminal subjects have the common features of being 1) located in the in-between spaces of social structure 2) occupying its marginal spaces 3) residing at its lowest levels. (Turner 2008: 125) Also the term *marginal* is often used in the context of describing the liminal, which denotes being situated at margins or borders. In every culture there are always means of classification and definition, and these means form the way in which persons in that culture observe and construct their environment. (Turner 1970: 95)

The liminal subject falls between classification and definition and is symbolically "invisible", for a culture is not able to comprehend the subject that resides between classifications. The subject is "no longer classified and not yet classified". (Turner 1970: 95—96) In other words, the location of the liminal subject is "neither here nor there" (Turner 2008: 95). It is only when the liminal subject reintegrates to society that

he returns to the system of classification (Turner 2008: 95). Eriksen stresses that liminality is a dangerous state because the liminal subject can decide not to reintegrate to society and renounce all status and values attached to his society. Despite being dangerous, the liminal state is a necessary phase for the ritual, since the subject of the ritual cannot be born into a new status without first fully renouncing his former status. (Eriksen 2004: 185–186) Similarly, Turner states that another structurally negative feature is that of having nothing. The liminal subjects have no status, property, insignia, secular clothing, rank and kinship position, in other words nothing that structurally distinguishes them from their kin, so they are represented as the "unaccommodated man". (Turner 1970: 98–99) These features can have devastating effects, and also Hazel and Roberts (2012: 201–202) in reference to Thomassen (1993) stress the destructive power of liminal spaces. The liminal subjects are often associated with vulnerability and suffering through physical, psychological and social aspects. They become nameless and their spatio-temporal location becomes ambiguous and socially unstructured. (Hazel & Roberts 2012: 201–202)

Turner regards the liminal subjects that fall between classifications as very ambiguous. He compares the condition of being in a liminal state with other concepts of ambiguous and undefinable nature, such as death, invisibility, darkness, solar or moon eclipse and bisexuality. (Turner 2008: 95) Outside the normative system, the liminal subject can symbolically represent both sexes, being androgynous or totally ungendered (Turner 2008: 102). Classification by gender is an important factor in structuring society, but classification by gender does not take place in the anti-structured state of liminality (Turner 1970: 98). Turner (1970: 98) describes the individual as *prima materia* that is undifferentiated raw material. Similarly, he uses the term *tabula rasa*, "a blank slate," onto which is engraved the knowledge and wisdom of the group to the extent that is linked to the new status (Turner 2008: 103). Ambiguity of gender and even species becomes apparent in the use of masks in rites of passage which combine features of both sexes as well as those of animals (Turner 1970: 105). Humility, sacredness, submissiveness and silence are connected to the features of the liminal entity (Turner 2008: 96, 103).

The anthropologist Claude Lévi-Strauss' proposes a theory of *binary opposites*, which is often used in discussing meanings of words. He claims that our understanding of word meanings depends not so much on the actual meaning of a word, but on the difference between the word and its opposite. (Lévi-Strauss 1970: 33) For instance, in fantastic literature, it is relevant to discuss the binary pair of real-imaginary. Turner sets liminality in between the binary oppositions of Lévi-Strauss, many of which are met in the Christian tradition. These polarities are, for instance: absence of status/status, sacredness/secularity, silence/speech, nakedness or uniform clothing/distinctions of clothing are communitas/structure. These states are often represented in liminality by a variety of symbols. (Turner 2008: 106–107) According to Turner, the symbols used in connection with the liminal persona are ambiguous and complicated. Many liminal symbols are connected with the biological, often negative, processes such as death and menstruation. These biological processes can be seen in comparison with the structural and cultural processes of liminality. These processes give more noticeable forms of manifestation to liminality's otherwise recessive and conceptual characteristics. Especially death is seen as a transition from one state to the next, which is why it is a symbol closely connected to liminality. In some transitive rites the ritual subject is in fact treated as dead, and in extreme cases the subject can even be buried. Optionally, the subject can be seen as the like of an infant, as a non-independent being. The ritual subject is renounced of property and name, which also refers to the idea of being dead or invisible to society. (Turner 1970: 95–96)

Even though the negative characteristic of liminality can be easily seen, Turner also mentions some positive sides of the concept. Although the liminal subject is separated from the society and made void of a variety of things, the liminal state makes it possible to experience positive changes, as Turner characterizes liminal state as "a realm of pure possibility whence novel configurations of ideas and relations may arise (Turner 1970: 97). Amidst the chaos and ambiguity, new positive energies have the power to change the subject into the better. In the context of heroes, the liminal phase often gives rise to new identity and power. According to Turner, amidst the death-related processes of undoing, dissolution, decomposition, there are also processes of growth, transformation, and the reshaping of old elements in new ways, which are symbolic of life and rebirth

(Turner 1970: 99). This antithetical and paradoxical nature is interesting: the neophyte experiences death and birth simultaneously through the symbols of tombs and wombs (huts and tunnels), lunar symbolism, snake and bear symbolism and nakedness. The moon waxes and wanes. Snakes shed their skin, appearing to die, only to emerge as new. Similarly, the bear arises in spring, from the "death" of hibernation. Nakedness is the symbol of infancy and death, as corpses are naked before burial. The liminal subjects are considered simultaneously alive and dead, and neither of those. The state is a paradoxical mixture of classifications. (Turner 1970: 97, 99)

3.2 Liminal vs. Liminoid

This thesis does not examine the term *liminoid* in detail, but as it is closely related to the term *liminal*, it is worth briefly highlighting their differences. Turner associates the liminal with tribal and agrarian societies, which are preliterate, simpler and of smaller scale as societies and characterizes the liminal as "work". By "work", Turner implies "divine work" and "the *work* of the Gods", thus relating to the ritual as sacred. The term *liminoid* is associated with industrial societies and with the words "play" and "leisure". It is possible to connect "play" with tribal agrarian societies too, but intrinsically they are more represented as "work" for the community in order to, for instance, promote communal welfare, fertility, crops and to make "boys into men, girls into women and chiefs out of commoners". (Turner 1982: 30–32)

Turner says that technical innovations, "the products of ideas" are characterized by the *liminoid*. The term's "-oid" derives from Greek's "-eidos", denoting "a form, shape; and means "like, resembling"". Thus liminoid resembles liminal. Liminal is further represented as obligatory and necessary, while liminoid is not connected with obligation, but with choice. Liminal is more objective and social, taking place at the level of society, whereas liminoid is more personal, psychological and idiosyncratic and operates at the level of individual, often in particular groups, like schools, circles and coteries. (Turner 1982: 32, 34, 54) The heroic journey is closer to the liminal than liminoid, since the hero must embark on the liminal journey, as it is something of a

"sacred" rite of passage that is predestined. The liminal space is a necessity in the hero-character's growth, including hardships and tests, which are more closely regarded as "work" rather than "leisure".

3.3 Communitas

Turner distinguishes *communitas* from one of two types of societies that form the connections between people in rituals. The first is a society outside the liminal that builds upon political, normative and economic conditions, in which people are categorized by many types of evaluation. Secondly, there is a society that appears in the liminal period, which is characterized by anti-structure and a sense of equality and community among its liminal subjects. This second society is called *communitas*, the Latin word for "community", which Turner uses to distinguish it from the community's meaning of "area of common living." (Turner 2008: 96) Communitas is made possible by the unique nature of the liminal state, where the liminal subjects are outside the social structures, yet located in a state where they can feel profound connection without the classification of statutes and castes. The subjects of higher status will go through a period where they experience lower status, thus learning humility towards others as they go up in social status. Liminality here implies that the person who is "high" must experience "low" and the existence of "low" is the requirement for the existence of "high". The bonds formed by the experience of communitas are ultimately something very fundamental and essential to the human condition, to the extent that society would not exist without those bonds. (Turner 2008: 96–98) Turner says that communitas is "a moment in and out of time" and something that cannot be examined through the lens of structure. Many initiation rites often have times of prolonged seclusion—also pilgrimages—where a sense of timelessness and anti-structure emerges. Also hippie communities are characterized by communitas. (Turner 1974: 238–239)

Turner sees communitas essentially as a spontaneous and fleeting state, for the liminal subjects in communitas eventually return into structure as they redevelop the norms that govern social relationships. Communitas represents something of an ideal connection

between individuals. Turner distinguishes between ideological, spontaneous and normative communitas. (Turner 2008: 132) The experience of communitas involves the liminal period's concept of lowliness in regard to others as well as "structural inferiority". However, Drewery states that it is important to distinguish the liminal from being at margins and alienation—two closely related concepts. Liminality does not emerge, like alienation and being at margins do, at the edges of social structure, but inside the social structure, in the pre-existing cracks of social norms, classifications and conventions (Drewery 2011: 3). This can make it very difficult to identify liminality.

3.4 Ambivalence

Ambivalence is yet another concept that closely relates to liminal in that it is also something that is situated between structures and oppositions as an anti-structure. Ambivalence is ambiguous and indefinite, since it can simultaneously evoke two opposite meanings and fluctuation between them, such as death and birth. Ambivalence is akin to the liminal because it is difficult to unmask and locate, and often it can be observed by juxtaposing two exclusionary concepts, where it resides in-between (Haasjoki 2005: 182, 187). Löytty (2005: 13) states that ambivalence does not necessarily emerge unless searched for in particular.

3.5 Borderlands

The *borderland*, which appears as the natural spaces between borders, such as the wilderness, is intrinsically a liminal landscape and the place where the hero often is "born, lives, tours, discovers, acts and dies" (Miller 2002: 381). Gloria Anzaldúa's (Anzaldúa 1999: 19) concept of the borderland manifests not only as a physical location but also in terms of mental and sexual borderlines: borders and borderlands always exist in places, where cultures, races and different classes meet. Pohjanrinne (2002: 81) points out that it is the liminal terrain where otherness is met. Anzaldúa examines the

term and discusses her own position as a Mexican in Anglo-American culture as well as living at the intersection of cultural influences. She defines *border* as a "dividing line, a narrow strip along a steep edge" and "a constant state of transition", having the prohibited and forbidden as its dwellers. It is the homeland of, among others, the troublemakers, the queer, the mulato, the half-breed and the half-dead. Borderlands are characterized by uneasiness, ambivalence and death. (Anzaldúa 1999: 25–26) The liminal connects to the concept of borderland in many ways, as the borderland is intrinsically a transitive state and in-between, but these two concepts also support one another in the sense that by being able to identify the characteristics of the liminal subject on both sides of the border, we simply make it evident that the border exists.

Borders are central to fantastic worlds. For the hero, borders are a necessity in the search for heroic self and power. The hero's mobility takes place between varying zones and realms as he crosses and penetrates boundaries, which often marks significant phases in the story. Furthermore, since fantastic worlds consist of worlds that are divided into areas of many kinds, and often crossing between regions can be dangerous yet exciting, or both destructive and positively transformative, it is relevant to discuss the terms *threshold, border* and *boundary.*

Ekman notes that two regions, although next to each other geographically, can have different rules for time, space and causality. A day in one region can be a decade in another. Amidst a place of perpetual summer there can be a place of darkness. A magical forest can have the power to change matter, but outside the forest such magic is considered absurd nonsense. (Ekman 2013: 68) Ekman refers to Clute's ideas of physical thresholds stating that, firstly, they usually appear as the frames of borderlands, marking the limits between regions joined together by borderlands. He also notes them as regions between two different types of reality. Secondly, physical thresholds appear as places where two or more worlds simultaneously overlap the same region. Thirdly, they comprise the perimeter of polders and, lastly, they can form a map of the land. (Ekman 2013: 68–69)

Ekman (2013: 69) considers the term *threshold* as having many possibilities of application. The term intends that the threshold is to be crossed, and with it, Ekman refers to the figurative meaning "the line which one crosses in entering" (OED). However, despite the usefulness of the term *threshold*, Ekman examines two terms that a more specific, namely *border* and *boundary.* He makes the distinction between a *border* and *boundary*, as "border" means distinguishing between two areas and differs from a *boundary* in that the latter has to do with a perimeter or circumference. The two differ also in the way that "you can be on either side of a border, but inside or outside a boundary." (Ekman 2013: 69) Ekman introduces three different kinds of borders that are often present in fantasy. First is the border between the land of the living and the land of the dead, in which the common motif is that of the journey to the underworld in many mythologies and so-called taproot texts, which are texts that have appeared before generic fantasy but have the fantastic quality and are important to the genre. Ekman lists a number of mythological voyages to the realm of the dead, as in the myth of the Sumerian goddess Inanna, the Japanese deity Izanagi entering the land of the dead called Yomi, Odysseus voyaging there for knowledge and the Norse gods journeying to Hel to capture Fenrir. (Ekman 2013: 69)

The second border Ekman discusses is that of the border between Faerie and the mundane. Faerie is the home of magical creatures and is a popular motif in many fantasy works. The relations between the two are characterized by three categories. Firstly, Faerie is an Otherworld only accessible from the mundane realm by magic or a portal. However, there is no consensus about what the non-magical world of humans should be called in relation to Faerie. Ekman lists a number of suggestions, such as "the *real* world", "the natural world", "the mortal world" and "the world of men" and says that they are problematic, since Faerie is often described as a space that is equally real and natural to the non-magical world, where death is also known. The third form of border is the division between science and magic, an early example of which is Theodore Cogswell's *The Wall Around the World* from 1953, in which the world of science is separated from the world of magic by a colossus wall. (Ekman 2013: 70–71

4 BETWEEN WORLDS: THE WHALE'S BELLY

As Drizzt escapes Menzoberranzan, he crosses the boundary into the metaphorical "Belly of the Whale" (see Campbell 1968: 90), that is the underground passages of the Underdark. As a silent tomb, life-giving womb and a mysterious labyrinth, it has numerous meanings for the hero. Here Drizzt spends a decade, having only Guenhwyvar in his company for most of the time. The Belly is a type of a purgatorial state, transitive and in-between. Often represented as a zone of danger, such as in the form of the dragon's lair, it represents symbolically the death and rebirth of the hero. Originally derived from the story of Jonah and the Whale in the bible, Campbell describes the trope as

> The idea that the passage of the magical threshold is a transit into a sphere of rebirth is symbolized in the worldwide womb image of the belly of the whale. The hero, instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown, and would appear to have died." (Campbell 1968: 90)

The hero moves into a "dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials" (Campbell 1968: 97). This description resembles the liminal phase, as *dream* refers to desire and unconscious. *Fluid* connects with change and potenciality and *ambiguous* is one of the fundamental features of the liminal. Lastly, the series of trials refers to the tests and ordeals liminal subjects often experience. The Belly of the Whale is a period that has inspired a world literature of fantastic tests and ordeals (Campbell 1968: 97). Countless heroes go through the Belly of the Whale, through great hardships but attaining great powers in the process. Bruce Wayne in the film *The Dark Knight Rises* (2012) is badly wounded by the villain Bane, and is thrown into a pit. Batman's only chance is to recover from "death" and ascend to the surface, to "life" and back into a state of new power that he can use to defeat Bane. The pit is the belly, dangerous but able to grant novel strength to the hero.

4.1 Death and Rebirth

According to Campbell (1968: 91), "the passage of the threshold is a form of self-annihilation […] But here, instead of passing outward, beyond the confines of the visible world, the hero goes inward, to be born again." Death, at least in its metaphorical sense, has to do with reaching a higher state of being, as Allison & Goethals (2011: 92) point out with a reference to Ananda Coomaraswamy's words: "No creature can attain a higher grade of nature without ceasing to exist." Death comes in the form of a descent into the Underworld, as in the case of Herakles. However, often one does not refer to a physical descent, but to the descent of consciousness into unconsciousness. The nature of the Underdark symbolically speaks of that which is below the conscious mind, being deep underground in the anti-structured darkness. Its connection with the word "Underworld" is obvious, and indeed for the surface dwellers the Underdark is a type of Underworld, because it is a dangerous and unknown place that is inhabited by the more or less evil races and monsters. Thus, Underdark is the region of death.

Miller (2002: 134–137) describes the Belly of the Whale as a re-occurring instance in search for power and growth for the warrior-hero. According to him, the Belly of the Whale traditionally manifests as the forested wilderness, but can also be "an extensive watery element", as the sea. It is the source from which terrifying enemies emerge. (Miller 2002: 138–139) For Drizzt, one of those terrifying enemies is the undead version of his father, Zaknafein. His nemesis, however, is the solitude being in the Underdark (see 4.1.3).

Turner (1974: 196) refers to caves and forests as common liminal sites. The cave is a place of death, but it is also a secret space of development and renewal (Jung 1980: 135). By getting into the cave, anyone who makes a journey into the unconsciousness will ultimately transform via connecting with the unconscious contents, which can result in a temporal, positive or negative, change of the personality (Jung 1980: 136). Mackey-Kallis (2001: 26) argues that even though the unconscious is a liminal state of growth, change, and enlightenment, the hero should not stay there perpetually, for the risk is to lose the connection with reality and being human. Lingering in the

unconscious means to forsake human evolution and the “infantilization/destruction of the self” (Mackey-Kallis 2001: 26). Therefore the hero must ascend back into consciousness (Mackey-Kallis 2001: 26). Drizzt is close to losing himself to the Hunter’s instincts, due to having spent too much time in the unconscious regions of the Underdark, in the deep reaches of his mind. “The Hunter” is a primal and animalistic state, which emerges in Drizzt during battles that require his utmost ability (see. 4.4). He experiences momentous negative change of personality due to the Hunter’s emergence (see 4.4.1).

Douglas, in addition to Jung and Mackey-Kallis, has a similar view on the power of available in the unconscious depths of the mind. Even though she refers explicitly to the context of ritual, it is relevant to the hero, for the hero’s transformation is a form of ritual. The ritual of the hero often lacks the explicit, more concrete means of performing the ritual, such as the exchange of rings in a marriage. The Belly of the Whale in itself is a ritual of becoming the hero, in which, the slaying of a dragon, for instance, and for Drizzt, the triumph over his father, marks the completion of the ritual. The hero’s journey as a whole is a rite of passage, a ritual of transition. Douglas states that in dreams, faints and frenzies, ritual aims to locate power not found in the conscious mind. Returning from these states is to bring with oneself power that is only available outside the control of self and society.“ (Douglas 1984: 96) Although Falassi (1987: 41) refers to the sphere of tourism and travel, his general claim is still relevant here, as he argues that through travel outside the quotidian one can have experiences that exceed the ordinary experiences. The hero’s journey from the quotidian structured spaces to the anti-structured, liminal regions of the unconscious is necessary for the hero’s search for power and self-growth.

4.1.1 The Mother as Life and Death

Rebirth for Drizzt is represented also in the death of his mother, the head of the house Do’Urden, Matron Malice. Rojola argues that the mother is the boundary between life and death, since the mother gives life that inevitably leads to death. Origin and

motherhood are essential concepts in the forming of the limits of one's identity, because separation from the mother and one's origin connects with the building of self. (Rojola 1995: 18) Drizzt's mother dies after the ritual of Zin'Carla fails, when her daughter Briza stabs her while she is in a weak state. The mother is an archetype in Jung's psychology and often implies positive meanings, such as fertility and fruitfulness. However, the mother has also negative connotations, such as dark, abyss and the world of the dead. (Jung 2012: 8) Drizzt's mother comes to represent, as is appropriate to the misogynous associations of the drow society, the negative associations of death and darkness. The death of Malice partly symbolizes the death of Drizzt's old self, right after which he continues the journey into the surface and light, out of the mother's dark womb. Additionally, the city is a maternal symbol (Jung 1977: 171) and escape from it is yet another aspect that suggests the forming of a new identity to the hero-character.

4.1.2 Imprisonment of the Hero

Since being a hero involves a constant movement, crossing of boundaries and surpassing great ordeals, his imprisonment in a passive state can be symbolically seen as his death. Prisoners are liminal subjects situated in the liminal environment of the prison, since both the prisoner and the prison are ambivalent and located outside or between social structures. Horvath et al. (2015: 48) explicitly refer to the prison as spatially liminal. Prisoners oscillate between the polarities of free-controlled and life-death, for instance. Prisons are areas of seclusion outside the quotidian.

Drizzt and his friends become temporally imprisoned by the mind-flayers, the illithids, in their fortress. Their state is an unconscious limbo, where their minds are in complete control of their master-illithids. They function as slaves, devoid of their own conscious will, serving the colossal central-brain of the illithid community, which is a god-like creature. Drizzt's role is to rub fine oils on the brain, while Belwar serves his master as a gladiator and Clacker functions as a herdsman. They are located in a dream-like state, where the subjects are reduced from self to Other, conscious to unconscious and freedom to slavery. Their awareness is narrowed down to only pleasing their masters,

which implies that they have no sense of time and place, in other words, their state is characterized by timelessness and anti-structure.

4.1.3 Silence, Solitude and Passivity

The time in the Belly is also a time of solitude and introspect for the hero, something which repeatedly occurs in mythology (Campbell 1968: 354), as the hero descends only to rise ever stronger. “Higher silences” (Campbell 1968: 92) are encountered by the hero in the Belly. The higher silences most likely refer to the silent powers of symbolic death. Drizzt speaks of solitude and silence as his enemy in Underdark: “My enemy was solitude, the interminable, incessant silence of hushed corridors” (*E* 8). Solitude and silence are further stressed as his enemies, when Salvatore (*E* 5) writes: “He feared no foes, but was no longer certain whether his courage came from confidence or apathy about living. Perhaps survival was not enough.” This is after the battle with one of the deadliest foes in all Underdark, the basilisk, which is a gargantuan reptile that has the ability to poison and petrify its enemies. The fact that “the hunter wore no smile today” (*E* 5) after the battle also suggests his apathetic state. In his extreme solitude, Drizzt grows increasingly ambivalent towards fighting: “I was secretly hoping that some denizen of the Underdark would prove stronger than I. Could the pain of tooth or talon be greater than the emptiness and the silence? I think not” (*E* 10).

Mackey-Kallis (2001: 212) discusses the notion of “passive receptivity”, which refers to the idea of hero’s enlightenment often taking place during a passive solitude, a liminal world. Luke Skywalker experiences enlightenment in using the force through a similar state in the planet of Dagoba, as Yoda says: “You will know. When you are calm, at peace, passive” (Mackey-Kallis 2001: 212). Although Luke’s state differs from Drizzt in the way that he is purposely and voluntarily learning the use of the Force under the guidance of a mentor. However, Drizzt’s stay in Underdark is a matter of survival and developing his skills through unconscious receptivity.

Jung discusses rebirth emerging in processes of self-incubation and introversion, the two of which are closely related. Introversion denotes immersing in one's self, with the unconscious and asceticism. This results in spiritual rebirth of an individual. (Jung 1977: 359) Jung's words support Mackey-Kallis' idea of passive receptivity, which allows the hero to gain novel power through a profound search within the self. Silence, solitude, passivity and metaphorical death all ultimately connect with the transformative power that the hero seeks through those states. Introversion and solitude suggest a state of invisibility, which according to Turner (1969: 95) is a feature that is often likened to the liminal.

4.2 Communitas in the Belly

There is an instance in *Exile*, which can be characterized by Turner's idea of communitas. In the Underdark, Drizzt and his friend Belwar meet Clacker, who is a "pech", a gnome-like creature. Clacker was transformed by a wizard's polymorph spell into a hook horror, a terrible vulture-like humanoid beast; however, his former pech-consciousness is still intact. Residing outside social structures allows a profound connection to emerge between liminal subjects (Turner: 1974: 238), which makes it possible that Drizzt and Clacker become friends relatively quickly. Upon meeting Clacker, Drizzt feels great empathy towards him: "His tale is familiar to me…I, too, was lost" (*E* 202). "Drizzt felt a kinship to the unfortunate creature, a potentially fatal bond founded in empathy for Clacker's loss of self" (*E* 202). Clacker is trapped inside the body of a monster that he does not recognize and tries to fight against its primal and feral urges. His liminal ambivalence between two personas, the self and the beast, is parallel to the internal struggle that Drizzt also experiences with his Hunter-self.

As communitas is something that is not possible to achieve in socially structured, quotidian settings, it creates unique relationships. Clacker's deep sense of friendship towards Drizzt emerges in Clacker's ability to summon a stone wall from the earth in order to protect Drizzt from the attack of a group of mind-flayers. The feat of conjuring a stone wall is an act that can normally be achieved by a group of pech elders.

Therefore, it can be argued that the unique state of liminality, “a realm of pure possibility” (Turner 1970: 97) and sense of communitas allows such feats to be accomplished.

4.3 The Underdark as a Labyrinth

Labyrinths, or mazes, which most critics agree to be the same (see Shiloh 2011: 89) have existed in stories since prehistoric times. It is a literary metaphor and a highly complex structure by nature (Garcia 2015: 3). Shiloh (2011: 7, 167) argues that it allows a variety of representations, properties including circuitousness, imprisonment, repetition, recursiveness, complexity and disorientation, and many of these features, found in today’s fiction and film, symbolize the defeat of logic. The original meaning of the labyrinth, according to Bandiera who refers to Artress’s (1995) ideas on the labyrinth, stems from the pilgrimage traditions in Jerusalem. The path of the labyrinth is represented in the road to Jerusalem, and the center of the labyrinth in the New Jerusalem. She also mentions that journeying there became perilous due to the war of the Crusades, thus connecting labyrinth with danger. (Bandiera 2006: 2)

Labyrinths are often presented as symbols of the inner self, life and soul. Klapcsik discusses the fundamental symbolism of the labyrinth through Nietzsche’s words: “if we desired and dared an architecture corresponding to the nature of our soul (we are too cowardly for it!) — our model would have to be the labyrinth” (Klapcsik 2015: 107). Klapcsik refers to Nudelman’s (2000) theories stating that the labyrinth without exception involves a type of enigma and that it always connects to the discovery of something new and unknown. It is a space of psychoanalysis, myth and a symbol in Jung’s theories. The labyrinth often connects with the rite of passage, the fantastic portal and initiations rituals and forms a liminal space that consists of the traditional ordeals the hero has to face in order to gain new identity. (Klapcsik 2015: 107) The labyrinth of Underdark is both an initiative stage for Drizzt’s heroic transformation as well as the intermediary portal to the new and unknown world of the surface.

Interestingly, Bandiera (2006: 1) characterizes the walk through the labyrinth as having a tripartite structure similar to the three stages of rite of passage: separation, transition and incorporation. She refers to the persons going through the labyrinths as performers of a ritual act, and in the first stage one enters 1) *Purgation*, where one journeys to the center of the labyrinth, 2) *Illumination* is the stage when the performer arrives in the center and 3) *Union* denotes exiting the labyrinth and going back the same route as one came in. (Bandiera 2006: 1–2) *Purgation* connects with the idea of Drizzt becoming free of his society's influence and false principals: free of his old self by being "purified". *Illumination* is the part when he discovers the Hunter's power and that his journey must continue to the surface. *Union* becomes evident, when he joins the surface world, the forest and Mielikki, his true friends—the place where he feels he belongs. The pain of the blinding sun symbolizes the pain associated with birth, as Drizzt is reborn in light. Ultimately, journeying to find self and finding unity with the natural world and other people, among many, are the results of the three stages of the labyrinth (Bandiera 2006: 265). Finding self is one of the reoccurring themes of the hero-journey, and it is also the main purpose of Drizzt's departure from home city. Moreover, finding unity with the natural world becomes later evident in his affinity to the forest and goddess Mielikki. Finding acceptance with others is another thing that he seeks, as all races consider the dark elves as evil.

The labyrinth is clearly something that can be characterized by the Belly of the Whale or the liminal, as it is ambiguous, ambivalent, a space in-between that incorporates many binary oppositions, such as of death and rebirth, akin to the liminal. The fact that one can get disoriented in a labyrinth, never finding an exit, corresponds to the peril of a liminal state where one is in potential danger of never returning to the social structures and society, if the liminal state is prolonged. Drizzt nears this threat, as he almost succumbs to the dark that is implied in his apathy about living and when he refers to himself as a having become "a creature of instinct, calculating and cunning but not thinking, not using my mind for anything more than directing the newest kill" (*E* 9). His mind is becoming lost in the animal inside him that solely lives to survive: "I fear I am losing everything that gives me meaning to life. I fear I am losing my self" (*E* 65–66). Furthermore, the danger of becoming lost in the region of anti-structure becomes

apparent, as Drizzt says: “The very identity of every reasoning being is defined by the language, the communication, between that being and others around it. Without that link, I was lost” (*E* 9) Here, Drizzt explicitly refers to social structures, one element of which is the language and social interaction between individuals. His sense of being lost, of never returning back to society, grows the longer he spends time in the Belly, in a liminal space.

Tricarico states that labyrinths often manifest in the form of natural caves and cavities in the earth and they tend to have a shared meaning: the journey into the Underworld, after which one returns to life through the symbolic rituals of death and rebirth. The labyrinth symbolizes the “continuation of life after death” and is an “archetype of Possibility”. (Tricarico 2014: 40, 44, 58) Bandiera (2006: 11–12), who examines the labyrinth as a spiritually transforming experience, says that the labyrinth is a possibility that parallels the liminal’s aspect of potentiality: it is not only about “going to be” but also “what may be.” Turner explicitly refers to the potential aspect of liminality, as he speaks of the liminal as “a realm of pure possibility” (Turner 1970: 97) and characterizes the threshold, the margin or limen as

> […] an interfacial region or, to change the metaphor, an interval […] when the past is momentarily negated, suspended, or abrogated, and the future has not yet begun, an instant of pure potentiality when everything, as it were, trembles in the balance.” (Turner 2008: 44)

The possibility of the labyrinth, negative or positive, as in liminal states, depends on the person journeying through it and how one interacts with the stimuli (Bandiera 2006: 111). This implies that the person in the labyrinth can choose to draw power from the labyrinth and live, or succumb to it and die. Since Drizzt decides to survive the ordeals of Underdark, he finds unprecedented power in the process, even though his “death” is first required.

Labyrinths are ambiguous and their meaning depends on the person going through it, according to Garcia (2015: 7). They are dynamic and static, single for having a single physical structure and double in the sense that they concurrently evoke order and

disorder, clarity and confusion, unity and multiplicity, artistry and chaos, which forces one to move back and forth between ambivalent conditions, states or concepts (Garcia 2015: 8). Also Klapcsik (2015: 108) sees the labyrinth as ambivalent and Bandiera (2006: 29) finds it as having a multitude of opposite meanings, such as dark and light; seen and concealed; loneliness and connection; fear and security; defense and openness; battle and peace; struggle and rest. Bandiera (2006: 29) refers to Pettis in stating that polarities create order, which in turn creates the conditions for transcendence and new reality. The labyrinth, Bandiera argues, is a voyage to the unconsciousness, followed by an arrival to awareness of the self. Journeying through the labyrinth allows the subject to make changes in the consciousness from linear to the non-linear, verbal to non-verbal, analytical to sensory, and left-brain to right-brain. In a way, negative reality gives way to positive reality. (Bandiera 2006: 29–31) The journey into the dark unconscious and its empowering nature becomes also apparent in Jung's thinking, as Jung (1967: 265–266) says: "One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious". When Drizzt journeys through the labyrinthine Underdark, he moves into different regions of the mind, as the aforementioned non-verbal, which shows in not having anyone to talk to, excluding Guenhwyvar. The move from verbal to non-verbal is evident in the preface of *Exile*, when Drizzt calls Guenhwyvar and revels "in the sound of the words as he spoke them" and generally stating that words "seemed more foreign and came to him with difficulty" The transition from the left-brain (logical, analytical) to the right-brain (creative, disorganized) is evident in the lack of logical functioning, since Drizzt submits to his primal Hunter-self that is governed by survival instinct.

The seclusion of the labyrinth represents yet another aspect similar to the liminal state. Complete seclusion from society is accentuated by that fact that Underdark is timeless and silent. Time is something associated with the quotidian, but not with the otherworldly regions of the Underdark. There are no signs of season or time of the day, only eternal darkness: "Day and night were one, and all the days were one, in the life of the hunter" (*E* 33). Drizzt starts to mark his sleep periods on stone in order to measure time, but at some point he forgets to do so and thinks "what use were the markings anyway?" (*E* 61). He further states that "Time is something of that other world" (*E* 62),

referring to the outside world of the Underdark. The timelessness of the Underdark emphasizes the region as a place of seclusion outside society and creates a liminal effect of blurring distinctions between opposites (Turner 1982: 26) of day-night, light-dark and time-timelessness.

The Underdark as a labyrinth does not ultimately spell insurmountable dangers for Drizzt. This becomes evident in his innate ability to see in the darkness and the fact that he becomes fully adapted to his new environment, as "he feared no foes" and saw the Underdark as "his world" (*E* 5, 60). Out in the wilds, "Drizzt held confidence that he could survive against whatever nemeses Matron Malice sent after him" (*E* 60). His real enemy comes in the form of "solitude, the interminable, incessant silence of hushed corridors" (*E* 8). Thus, for the creature of the dark subterranean world, there is no danger of physical disorientation, but more of the disorientation of the self. His great longing for company and voices of other living things becomes evident, when he observes a group of deep gnomes from a distance: "He needed to hear the gnomish voices more than he needed the simple necessities of survival" (*E* 39).

The ultimate and more concrete danger, the Minotaur of the labyrinth, comes in the form of his final duel with Zaknafein. It is fitting that Drizzt has to fight Zaknafein, both his father and nemesis, giver of both life and death, the liminal entity and the "threshold guardian" to the "zone of magnified power" (Campbell 1949: 77), which is the surface. Zaknafein's new undead state, originating from the lower planes of existence, fits to the infernal symbolism attached to the Underdark. Drizzt cannot exit the labyrinth before facing his father. One of the stages in Campbell's monomyth is the hero's confrontation with the father figure, "The Atonement with the Father", in which the father must be killed symbolically in order for the hero to construct a separate identity (Campbell 1949: 147). However, Zaknafein's killing is concrete, as the pool of acid finally destroys his body. Miller (2002: 90) stresses that the hero's father often becomes his enemy; the birth of the hero is always an embarrassment to someone, and therefore someone tries to destroy him. In a sense, the birth of Drizzt was the bane of his father, since Drizzt was to surpass him and become the new weapons master of the house Do'Urden. Although Zaknafein is forced to fight against his son involuntarily, it is

fitting that he, even in death, he rises once more to test his son's worthiness in continuing his legacy.

Walking the labyrinth is an opportunity of forming and discussing meaning (Bandiera 2006: 111). During the ten years Drizzt spends in the Underdark he has a great amount of time for self-reflexivity, contemplating who he is and where he is going, for his place is not in the evil society of the drow. The Underdark acts as an intermediary place of two worlds, the subterranean and the surface. It is a liminal stage that allows the hero to venture deep into the reaches of his own mind and discover something new about the self and the purpose of his journey. Descending deep into the unconscious of the dark allows him to be reborn, as he later emerges from the "womb" to the surface world and to light.

4.4 The Birth of the Hunter

Given the circumstances, as Drizzt is alone with his panther, the passive state that is solitude and silent corridors, the darkness; all add to the growing tension between polarities of man and animal, conscious and unconscious, reason and instinct, eventually culminating in the birth of the Hunter.

Wicher, Spyra and Matyjaszczyk (2014: 109) argue that animalism is a motif that is tied to many warrior-heroes: Achilles parallels himself with wolves and lions. Conan is continuously described as fighting like a tiger and having wolf-like senses. Rojola (1995: 16) argues that one of the most important aspects of defining self is the boundary between man and animal. It is not explicitly stated which animal the Hunter is, but it can be argued that it is a feline creature, such as the panther. Firstly, Drizzt, sharing a profound an intimate connection with his panther, hunts stealthily in the dark, as she does. Secondly, his two blades are like long claws; the claws of a panther. Thirdly, since "Guenhwyvar" means "shadow" in the books, it can be argued that Drizzt's shadow persona (see 4.4.1) shares a connection with the panther. The union of Drizzt, Hunter (Shadow) and Guenhwyvar represents a strong tie in a "magical" tripartite structure, as

in the Holy Trinity. However, it is ultimately more important to discuss his animal characteristics in general, not which animal those characteristics embody.

Miller (2002: 78) discusses the hero's inclination for ferality during initiative stages of the journey, as the hero moves out of culture, into transformations associated with animality. From a psychological perspective, it is perhaps that "the animal-monstrous 'double'" is created in order to show unfitting and repulsive characteristics of the hero. Traditional epic texts are abundant in allusions to the animality of heroes. In the most dramatic sense, the hero originates from "the beast of the wilderness, as an exotic, alien enemy to humankind." (Miller 2002: 81, 79) Drizzt refers to the Hunter as a "beast" who follows him (*E* 119). Furthermore, animalism can be seen in Drizzt's behavior in the way he defends his "domain" (*E* 35), as if he were an animal defending his territory from attackers. The animal inside him emerges through animal utterance: "The hunter issued a growling command, hardly intelligible, but Dinin fathomed its meaning well enough […]" (*E* 56). "All that Dinin saw in his brother's lavender eyes was his own death" (*E* 56), which further demonstrates Drizzt's animalistic intent to kill and causes Dinin to surrender without even engaging in a fight. The Hunter is indeed something that is repulsive to the conscious ego, a "beast" (*E* 119) and an alien force that does not belong there. It is only later that the Hunter is seen in more positive light, since Drizzt considers it a part of his self and has control over it: "At first he tried to sublimate the rage, but then he remembered the lessons he had learned. This darker side was a part of him, a tool for survival, and was not altogether evil. It was necessary." (*E* 78)

According to Turner, invisibility and darkness are often associated with the liminal subject in many societies; "like a planet in eclipses or the moon between phases", as the liminal persons are made void of name and clothes, "smeared with the common earth" and they assume animalistic behavior. The initiates are born into a new identity through life and death. Separation may become evident in the "sharp symbolic inversion of social attributes", while liminality is characterized by the "blurring and merging of distinctions". (Turner 1982: 26) The inversions from status to non-status, man to animal, or light to darkness characterize the separation from Drizzt's home city. His house does not exist anymore, as it has been wiped out. He descends from civilization

into the wilds and nearly loses himself to the animal side and to the dark. Drizzt is not made void of clothes, but his piwafwi is "tattered and torn beyond recognition" (*E* 51).

The Hunter is an unconscious state, a second persona, into which Drizzt enters during times of great adversity and physical hardship. It is a liminal state of the mind that oscillates between the aforementioned polarities. The Hunter lives to survive and is the apotheosis of Drizzt's physical abilities. The hunter-state is simultaneously something of a higher and lesser grade of nature, powerful but primitive and accessible only when Drizzt metaphorically ceases to exist, through death. Later, he is able to consciously summon the Hunter without getting lost in it, which helps him a great deal in future battles. Campbell (1968: 79) argues that the spaces of unknown, such as the regions of desert, jungle, deep sea and alien land are places where the unconscious content can freely emerge. The hunter state is a physical manifestation of Drizzt's unconscious content that becomes first accessible through the unknown borderlands of the Underdark. Kearney says that the repressed unconscious "returns to haunt us as phantom 'doubles'". The double originates from the early mental stages, a time when it was characterized more by being a friendly aspect. Later, the double has become "a thing of terror". (Kearney 2003: 74) The Hunter described through the aspects of the double illustrates its nature. It is clear that the Hunter refers to mentally earlier stages, since it is a primal entity whose existence is based on instinct and survival. The primitiveness of the Hunter emerges in a fight with a mind-flayer, who shoots Drizzt with a psychic blast: "The hunter resisted […] his thoughts simply too primitive for such a sophisticated attack form" (*E* 262). The conscious ego, capable of complicated rational thinking, deems the Hunter "a thing of terror", who is not able to execute such complex thoughts. Its intentions are ultimately ambiguous and it is difficult to say whether its intentions are purely evil, or motivated by the simple defensive instincts of an animal. However, the Hunter's desire for vengeance implies that the Hunter is evil (see 4.4.1).

When Drizzt says that the Underdark has "food for those who know how to find it and safety for those who know how to hide" (*E* 8), the "food" and "safety" can be metaphorically seen as power, since attaining those things in such an environment is

extremely difficult and requires transcendence of one's abilities, such as the power of the Hunter. Even though "food" and "safety" most obviously refer to concrete survival, the mere act of survival is not easily done in the Underdark, as "only the strongest survive" and "failure allows for no second chance" (*E* 35).

The repetitious survival that tests his limits allows Drizzt to reach the primal state of the Hunter. Living in a region of chaos and anti-structure means, Douglas (1984: 96) argues, that one resides in a state formlessness, which involves powers both dangerous and good. Transition implies danger both to the liminal subject and others (Douglas 1984: 96). She refers to death and rebirth in a ritual where boys go outside the social structures and into the margins and are exposed to power that can kill them or "make their manhood" (Douglas 1984: 97). The "making of manhood" in the case of the male-hero simply refers to becoming stronger and more mature as a hero, not necessarily as man, as he overcomes great ordeals that have the power to destroy him or make him stronger. This is exactly the case with Drizzt: he faces dangers that can kill him, but by not doing so, grant him new strength.

4.4.1 The Hunter as Jung's Shadow Archetype

The second "I" of Drizzt, the Hunter can be approached with Jung's concept of *shadow*. The shadow is one of the many archetypes of the *collective unconscious* in Jung's psychology. It also reflects similar ideas to those of Freud's unconscious and the hostile double (Shiloh 2011: 32). Shiloh (2011: 32) refers to Jung's description of the shadow stating that the shadow is "that hidden, repressed, for the most part inferior and guilt-laden personality whose ultimate ramifications reach back into the realm of our animal ancestors." The shadow is morally problematic to the ego personality, since to recognize its presence is to familiarize oneself with the dark and inherent part of self. The ego does not allow the shadow to impose its darker reality, since the ego would lose its dominion. The nature of the shadow is ultimately characterized as a manipulative and a self-destructive force. (Shiloh 2011: 33) The shadow can be fatal, if the hero lacks

vitality or consciousness to complete his heroic quest (Jung 1977: 274). Lack of consciousness emerges in Drizzt's inability to have full control over the unconscious Hunter. The death-laden symbolism of his state in the Underdark implies low vitality. The way he describes his current life, however, refers to low vitality: "I need more, more than simple survival. I need a life defined by more than the savage instincts of this creature I have become." (*E* 66) The shadow, or the Hunter, is represented in the ambivalent oscillation of Drizzt's persona between conscious-unconscious, man-animal and good-evil.

Miller (2002: 321) connects the idea of the shadow with the hero-character, especially the epic hero, since the "purposive avoidance of any 'deep' self-examination" is an integral part of the hero. Perhaps the hero is, at first, reluctant to self-examination, since his self is often one of the greatest enemies. However, it is ultimately an inevitable part of his evolution and journey. Miller (2002: 321) refers to the Jungian scholar Marie-Louise von Franz' (1988) description of the shadow as representing the inferior dimensions of the conscious personality, such as laziness, greed, envy, jealousy, the desire for prestige and aggressiveness. Similarly, Miller discusses Erich Neumann's (1954) definition of the shadow as partly embodying aspects of the personality that the ego sees as negative, but even more importantly, the shadow is a part of and in between the personal and the collective unconscious. The shadow appears as the antagonist or the hostile one, but more often it takes the form of a more congenial twin, "the dark brother", meaning that it can be considered a companion and friend, although at times it may be hard to distinguish it from the self. The shadow embodies the human inclinations for aggression and is ready to defend itself or attack. (Miller 2002: 321–322) This, and the inability to fully control the Hunter, can be seen in the way how "Drizzt felt his muscles tense involuntarily as the svirfnebli moved all about him. The primal instincts of the hunter sensed a vulnerability that could not be tolerated. Drizzt fought hard to sublimate his alter ego […]." (*E* 113)

The fact that the shadow resides between the personal and collective unconscious is a liminal feature. Similar to the concept of shadow, Drizzt's Hunter-self is the source of aggression and hostility, which becomes evident on multiple occasions. Upon the sight

of the slain basilisk's body, the enraged Hunter still wanted more: "As though it moved of it own accord, the weapon shot out as Drizzt passed the basilisk's head, splatting sickeningly into the exposed brains" (*E* 36). On another occasion, "the hunter stroke the monster again, even though he knew it was already dead, for no particular reason at all" (*E* 262). When Drizzt meets Briza and Dinin after a time spent in the Underdark, he descends into the Hunter's rage and tries to kill her, but is interrupted by his panther. He commands Guenhwyvar to kill her: "Get her! Kill…!" (*E* 57) After the incident, Guenhwyvar deems his actions morally inappropriate and pins Drizzt to the floor (*E* 57). The Hunter-shadow does not directly commit evil deeds, but it has the capacity for it. If Guenhwyvar did not stop Drizzt from killing his sister Briza, he surely would have done so in his hunter-fueled frenzy. Although the Hunter is Drizzt's torment, it is also his power, his salvation: the dark brother.

Although Drizzt is more of a classic hero than an epic one, Miller's description of the epic hero's connection with the shadow is also relevant here. According to him, the hero's intimate connection with the shadow is the result of the hero having features that are aggressive and socially not appropriate as well as the oscillation between light and dark, which ultimately leads to the search for death. As the hero's ego is yet to be fully structured and explored, it is to be made "negated and dissolved, and transmuted, made eternal." (Miller 2002: 322) This implies that the hero's ego must go through certain subversions and changes in order to develop. The shadow is a natural part of the hero and possibly a covert force pushing the hero into situations associated with death, which in turn is an inherent part of the forming of the hero's identity through the trope of rebirth. Enlightenment comes through making the darkness conscious (Jung 1967: 265–266), which also suggests that the shadow, despite its risks, is necessary for the hero.

Zehnder and Calvert discuss Jung's idea of the shadow as something that emerges to protect in times of need. When a person defends himself against a threat, the shadow provides protection, but involves the possibility for committing evil deeds. The evil of the shadow is most evident in retribution and revenge. (Zehnder & Calvert 2005: 124) The Hunter's desire for revenge is explicitly stated after Drizzt becomes free from the mental clutch of the mind-flayers' central brain: "Drizzt should have been looking for

an escape route […] but the hunter wanted more. His hunter-self demanded revenge on the brain mass that had enslaved him." (*E* 263) Akin to the ideas of Zehnder and Calvert, the Hunter-shadow protects Drizzt, but can possibly do evil. Ultimately, the hero often fights his mirror-self, which is the shadow, since he rarely battles the forces of evil directly (Miller 2002: 322–323). Perhaps the hero's power is so great that the greatest enemy for him is the dark side of self, which also Drizzt implies, as he "feared no foes" (*E* 5) and considers his own self as the enemy, when he tells Montolio that "if you take me in […] then you will be doomed, as were the farmers in the village" (*E* 163).

5 FROM HELL TO HEAVENS

Drizzt's journey is a rite of passage where he physically and symbolically ascends from hell to heavens, a process where the hero goes through rebirth. This chapter deals with the hero's journey as whole and with themes that mostly relate to his surface life. During his life in the surface world, Drizzt resides in the borderlands of the wilderness. The borderlands trope and the often closely linked concept of otherness are analyzed. The hero-journey itself as a liminal space and time is approached from the concept of *the odyssey experience* and Turner's *pilgrimage*.

5.1 Borderlands and Otherness

Pohjanrinne (2002: 81) refers to Kolodny (1992) in discussing the liminal landscape of the borderlands that occupies a multitude of meanings, such as confronting the Other. It is the place where notable events in the hero-story take place, and Miller (2002: 381) mentions that it often is the place where the hero is "born, lives, tours, discovers, acts and dies." Drizzt's rite of passage takes place in the borderlands of the Underdark and the forested wilderness, locations, which are neutral zones that van Gennep (1960: 18) characterizes as symbolic and spatial areas of transition in the rite of passage. The hero has the potential to cross any type of boundary, in particular the border between cultural and natural (or supernatural) (Miller 2002: 164). As such, the borderlands as a geographical location is of heightened significance to the hero. For Drizzt, the important period in the Belly of the Whale takes place in the borderlands of the Underdark. In the surface world, Drizzt lives in the borderlands forests of the wilderness, which according to Turner (1969: 95) is a liminal region. Miller (2002: 97) sees the wilderness not only as liminal but also extrasocietal. Mackey-Kallis (2001: 179) discusses the liminality of the forest as a place of change, in which the world of human and the world of extraterrestrial make contact. Change and the extraterrestrial become evident through the discovery of Mielikki.

Miller discusses the threatening aspect of the hero, which derives from the fact that the hero is inherently the Other, often seen in connection with the wilderness, exile, foreign and unknown parts. His dangerous otherness comes from his precipitate appearance and the mobility from the known to the unknown, which threatens the society and cultural order. (Miller 2002: 335) During his time in the surface, Drizzt is considered to be part of a world that the surface dwellers have only heard in tales. He represents the dark subterranean world that is the region of the unknown to the surface people. A dark elf is an extreme rarity in the surface world, as is stated by one human farmer, when he says that the last drow raid was the first news of drow appearance in three generations (*S* 43). His appearance, at least during the beginning of his life in the surface, is characterized as a "mess" (*S* 11). Drizzt is not allowed to enter any of the settlements, as the "receptions were always the same: shock and fear that quickly turned to anger" (*S* 258).

Drizzt's liminality can be examined through the concept of otherness. As the term *otherness* is characterized by being "outside the margins of the dominant cultural representations" (Plate & Jasper: 1999), it refers to a concept that is intrinsically liminal. Furthermore, Turner (1969: 95) refers to liminal subjects as falling between classifications that define states and positions in the cultural order, which is something that can be associated with the Other that naturally resists strict definition by being part of the unknown and the strange.

Drizzt is an Other practically to all other races, but his Hunter-self represents the ultimate form of the Other and monster to the self. The encounter with the other self is also partly the encounter with the monstrous self. Kearney (2003: 35) says that the uncanny meeting with the monstrous is to make contact with the repressed Other in one's self. Drizzt in fact refers to his unconscious Other by the words "beast" (*E* 119) and "savage monster" (*S* 185). Kearney (2003: 34) refers to Beal (2001) in stating that monsters have "something to say or show about ourselves". Drizzt's monstrous Other shows him where the limits of the conscious self and the Other are. It demonstrates the negative potentiality of the prolonged liminal state in the Belly: as man becomes animal, conscious becomes unconscious and logic thinking becomes instinctive action, for instance.

The monster is a personification of the other (Kearney 2003: 42), which is also seen in the Hunter taking a more concrete form of the monster from the abstract Other. The Other of the self is an important aspect in the forming of Drizzt's identity. Kearney (2003: 66) argues that most concepts of identity are based on the relation to some degree of alterity and the otherness of the Hunter describes this alterity to the self. Kearney (2003: 75) states that our greatest fear is in our mirror image, in the othered self. For Drizzt, one of his greatest fears is the losing of self to the Other: "I feared that I had lost myself and my principles to some instinctive, savage monster (*S* 185). The Hunter can be seen as a symbol of the repressed, evil past of the drow society. Ultimately, Drizzt needs to accept his past as a part of him in the same way the Hunter needs to be accepted as a necessary part of the ego.

Jackson refers to the Other as something that is often considered evil. What is seen as different tends to be deemed as evil and the different is a threat to the existence of the self. "[…] anyone whose origins are unknown or who has extraordinary powers, tends to be set apart as other, as evil. (1981: 52) The Hunter's origins are vague and its extraordinary power, the skill of being "impossibly fast and impossibly silent" (*E* 2), may be something so different to the conscious self that it considers it evil. The Hunter is part of the unconscious, which is fundamentally different to its opposite, the conscious.

Otherness is close to the concept of *foreigness.* Kristeva discusses the idea of a foreigner, who suffers from a loss of time and space: lost of homeland and belonging nowhere. His present state of time is troubled by the fact that he lives neither in before nor now, but in the future. On the positive side, the foreigner often comes to transcend and is never satisfied. He is in search for another, promised land or something else. (Kristeva 1991: 9–10) These ideas characterize Drizzt's liminal state to a large extent. He lives in the expectation that someday he could live a life that corresponds his principles. His former self and old life in the drow society becomes obsolete. His home was not in Menzoberranzan nor it is in the Underdark: "One day, I was determined, I would find acceptance and find my home" (*S* 258), Drizzt says and refers to the "promised land", which is acceptance and home.

5.2 Journey as the Odyssey Experience

Drizzt's liminal hero-journey can be approached with *the odyssey experience*, introduced by Neil J. Smelser that includes a set of different types of journeys that the hero can undertake. The term derives from the adventure of Odysseus in Homer's epic, a source that has been an inspiration for a plethora of cultural tradition (Smelser 2009: 8). Akin to the concept of monomyth, the odyssey experience is also something that is universal and inherently part of human condition emerging in nearly any myth, religion, culture and literature as the dramatic journey. (Smelser 2009: 1–2). The concept is represented in various types of journey, for instance wandering, quest, pilgrimage, voyage/trip, adventure, epic/saga, odyssey, ritual, transport, regeneration, conversion, healing/therapy and ordeal (Smelser 2009: 6). In Smelser's terms, the journey types of *adventure*, *ritual* and *regeneration* best characterize Drizzt's journey. Smelser says that adventure is a phase that includes a beginning and an end and is abundant with danger and excitement. Ritual is a transition from one psychological and social state to another. Regeneration, characterized often as death-rebirth, is also a psychological voyage, where the individual moves from a psychological status to a higher or better one. (Smelser 2009: 7)

Smelser claims that the odyssey experience has certain generic social features. Firstly, it is *finite*, which means that "every journey has an end" (Smelser 2009: 10). The finiteness can be explicit, as often is with rituals, ordeals and journeys that span from birth to death, for example. At times, especially the end point is indefinite, as in psychotherapy. The finite aspect of the odyssey experience is what makes it unique and different from the quotidian events as "time away." (Smelser 2009: 10–11) Drizzt's journey has a clear beginning, starting from the separation from his society, Menzoberranzan. The end point of the journey is somewhat definite, as it ends in the Battlehammer clan's home in Icywind Dale. This is the *incorporation* part of the rite of passage, where the hero reintregrates into social structure. Drizzt hears the "words he had waited so many years to hear: welcome home" (*S* 341). The finiteness of the journey is further implied by the fact that Drizzt heroic transformation is complete. He

arrives at the pilgrimage center, goes through a mental change and finally arrives at home.

Secondly, the experience features a *social destructuring* of social roles, status, obligations and everything that is essential to everyday life. (Smelser: 2009: 10–11) The social destructuring is highly similar to the concept of anti-structure, as both involve the destructuring and dissolving or social aspects. However, Smelser (2009: 12) criticizes Turner's characterization of the consequences of destructuring as anti-structure, stating that anti-structure is not necessarily involved in the process of social destructuring, since it is too radical. Anti-structure implies the complete opposite of structure, a subversion, which is an exaggeration, since only some qualities, for instance ritual and pilgrimage, are opposites of social structure (Smelser 2009: 70). Smelser makes a relevant point, however: Turner does not state that all qualities of social structure would be subverted. In fact, he refers to the "blurring of distinctions" (Turner 1982: 26) of social structure, which implies destructuring and not total subversion. Considering Drizzt, some qualities of social structure are totally subverted, as is evident in the stripping of his class and status (from drow noble into a vagrant) through the destruction of his house and desecrating the drow goddess Lolth. His total abandonment of the drow's false values implies a subversion and antagonism to the social structure from which he originates. His state as an outsider and Other to Menzoberranzan and the surface cities further confirms this fact. Ultimately, it can be stated that as part of Drizzt's heroic journey and growth, the liminal destructuring and/or anti-structuring of his social structure are necessary: without them the growth and discovery of hero-self would never be possible.

Smelser argues that the third feature is located between destructuring and restructuring, which is the essence of the journey, the journey or transformation itself: the period of liminality. As the core of the journey, the liminality in the journey's middle phase is the most important time of the hero, where the heroic self is molded, as in the case of Drizzt. This is the liminal time in the Belly of the Underdark and the wilderness of the surface world.

The forth aspect is the negative features often associated with the odyssey experience, such as uncertainty, danger, threat and loss of security (Smelser 2009: 12–14). Smelser refers to Mitford (1992) in stating that the word *travel* comes from *travail*, meaning "the pain of childbirth" (Smelser 2009: 14). This suggests that travel inherently refers to leaving the comfort zone, which involves negative aspects. Smelser explains that the negativity is the result of the destructuring, which is unsettling, since one must depart from the routine and known and move to regions of uncertainty (Smelser 2009: 14). Drizzt's life in the darkness of the Underdark expresses feelings of uncertainty, danger and loss of security. In addition, during his first day in the surface, he expresses uncertainty of his whole quest: "He wondered, not for the first time and certainly not the for the last, about the wisdom of his decision to leave the Underdark, to forsake the world of his evil people" (*S* 2).

The fifth aspect is the process of leaving this world and entering another, Smelser argues. The religious odyssey often involves leaving the profane and entering the sacred. In more quotidian terms, making contact with the non-routine or unusual produces the same effect. (Smelser 2009: 15) As Drizzt sees the drow society as evil, it is not sacred to him, but the opposite. He discovers "sacredness" in the wild, in the world of light that, as he says, "reinforced my principles" (*S* 6). "The sun became the symbol of the difference between the Underdark and my new home" (*S* 6). Furthermore, the comfort and the "wondrous elation at the feel of the wind and the scents of newly bloomed flowers" (*S* 205) during his first day in the surface support the idea of sacredness that he attaches to the forested nature. The forest is the liminal region of the goddess Mielikki and thus sacred. In quotidian and secular terms, the passage from Menzoberranzan to the Underdark and surface is also a movement from the routine and the usual into the non-routine and the unusual.

Smelser associates certain psychological features to the odyssey experience, out of which *ambivalence* and *culmination* are the most relevant for the journey of Drizzt. In the positive sense, ambivalence is shown in anticipation, hope and euphoria, which derive from the feeling of liberation. On the negative side, uncertainty, even dread, is associated with the process of destructuring. (Smelser 2009: 16) Ambivalence manifests

itself in a variety of ways during Drizzt's journey. There is an oscillation between the concepts of life-death, man-animal, light-dark, good-evil and conscious-unconscious, all of which have already been discussed. Smelser claims that culmination results from the feelings of personal betterment, growth, regeneration and even rebirth. There is an "insistence on the happy ending of odyssey experiences." (Smelser 2009: 18) This means that the journey somehow tends to gravitate towards a positive ending. Smelser (2009: 18) refers to Kierkegaard's (1949) words in describing the psychological process of the odyssey experience as a whole: "To venture causes anxiety, but not to venture is to lose one's self." This quote also captures the essense of Drizzt's journey. If he had not ventured into the Underdark and beyond, he would have lost his self in the evil ways of the drow. Ironically, he nearly lost his self to his primal side in the darkness of the Underdark, but it was a battle that was necessary in the hero's struggle for growth.

5.3 Completion of Rebirth

On the surface, there are a few instances that finalize Drizzt's transformation and his rebirth into new life. Firstly, his magical drow cloak, the piwafwi, which bears the symbol of his house,"had finally succumbed to the daylight", as the magic "had begun fading […] the fabric itself was simply melting away" (*S* 1). Drizzt tosses the remains of his cloak into a deep chasm (*S* 3), back to the "Underworld", a ritual that signals a completion of one era for the hero. Furthermore, similar to how the snake produces a new skin in the death and rebirth symbolism (Turner 1970: 97), Drizzt's equipment, his "skin", dissipates as he begins a new life. Drizzt knows that his boots will also disappear along with the magic on his drow-scimitars (*S* 2). The dissipation of his equipment, his old self, throwing away the "umbilical cord", parallels the abandonment of the drow's previous life.

Secondly, similar to the aforementioned, Drizzt goes through "baptism" when he bathes in a river. Jung says that for the Greeks the river is the symbol of generation. Water and life share an intimate connection and, for example, Christ bathed in the river Jordan and

experienced a rebirth. (Jung 1977: 178) Additionally, the river has for a long time been a place, where people end their lives (Andrews & Roberts 2012: 110). After a misfortunate confrontation with a skunk, Drizzt goes to a nearby river to wash himself. Drizzt considers himself exposed to danger, symbolizing the vulnerability of a new-born child: "[…] his sense of smell lost within the cloud of his own pungent aroma, and his keen sense of hearing dulled by the din of rushing water, the drow was indeed vulnerable" (*S* 11). He also comments his own rugged, tattered appearance: "What a mess I must appear" (*S* 11). The stink of the skunk represents the "stink" of his old self and the evil society of his origin. The fact that Drizzt deems his appearance as a "mess", can be metaphorically seen as the rejection of his previous life. By washing himself in the river, a liminal place and a border connecting land and water, Drizzt nears the completion of his rebirth.

Drizzt's meeting with Montolio marks the beginning of his new status' completion. Montolio, or "Mooshie", is an old, blind ranger, who lives a secluded life along the principals of the goddess of the forest, Mielikki. Montolio is Drizzt's mentor and the "father" of his new life in the surface world. Montolio teaches Drizzt the common language, a symbol of a child learning to speak. Similarly, the father figure teaches the young one, as "Drizzt learned many things from Montolio, practical lessons that would aid him for the rest of his life" (*S* 168). The grove, where Drizzt lives with Montolio, offers protection and good, a sense of home, which has been rare during Drizzt's long journey. Drizzt thinks about the time in Menzoberranzan's "breathtakingly beautiful structures" and the "wondrous castle of stone", "but none of them seemed as welcoming as Montolio's home" (*S* 165). Even though Montolio's home is made of wood and dirt, the natural world is attractive to Drizzt. Montolio tells Drizzt that his moral code has always been the way of a ranger, one that protects the natural order. According to Montolio, Drizzt has "the heart of a ranger", which is the heart of Mielikki. (*S* 169, 205).

5.4 Arriving at the Pilgrimage Shrine

According to Turner, the pilgrimage is a liminal phenomenon. The pilgrimage is often a journey of separation, arrival at the pilgrimage center/shrine and returning home. (Turner 1974: 166–167) Turner says that the influence of the pilgrimage is not bound only to religious contexts, but it also emerges in literature in the form of quests and wayfaring tales. The hero or heroine embarks on a journey to discover who one really is outside social structure. (Turner 1974: 182) Turner connects peripherality with pilgrimage, since pilgrimage centers are located outside the social order, state and other politico-economic units (Turner 1974: 197). The route becomes increasingly sacred as the pilgrim journeys towards the shrine, but he also encounters more dangers along the road, such as bandits and robbers (Turner 1974: 183). At the pilgrimage center, a place and moment in and out of time, the pilgrim hopes to make contact with the sacred or the supernatural in the material aspect of healing or the immaterial aspect of mental transformation (Turner 1974: 197).

The forest and Mielikki is the pilgrimage shrine for Drizzt. The forest of the wilderness is a peripheral region that is outside structure. Drizzt is at first not aware the Mielikki is indeed his goddess, the personification of his heroic ethos, but Montolio implies it: "You have followed Mielikki all your life, Drizzt. You merely never had a name to put on your heart" (*S* 205). Montolio asks Drizzt what he felt on his very first day in the surface, when he looked upon the sun, the stars and the green forest, and Drizzt says: "Those were painful memories, but within them loomed one sense of comfort, one memory of wondrous elation at the feel of the wind and the scents of newly bloomed flowers" (*S* 205). This suggests that the nature of the surface is something otherworldly to him, possibly supernatural and sacred, as would be appropriate for one whose goddess is Mielikki. In addition to Drizzt values that are one with Mielikki, the fact that Drizzt is "of like heart with Guenhwyvar, who follows Mielikki" (*S* 204). Drizzt only had to journey to pilgrimage shrine, to the grove, to fully understand the truth behind his principles.

The final change that completes Drizzt transformation after the discovery of Mielikki and Montolio's teachings is the lessening of guilt and a sense of righteousness in his doing. This becomes evident when Drizzt fights a giant and feels "a sense of righteousness in his heart", as he "slashed at the giant's throat with both weapons" (*S* 239). Finally, he departs the grove feeling changed: "How different the trail seemed as I departed Mooshie's Grove from the road that had led me there […] On this road, though, I was alone only in body. In my mind I carried a name, the embodiment of my valued principles. Mooshie had called Mielikki a goddess; to me she was a way of life." Eventually, he reaches home in Icewind Dale, which marks the end of his pilgrimage.

6 CONCLUSIONS

This thesis has examined liminality in the hero-journey of Drizzt Do'Urden and how it constructs the heroic self. Drizzt's journey is a rite of passage, which consists of separation-transition-incorporation. The most liminal period of his journey is time in the Underdark, which can be characterized as Campbell's "Belly of the Whale". In the surface, Drizzt resides in the liminal region of the forested wilderness.

The journey begins with a separation from the society and the quotidian into a region of anti-structure that is the Underdark. During this highly liminal phase, the hero goes through a symbolical death and rebirth. The Belly is a dangerous place, but able to grant new power to the hero.

The Underdark is a borderland between the subterranean nations and consists of a labyrinthine network of caves and tunnels. As a cave, it is a place of death. As the hero moves into this region, he makes the passage from conscious to unconscious. It is a tomb and a womb; the hero ceases to exist in order to reach a higher state, the state of the primal and animalistic Hunter. As there is a risk for the liminal subject to never return to the social structures, so there is a risk for Drizzt of losing himself to the Hunter.

A passage to new life and identity is also represented in the separation from the mother. The death of Drizzt's mother suggests the death of the old self and the abandoning of the evil dark elf society. Drizzt mother represents the negative aspects of Jung's mother archetype, such as death and darkness.

The hero's imprisonment is a yet another theme in the context of death. Drizzt becomes captured and mind-controlled by the mind-flayers. The prison and the prisoner are highly liminal, since they are located in anti-structure, outside the quotidian. Drizzt's liminal state is a limbo of serving the master mind-flayers. A movement from self to Other, conscious to unconscious and freedom to slavery further characterizes his state.

The liminal state allows a sense of communitas to emerge between liminal subjects. Drizzt feels deep sympathy for Clacker, whose ambivalent state is similar to Drizzt. Clacker has been transformed into a beast, but his old self is still intact. His struggle between the self and the beast is parallel to Drizzt's internal oscillation between the self and the Hunter.

Drizzt's death-like state in the Underdark is characterized by silence, solitude and passivity. Indeed, the solitude is his greatest enemy, and, in his apathetic state, he secretly hopes to encounter a creature that would prove stronger than him. However, there is a chance for enlightenment for the hero in the passive receptivity of liminal solitude. Silence, solitude and passivity transform the hero, allowing him to integrate with the self in a profound way.

The Underdark as a labyrinth symbolizes inner, life and soul. The labyrinth connects to the discovery of something new and unknown, which can be seen in the discovery of the Hunter-self. The labyrinth is a liminal space that consists of the traditional ordeals for the transforming hero. For Drizzt, the labyrinth of the Underdark connects to the disorientation and loss of self. He becomes free of his old self and life, but almost succumbs to the primal urges of the Hunter. The labyrinth is ambiguous and ambivalent, a space in-between, akin to the liminal state, and incorporates a number of binary oppositions, most important of which are death and rebirth. Similar to the possibility of the liminal state bringing positive change and power, the labyrinth is also an archetype of possibility, able to destroy, but also to regenerate. By journeying into the labyrinth, the hero ventures into the unconscious and deep into self. Seclusion and timelessness of the labyrinth connects with the liminal's feature of being in and out of time. The ultimate danger of the labyrinth, the Minotaur, is Drizzt's father Zaknafein, who the hero must surpass in order to continue on the path of self-growth.

Solitude, silence, darkness and extreme survival culminate in the birth of the Hunter. The Hunter is the primal Other of Drizzt self and incorporates oscillation between the polarities of man-animal, conscious-unconscious, self-other and reason-instinct. The Hunter represents the animalistic side of the hero, possibly evil, but ultimately a

necessary part of his conscious self. It is simultaneously a higher and a lesser grade of nature, powerful but primitive and accessible through the hero's symbolic death. The Hunter is a physical manifestation of Drizzt's unconscious content that, although has a risk, makes it possible for Drizzt to reach his physical apex when needed.

The Hunter can be approached from Jung's concept of the shadow archetype. The shadow represents the inferior parts of the self, often characterized as the manipulative and self-destructive. Drizzt struggle with the Hunter-shadow can be seen as an internal struggle of the hero between good and evil. Although the shadow is more characterized as evil, the hero needs to make darkness part of him, in the form of a dark brother, in order to continue on the path of evolution. The Hunter is ultimately Drizzt's torment, but also his salvation.

The liminal landscape of the borderlands is a place where notable events in the hero-story take place. These neutral zones, as the Underdark and the forested wilderness, are symbolic and spatial areas of transition in the hero's rite of passage. The borderland is often the region where the supernatural forces are met. It is a place of danger and growth for Drizzt. It is the region where the Other, which Drizzt comes to represent to a large extent, resides. He cannot enter any of the surface settlements, for everyone fear the notorious dark elves. The idea of otherness is inherently liminal, due to its ambiguity and the fact that the Other is outside the dominant culture.

Drizzt's Hunter-self is the ultimate form of the Other to the self. It is also characterized as the monstrous that is repulsive to the conscious ego. However, Drizzt monstrous other, the Hunter, demonstrates the limits of the conscious self and the Other, the limits of good-evil and man-animal. The Hunter represents a degree of alterity to the self, which helps Drizzt to form his new identity. Also Kristeva's idea of the foreigner is relevant here. As a foreigner, Drizzt suffers from loss of time and space, loss of homeland and belonging nowhere.

On a wider scale, the hero's journey is a liminal phenomenon in itself. As a form of travel, the journey takes the hero outside social structures, to far-away lands where

adversity is met. The hero-journey of Drizzt is greatly characterized by the concept of the odyssey experience. Firstly, it involves finiteness, which is seen in the incorporation part of the rite of passage, as the journey of Drizzt ends in Icewind Dale. Secondly, social destructuring closely refers to the idea of the liminal state's anti-structure, where distinctions between polarities become blurred. Drizzt's status as a drow noble becomes reduced to the state of a vagrant. Ultimately, the merging, blurring and subversion of distinctions create the conditions where the hero can grow. Thirdly, the core of the journey is the period of liminality, which most explicitly emerges during Drizzt's time in the Underdark. Fourthly, the odyssey experience is characterized by uncertainty, danger, threat and loss of security, all of which are present during Drizzt's journey. The fifth aspect is the passage from profane to sacred, from routine to non-routine or unknown. Finally, the odyssey experience involves ambivalence and culmination. Ambivalence emerges in the various polarities, between which the hero oscillates, such as life-death, man-animal, self-other, good-evil and conscious-unconscious. Culmination is the change that results from the hero-journey. Drizzt goes through rebirth, gaining new power in the form of the Hunter, finding a sense of righteousness to his fighting, lessening of guilt and ultimately finding home and acceptance.

Drizzt's rebirth arrives at a completion on the surface, when he symbolically abandons his old self by throwing away his piwafwi, a magical drow cloak. His drow-enchanted gear loses its magic under the sun. He is "baptized" in a river, where he symbolically washes away the stink of a skunk, his evil origin. The meeting with his mentor Montolio marks the end of his completion, as he learns many valuable things, such as to speak the common language. Drizzt also discover his goddess, Mielikki, a personification of his moral code.

Finally, the hero-journey is a tripartite pilgrimage, similar to the rite of passage. Drizzt is first separated from his homeland, after which he arrives at the pilgrimage shrine, which is the sacredness of the forest and goddess Mielikki. Then, he returns home to Icewind Dale. The pilgrimage enables a mental change in Drizzt: the knowledge that he is doing the right thing.

The liminal is highly valuable when analyzing any type of journey, especially heroic journeys. The hero's identity and power are forged in the liminal spaces of the journey. Whether the target of examination is factual or fictional does not matter, because the liminal is part of the human condition. Whenever there is a transition or a change in life, there is bound to be liminality. A future research could incorporate multiple heroes in one thesis, but I believe that closely examining the journey of one can prove efficient, since the hero-journey has many universal and reoccurring features. Thus, one journey can describe the features of many.

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