Steve Barlow [real name: Steve Lowe] , Steve Skidmore , Andrew Tunney [aka 2hands]

Athena (EDGE: I HERO: Legends, 5)

United Kingdom (2018)

TAGS: Apollo Ares Athena Centaur(s) Chiron / Cheiron Cyclops / Cyclopes Delphi Hera Heracles Hercules Oracles Orion Pegasus Poseidon Zeus

Cover courtesy of Hachette Children's Group.

General information	
Title of the work	Athena (EDGE: I HERO: Legends, 5)
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United Kingdom
Original Language	Engish
First Edition Date	2018
First Edition Details	Steve Barlow and Steve Skidmore, *EDGE: I HERO: Legends: Athena*. London: Franklin Watts (an imprint of Hachette Children's Group), 2018, 64 pp.
ISBN	9781445152349
Genre	Action and adventure fiction, Choose-your-own stories
Target Audience	Children (7 years and up)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
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Creators

Steve Barlow [real name: Steve Lowe] (Author)

From the book *EDGE: I HERO: Legends: Hercules*: "the 2Steves [Steve Barlow and Steve Skidmore] are Britain's most popular writing double act for young people." The couple specializes in adventure stories involving comedy. They have written more than 160 books together.

Steve Barlow (real name Steve Lowe) was born in Crewe in England in the UK. He has had a varied career in teaching acting and more.

Source:

Official website (accessed: February 18, 2019)

Profile at panmacmillan.co.za (accessed: April 22, 2022)

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

Steve Skidmore (Author)

From the book *EDGE: I HERO: Legends: Hercules:* "the 2Steves [Steve Barlow and Steve Skidmore] are Britain's most popular writing double act for young people." The couple specializes in adventure stories involving comedy. They have written more than 160 books together.

Steve Skidmore was born in Bristol, England. He is a trained teacher of drama, English and Film.

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Source:

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

Andrew Tunney [aka 2hands] (Illustrator)

From the book *EDGE: I HERO: Legends: Hercules* : “Andrew (aka 2hands) is an English freelance artist and writer. He can draw with both of his hands. His work is inspired by film, comics and animation.”

Source:

Official website (accessed: February 18, 2019)

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

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Additional information

Summary

In this choose-your-own-path book, the reader is Athena. Athena is punished by the gods because she helped Odysseus evade Hera's traps. Hera and Poseidon would like to avenge these acts by punishing Athena and stripping her of her divine powers. Athena now becomes a mortal and must face challenges before she can confront Zeus and plead for her innocence. On her way to Mt. Olympus, Athena encounters mysterious creatures and faces real danger. She is chased by the fierce hunter Orion and his hunting dogs; encounters an enormous python and fire-breathing dragons; is pursued by the centaurs and also needs to face the gods Poseidon and Ares who try to hinder her.

Analysis

It is always a nice change to see an adventure story focused on a female hero. The fact that Athena becomes mortal makes the challenges she is facing more difficult. She needs to count on her own powers and not on magic powers. Thus she resembles the readers who are assuming the role of the goddess. The authors create their own set of adventures, yet they also allude to well-known stories and mythological characters such as Odysseus' blinding of Polyphemus and the hunter Orion, Pegasus and the Centaurs.

Athena faces a double challenge. First, she is wandering the world as a mortal and needs to confront fierce rivals, such as the hunter Orion, the Cyclops and Centaurs. But the more important mission is not a physical struggle, but her need to persuade Zeus that she is innocent and did nothing wrong when helping Odysseus. She needs to learn to make peace with Hera and pacify her, instead of attacking her, and Zeus, as well as to overcome Ares. Thus getting along with people, even with those who have wronged you, is the main lesson of this story. Hera taunts her: "Athena, proud goddesses – has your pride been humbled yet?" (p. 36), and while Hera is clearly in the wrong, the lesson being taught here is that sometimes it is better to swallow an insult rather than picking a fight, however justified.

The authors use the ancient myths as their base but also find new ways to engage with them and create their own adventures, using the mythological characters. The authors aimed at creating an action-packed story yet one that also has a moral to it. Athena was accused of

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	being too haughty, not respecting the other gods, especially Hera. She is punished not simply for helping Odysseus but mainly for hurting and disrespecting Hera. In the end, being mortal makes Athena think of her actions and the special structure of the story very graphically shows that her actions can carry fatal results. This teaches Athena a lesson in humility; just because she is a goddess she does not have the right to belittle others. Furthermore, the story also shows Hera as petty and she is something of a bully. Thus Athena learns how to control her own temper and how to make peace with a bully. Even if she is right, fighting is not always the best path to settle disputes.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Apollo Ares Athena Centaur(s) Chiron / Cheiron Cyclops / Cyclopes Delphi Hera Heracles Hercules Oracles Orion Pegasus Poseidon Zeus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Heroism Interactivity Journeys

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