

Unlikely heroes prevail



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

There are unlikely heroes among us, just waiting for the right moment to save the day. These heroes, at a quick glance, often times seem less than extraordinary. Sometimes we have to look harder and remember that it is not always wise to judge a book by its cover. Often times, the most unlikely heroes rise up above all doubt and surprise us all. According to Linda Seger and her essay *Creating the Myth*; there are ten beats that can turn even the most unlikely characters into first-class heroes. Her principles are held true in Disney Pixar's *Despicable Me*.

In the beginning of the movie, the protagonist, Gru, is a grumpy super villain who undergoes a complete change of heart after experiencing the joy of becoming a father to three orphaned sisters. His previous life as a villain is forgotten, and he becomes a great hero and dad. Gru morphs into a completely different person from the beginning of the movie to end with the support of many helpers and a new found arch nemesis, or shadow figure, Vector. Gru's character completely evolves from the beginning of the movie to the end.

According to Seger, in most stories a hero starts out as an average person, stuck in the normalcy of his or her everyday life or routine. Throughout the story the character has a change of heart and transforms, from beginning to end, into a hero that is not only courageous but also morally secure. Gru experiences these changes throughout the entire movie. In the beginning, Gru is a bitter super villain who has been upstaged by a newcomer to the dark side named Vector. In order to surpass Vector in evil deeds, Gru sets out to steal a top secret shrink ray so he can shrink the moon and steal it.

With the help of his minions, Gru successfully acquires the shrink ray, only to be outwitted and left without his sought-after prize at the hands of Vector. Gru was feeling pretty down on himself when opportunity came a-knocking... literally. Three orphaned sisters, Agnus, Edith, and Margo, come knocking at his door selling cookies. Gru then has the bright idea to adopt the children and use them as a way to penetrate Vector's lair. At first, Gru does not pay his adopted daughters much attention, and he views them as quite the nuisance. His only objective is to use them to distract Vector so he can retrieve his precious shrink ray.

But after the girls help him steal the shrink ray, something inside of him changes. He begins to care for Agnus, Edith, and Margo just as a good father would, and the girls grow to love him. Unfortunately, Dr. Nefario, Gru's accomplice, becomes wary of the fact that Gru is spending more time with his adopted daughters than he is working on his master plan to steal the moon. So, he has the orphanage take the girls away from Gru so he can get his priorities straight. He soon realizes there is a void in his life that can only be filled by Agnus, Edith, and Margo. So, he gives up his career as a super villain and rushes to get his daughters back.

Unfortunately, he is too late. When he gets to the girl's ballet recital, he finds a ransom note from Vector. If he ever wants to see his girls again, he has to give up the shrink ray. Vector goes too far, and an enraged Gru's paternal side emerges. He showed no signs of hesitation when he comes to the girls' rescue. In the end, Gru defeats Vector and saves his girls from his evil clutches. He goes from being an unapproachable villain to the best kind of

hero: a caring and compassionate father. Seger makes a point to mention that no character can take on the difficult journey to becoming a hero alone.

There has to be helper figures to guide them along the way. Fortunately for Gru, he had a whole support system behind him. Agnus, Edith, Margo, and let's not forget all of his minions, helped Gru break out from his traditional role as a super villain and become a courageous hero that saved the day. Gru was an unapproachable grouch whose purpose in life was to make the world a more miserable place. Well, that was until three special little girls, Agnus, Edith, and Margo, came into his life. Gru adopted the sisters with his own hidden agenda; he was not expecting to have a relationship with the children.

At first, he was strict, detached, and did his best to ignore the girls by burying himself in his evil plans to steal the moon. Despite his efforts to ignore the girls' existence, they still loved their new father just as much as his minions did, and they tried their hardest to build a relationship with him. Slowly but surely, Gru's wall of resistance began to crumble, and he started to care for his adopted daughters as well as his devoted group of minions. Gru finally learned to put others ahead of himself, and he finally found happiness. Gru became the epitome of a devoted father who would sacrifice anything for his family.

Agnus, Edith, and Margo taught Gru the most important lesson he could learn: how to love. They turned an experienced villain into a hero that saved the day, and more importantly, a devoted father. Every hero encounters an adversary, or a shadow character in his or her story. In Gru's case, this was Vector. At the beginning of the movie, Gru was forced to accept that Vector,

a goofy newcomer, might just be a better super villain than himself; obviously the fear of being second best to Vector lead to a competitive rivalry between the two villains.

Gru, not wanting to be outdone, hatched an evil plan to steal the moon. Once Vector caught wind of Gru's master plan, he was determined to take the moon for himself. When two people want the same thing, there is always going to be conflict. Both Vector and Gru could not be the top villain. There was not room for two villains in town. Someone had to change and emerge as a new hero, and Gru unwillingly took on the challenge. Fortunately for Vector, after Gru adopted three little girls, he had a soft spot, and evil was not his top priority.

But when Vector kidnapped Agnus, Edith, and Margo, to prove he was the top villain and get the shrink ray back, he went too far. Something in Gru snapped. He loved his adopted daughters, and no one not even Vector was going to mess with them. Vector's actions throughout the movie shaped Gru and made him into the brave hero he became. Gru had a complete change of heart from the beginning of the movie to the end. He abandoned all his super villain ways, and in return, he became a hero that was capable of kindness and love.

Luckily for him, just like any other hero, he did not have to make the difficult journey alone. He had his daughters, Agnus, Edith, and Margo, to help him along the way. Even his rival Vector had a hand in the transformation of Gru into a beloved hero. Gru's story is a testament to the fact that ordinary people can rise above the rest, make a difference, and become a hero. No one can debate that Gru was an unlikely hero. He defied the ordinary,

stepped out of his routine, abandoned his previous life, and experienced a reward greater than he could ever imagine.