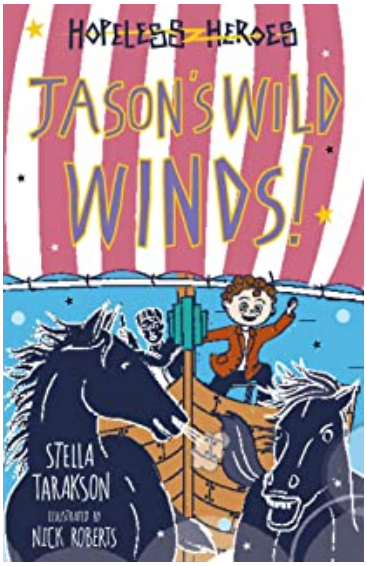
Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Jason's Wild Winds (Hopeless Heroes, 6) by Nick Roberts, Stella Tarakson ", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2021). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/1300. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Nick Roberts , Stella Tarakson

Jason's Wild Winds (Hopeless Heroes, 6)

United Kingdom (2019)

TAGS: Athena Hera Hercules Hippocrates Jason Medea



Courtesy of Sweet Cherry Publishing.

General information	
Title of the work	Jason's Wild Winds (Hopeless Heroes, 6)
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2019
First Edition Details	Stella Tarakson, *Hopeless Heroes: Jason's Wild Winds*. Sweet Cherry Publishing, Leicester, 2019, 208 pp.
ISBN	9781782263500
Genre	Fantasy fiction
Target Audience	Children (6–10 years)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
Peer-reviewer of the Entry	Lisa Maurice, Bar-Ilan University, lisa.maurice@biu.ac.il Susan Deacy, Roehampton University, s.deacy@roehampton.ac.uk

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Nick Roberts (Illustrator)

Nick Roberts is an English illustrator. He likes cartoons, monsters, robots.

Source:

Official website (accessed: January 23, 2019)

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com



Stella Tarakson , b. 1968 (Author)

Stella Tarakson is an Australian author of Greek descent, who writes for children as well as adults; her work includes both fiction and non-fiction books. She began her career working at a law firm, but then decided to focus on writing. She won several awards for her books. In her blog, she writes that she has been interested in Greek mythology for a long time; she also writes: “Like many Greek Australians, I grew up on a steady diet of Greek mythology. Herakles and Theseus were as familiar to me as Cinderella and Snow White. That’s why I’m so excited to add my voice to the stories that have been told and retold over the millennia.”

Sources:

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children’s and Young Adults’ Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw.

Official website (accessed: January 23, 2019);

evelyneholingue.com (accessed: February 26, 2019).

Bio prepared by Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com

Questionnaire

1. What drew you to writing the *Hopeless Heroes stories*? How did you develop your particular literary style / idiom / aesthetic for your works inspired by Classical Antiquity? (These are overlapping questions, so feel free to answer them as one)

Being the daughter of Greek migrants, I've grown up on a steady diet of Greek mythology. When I was very young, my father used to tell me many of the tales – I suppose he was continuing the great oral tradition of our ancestors! Books came next, and I'm lucky to still have most of them. My parents were very keen to pass their culture and identity on to their children, especially in a new country far from home. Now that my own children are growing, I also feel the need to "pass it on", keeping the link alive for future generations. I feel incredibly fortunate to be able to share these stories with a wider audience, and it's wonderful to have readers from all around the world enjoying my books! My literary style is not traditional, though. I've also grown up with a love of British comedy, which comes out quite strongly in the *Hopeless Heroes* series.

2. Why do you think classical / ancient myths, history, and literature continue to resonate with young audiences?

The myths continue to resonate with young audiences because we've never lost our fascination with monsters and heroes. Greek mythology is filled with passion and excitement, the characters are larger than life, and there are continuing parallels with our lives today. The human condition hasn't changed in thousands of years and I don't think it ever will.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

3. Do you have a background in classical education (Latin or Greek at school or classes at the University?) What sources are you using? Scholarly work? Wikipedia? Are there any books that made an impact on you in this respect?

I don't have a classical education – I have degrees in Economics and Law from the University of Sydney – but I've always been interested in the classics. Once I started writing *Hopeless Heroes*, I decided I wanted to learn more. I've re-enrolled at USyd part-time and I've been studying ancient history and classical archaeology. It's wonderful to be able to study something purely out of interest! My main source is Barry Powell's *Classical Myth* published by Pearson. I also like the website theoi.com (accessed: March 19, 2019).

4. Did you think about how aspects of Classical Antiquity (myth, history) would translate for young readers?

As you know, many Greek myths are rather Adult Only. I had to think very carefully about how to be age-appropriate, while staying as true to the myths as possible. I avoided the bloodier tales, and edged carefully around sexual issues. For instance, Hera hates Hercules (yes, I had to use the more familiar Roman name) because she's jealous of his beautiful mother. Which is true. However, I didn't come right out and say why! Even so, children learn a lot about Greek history and mythology from the books. Many teachers in the UK have been reading them to their classes as part of the class studies. I'm actually teaching by stealth!

5. How do you go about working with the comic / comedic aspects of classical antiquity?

I've incorporated comedy by accentuating the flaws of the Greek heroes and by placing them in unexpected situations. For example, Hercules is super-strong but not exactly super-smart. In book 1, which is set in the modern day, he insists on using skills he developed while performing the Twelve Labours. Sadly they don't work so well when it comes to tackling housework and school bullies.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

6. Are you planning any further forays into classical material?

Yes, I'm definitely planning further forays! I've already had a few plays published in the *Australian Readers Theatre*, (Blake Education), that combine the classics with Australian history. I've written *The Flying Finish*, where Pegasus and Bellerophon enter the Melbourne Cup; *The Gold Rush Touch*, where a goldfields prospector succumbs to the Midas Touch; and *Pandora's Ballot Box*, where a young girl encounters the suffragette movement. They bring the classics to life in a new way, and show that they are still very relevant and relatable today!

7. Anything else you think we should know?

The *Hopeless Heroes* books aren't just retelling of the myths – that's been done many times before. The stories begin when 10-year-old Tim Baker accidentally breaks an ancient amphora, and discovers that Hercules had been trapped inside it for thousands of years. Once repaired, the vase allows Tim to travel back to Ancient Greece. He befriends Hercules' daughter Zoe (an addition to the traditional myths), and together they encounter famous heroes, escape bizarre monsters, solve baffling puzzles, and even defy the gods themselves. I only hope they don't hold grudges …

Prepared by Elizabeth Hale, University of New England, ehale@une.edu.au

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Additional information

Sequels, Prequels and Spin-offs	Previous book: *Hopeless Heroes* (Series, Book 5): *Apollo's Mystic Message*. Next book: *Hopeless Heroes* (Series, Book 7): *Circe's Beastly Feast*.

Summary

This is book 6 in the "Hopeless Heroes" series. This is a series of portal-fantasy adventures in which a timid boy travels to the world of ancient myth by means of a magic vase, and learns to be brave through adventures with classical heroes. At the end of the previous book, Tim Baker was prepared to sacrifice himself so that the evil Hera would not harm his friends. For this deed he was named a hero by Athena who helped him return to his home.

In this story we find Tim puzzled over a school project: building a raft. But his raft keeps sinking and turning. Furthermore, it appears that his partner for the project is the class' bully, Leo. Leo arrives at Tim's home with his grandmother, who orders him to stay there until he finishes the project. Since neither of them can solve the problem of the raft, Tim quickly goes to his room and decides to travel to ancient Greece and ask the boat maker, Jason, for advice. The magic vase brings him to Greece where he finds Jason. Jason agrees to help him but only if Tim will join him for a ride in his new boat. Tim asks Jason if he can bring his friend Zoe, Hercules' daughter, with him and then he hurries to her house. However, upon arriving, her mother tells him that Zoe has gone missing. Tim decides to look for her in Hera's temple and Hercules arrives there as well.

Since they cannot find her, Hercules decides to consul with the grey ladies. Tim offers them a present, which can help them cure their lonely tooth, in return for their assistance. The ladies tell them that Zoe is locked up in Perseus' cave. Hercules and Tim hurry to the cave and find Zoe tied to a thick column with hundreds of silver threads which tighten when trying to loosen them. Hercules decides to break the limestone column, but a huge boulder falls and lands on Zoe, pinning her to the ground and breaking her legs. Zeus lifts it quickly, but she cannot move. Hera suddenly appears to gloat at the accident and traps them in the cave. Hercules manages to clear some of the rocks so that Tim can get out and find the doctor Hippocrates.

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Tim hurries to Jason who agrees to take him to the doctor. After retrieving Hippocrates, while on the boat Tim accidently opens Jason's bag of winds and the boat spins out of control for a while. They also face a giant bronze man, the brother of Talos, whom Jason and Medea killed. Yet Tim manages to save his friends without harming the giant. Finally Hippocrates hurries to the cave and tells them that Zoe's condition is grave. Then Tim remembers that the golden fleece can cure anything and that Arachne gave him gloves made of the fleece. He rushes to his home, brings the gloves and heals Zoe. He also gives the Grey Ladies toothpaste and a toothbrush.

Unfortunately, the troubles begin when he returns home. Leo had noticed the vase and that Tim went missing and demands to know the secret. Suddenly Tim's mother arrives and sees that the vase, which she thought was broken, is undamaged so she is now determined to sell it, leaving Tim anxious and confused.

Tim decides to visit his friends in ancient Greece one last time, to say goodbye, yet when he arrives they do not seem to recognize him, neither Hercules nor Zoe.

Analysis

In this adventure Tim discovers he must help his friend who is facing a fatal situation. Tim again is putting his life at risk to find Zoe and heal her, revealing his truly heroic nature. The comic aspect of the book is found in the mouth hygiene which Tim introduces to the Grey ladies.

Regarding Leo, when he arrives at Tim's house, he seems afraid of his grandmother. She appears angry and Tim describes her a holding Leo;s shoulder strongly, "Her wrinkled hands clutched at Leo's shoulders like an eagle's talons." (p. 6).

She talks to him severely, using the same phrase which Leo uses to scare Tim so often ("I'll fix you up"). Later Tim discovers that Leo does not have any parents; this fact makes him more sympathetic towards the bully, especially since Tim also lost his father: "he was beginning to realise that Leo's home life wasn't awfully happy. He might even understand him a little bit better now" (p. 8). Tim understands that, unlike himself, Leo is probably not loved enough. While the fact that Leo suffers at home does not make his bullying justified, it can make it understandable, since this is what he witnesses at home and how he is treated. The message may be that bullies are at times scared children

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

(which is a common notion in children's literature). However, this certainly does not excuse Leo's attitude towards Tim.

In the end, Tim must rely on his brains to save his friends and amends for the problem he caused with the bag of winds. He can even relate to the feelings of the giant bronze man, Brountzos (like he sympathized with Leo), since the giant was grieving at the death of his brother. While Jason is indifferent to the giant's suffering, Tim does not wish to harm him. The giant promises to let them go if they find his nail which Tim locates in his tooth, yet Tim does not pull it out and spares his life. When Tim consults with Hippocrates, he replies philosophically, "'Bronze men were created by Hephaistos, the blacksmith god,' Hippocrates answered, not taking his eyes away. 'As to whether they are alive…' He shrugged. 'It depends on your definition of life. Does it have emotions? Does it feel pain? I cannot say.'" (p. 77). Tim decides that his life is worth saving even if he is mechanical. Tim then asks Hippocrates again, "'But to kill it? Could he bring himself to do it? Tim knew it was a monster, but it kind of looked human. It was upset about its brother. 'Would you take out the nail?' he asked Hippocrates worriedly. 'If you saw it?' 'First do no harm,' the doctor answered, pressing his lips together. 'Killing is against my vow as a man of medicine.'" (p. 78).

The book comically refers to the Grey Lady and the quest for the fleece and picks certain episodes from it. Medea is not mentioned nor the consequences of the journey. The author incorporates these mythical characters into the new fantastic world she created for Tim. They maintain their mythological roots, yet their stories are not fully explained or only hinted, since their existence in this story is significant only in reference to Tim’s adventures. The author does not repeat the ancient myths but rather chooses the characters and part of the stories from the classical myths and adapts them to fit her version of the classical world which Tim discovers.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

Athena Hera Hercules Hippocrates Jason Medea

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union’s Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children’s and Young Adults’ Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of “Artes Liberales” of the University of Warsaw.

Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Family Friendship Heroism Magic Sacrifice
Addenda	The review refers to the Kindle edition (9781782263500).

This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.