Elżbieta Olechowska, "Entry on: The Mines of the Minotaur (The Companions Quartet, 3) by Julia Golding [Eve Edwards, Joss Stirling] ", peer-reviewed by Elizabeth Hale and Lisa Maurice. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1115. Entry version as of November 05, 2026.

Julia Golding [Eve Edwards, Joss Stirling]

The Mines of the Minotaur (The Companions Quartet, 3)

United Kingdom (2006)

TAGS: Minotaur Pegasus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Mines of the Minotaur (The Companions Quartet, 3)
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	Worldwide
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2006
First Edition Details	Julia Golding, *The Companions Quartet. Book Three: The Mines of the Minotaur.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007, 269 pp.
ISBN	9780761457961
Genre	Bildungsromans (Coming-of-age fiction), Fantasy fiction, Novels, School story*, Teen fiction*
Target Audience	Young adults (and Teens)
Author of the Entry	Elżbieta Olechowska, University of Warsaw, elzbieta.olechowska@gmail.com
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il

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Creators



Courtesy of the Author.

Julia Golding [Eve Edwards, Joss Stirling] , b. 1969 (Author)

Born in Ilford, Essex, in the vicinity of an area of ancient woodland called Epping Forest, she studied English literature at the University of Cambridge. Later, after working as a diplomat for the British Foreign Office in Poland, she resumed her studies at Oxford obtaining a PhD in English literature. She then worked for the international charitable organization Oxfam, as a lobbyist on the impact of conflicts. She now lives in Oxford and writes full time: from 2006, the date of her first novel, she has written over thirty books, among them *The Companions Quartet* (2006-2007), a cycle of novels with numerous references to Greek mythology. In 2011, she published a sequel to the *Quartet*, entitled *Water Thief*, labelled as *Universal Companions* 1; as of June 10, 2017, it remains the only volume of the new series.

Golding writes also historical romance for adolescents under the pseudonym Eve Edwards and romance novels for teens as Joss Stirling.

Literary Awards:

- 2006 – Waterstone's Children's Book Prize, Nestle Children's Book Prize,
- 2007 – Waterstone's one of the "Twenty-five authors for the future",
- 2008 – An honor book medal of the Green Earth Book Award for *The Secret of the Sirens (The Companions Quartet 1)*,
- 2012 – Beehive Book Award, Young Adult Division, awarded by the Children's Literature Association of Utah,
- 2015 – Romantic Novel of the Year (*Struck* by Joss Stirling).

She was also nominated or shortlisted for a number of the same and other awards.

Sources:

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Official website (accessed: May 29, 2018),

Profile at the literature.britishcouncil.org (accessed: July 3, 2018),

Profile at the www.goodreads.com (accessed: April 9, 2018).

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Additional information

Translation	Multiple translations.
Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Prequel: Golding, Julia, *The Companions Quartet. Book One: Secret of the Sirens*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Golding, Julia, *The Companions Quartet. Book Two: The Gorgon's Gaze*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006. Sequel: Golding, Julia, *The Companions Quartet. Book Four: The Chimera's Curse*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. Spin-off: Golding, Julia, *Universal Companions. Book 1. Water-thief*. (E-book). (n. l.): Frost Wolf, 2011.
Summary	Another assault on Connie Lionheart, the universal companion to all mythical creatures, by the evil shapeshifter, Kullervo, bent on destroying humanity. This time, he invades her mind from within using the mark he left in her brain during their bonding (see *The Gorgon' Gaze*). He takes control of her body when she is sleeping and her defenses are down, and makes her go to the beach and summon a storm and flood. Afterwards, she is vaguely aware of having done something but has no clear recollection of what happened. When she hears about the flood in the neighbourhood, she begins to suspect her role in the event. It happens again, this time, when she is awake. Her friends attempt to stop her, but being under Kullervo's control, she almost kills them. Her enemy, Mr. Coddrington, who has now become one of the trustees of the Society for the Protection of Mythological Creatures, expels her from the Society as a danger to all and forbids other members from having any contact with her. Her friends launch an appeal, but Connie herself is in despair because she

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believes that Mr. Coddrington may be right about her. In her depressed state, she wanders to some abandoned tunnels where she meets a Minotaur and a large group of sick mythological creatures hiding there, whom the Society abandoned to their fate, after having been damaged along with their environment by toxic and polluting human practices.

Connie bonds with the Minotaur, and he becomes her Sentinel, someone with a mission to look out for her and always support her. The Minotaur, with the help of her friends, is able to penetrate her mind, and after finding the mark of Kullervo there, they are able to explain how he made her call up the storm and almost kill her friends. Mr. Coddrington, frantic to have her expelled permanently, calls up another storm and flood with the help of his companion, the weather giant, and blames it on Connie. All is revealed at the appeal when the other trustees, thanks to the Minotaur, are able to observe the mark of Kullervo. Mr. Coddrington is relieved of his function as a trustee and apologizes to Connie for his deception. Connie begins the healing of the damaged creatures hiding in the tunnels. Another one of Kullervo's attempts to destroy humanity by using Connie's powers of universal companion has been thwarted with the collaborative effort of her friends, old and new.

Analysis

Each volume begins with a brief traditional definition of the title creature quoted from *The Oxford English Dictionary*. Golding's Minotaur Sentinel represents a species of mythological hybrid (man/bull) creatures; contrary to Greek mythology, he is not a son of Pasiphae and the bull of Poseidon. It is a general premise of the *Companions Quartet* that mythological creatures exist in the real world as real entities, they are clearly endangered and function within the boundaries of their mythological personas and origins but as species, not concrete characters entangled in myth in its specific variants. It is not suggested implicitly by the author, but we can reasonably deduce that in the book's worldview, mythological tales are etiological and by featuring the various creatures and describing their origins, they tacitly acknowledge their existence as species in nature. The Minotaur Sentinel, while also a hybrid between man and bull, like the human flesh-eating Cretan monster, belongs to a species with a noble mission: "We minotaurs guard the world's labyrinths, keeping the secrets of the underworld from the greedy eyes of

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humans." (Golding, 2007, 99). The strong ecological message of the book is broadened here to include, among damages of which humans are guilty, also making the mythological creatures weak, sick, and desperate. They are not monsters of Greek mythology but sentient beings endangered by selfish and short-sighted humans.

Golding's Minotaur is a symbolic figure of the noble Other, of someone who is forced to hide out of shame for his failure. Connie gives him a mission and builds his trust in himself. He feels strong compassion for creatures sick and weak, deserted and forgotten by those who should have cared for them and helped them. As someone who lived through and well understands their plight, he considers helping others his duty. For contemporary teenagers such a symbol is close to their daily experience and represents all the moments in their lives they felt excluded, humiliated, misunderstood, and despised by their communities.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Minotaur Pegasus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Abandonment Environment Friendship Parents (and children) Values
Further Reading	Smith, Jules, *Critical Perspective*, available at literature.britishcouncil.org, London: British Council, 2013 (accessed: August 26, 2020).
Addenda	*Science Has The Best Stories* – Introduction from Julia Golding, "Best Selling Author" (accessed: September 17, 2020).

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