Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Aphrodite Finds Her Inner Beauty (Taki and Toula Time Travelers, 5) by Josef Hill, Elena Paige", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/921. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

Josef Hill , Elena Paige

Aphrodite Finds Her Inner Beauty (Taki and Toula Time Travelers, 5)

Australia (2018)

TAGS: Aphrodite Galatea Pygmalion Zeus





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

General information	
Title of the work	Aphrodite Finds Her Inner Beauty (Taki and Toula Time Travelers, 5)
Country of the First Edition	Australia
Country/countries of popularity	Australia
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2018
First Edition Details	Elena Paige, *Taki and Toula Time Travelers Book 5: Aphrodite Finds Her Inner Beauty*. Angelos Publishing, Kindle edition, 2018, pp. 35
ISBN	9781925557572 ebook
Genre	Didactic fiction, Fiction, Illustrated works, Mythological fiction, Time-Slip Fantasy*
Target Audience	Children (5–10 (primary school age))
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, University of Roehampton, 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



Josef Hill (Illustrator)



Elena Paige (Author)

From her website: “Elena Paige is a children's and teen author with a background in counselling psychology.” She has written numerous series for children; among them *Taki and Toula Time Travelers*, *The Magicians*, *Evie Everyday Witch* and more.

Source:

Official website (accessed: September 24, 2019)

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

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

Summary

In this time-traveling series fifth installment, two modern day Greek children from Crete, Toula (8-year-old girl) and Taki (6-year-old boy) find strange traditional Greek shoes called tsarouhia in their mother's chest. They find out that wearing these shoes enables them to time-travel to ancient Greece (see here).

In this book, the children arrive at Aphrodite's temple. There are many statues of beautiful Aphrodite in the temple, yet one of the statues is of an older, ugly woman. When Taki accidentally touches the statue, Aphrodite becomes older and uglier. She explains to the children that was Zeus' curse, since he thought she was vain. The children help Aphrodite understand that she is loved by the people because she is beautiful on the inside, and consequently they help us break the curse to return to her former younger self. Meanwhile, Aphrodite helps the sculptor Pygmalion turn his beloved stone statue, Galatea, to a real woman.

Analysis

This installment focuses on what true beauty means; is it simply the way one looks or the way one behaves. Aphrodite appears vain, constantly looking in her mirror and worrying about her looks, yet she is also kind and benevolent. The children show her that her character is more important than her external appearance.

The theme of beauty is a significant one for children as well as adolescents. Insecurities may increase depending on one's appearance. For example, Toula does not feel confident about her looks; therefore she finds it difficult at first to appreciate Aphrodite, who constantly emphasizes external beauty. Aphrodite claims she grants to women handsome men and to men beautiful women. Yet Toula asks if they are also kind and beautiful on the inside, since her mother told her that was the most important thing; to which Aphrodite responds, "What lies! Nobody cares if I am kind or mean. Only that I am beautiful". It seems as if Aphrodite herself is caught up in her own beauty cage. She believes that people only wish for external beauty and that no one really cares about her true self, since all they wish is for her to be beautiful as well.

Aphrodite's remark may disclose inner insecurities as well. If Toula is

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.

insecure because of her looks, which she believes is not beautiful, then Aphrodite feels anxious and perhaps even frustrated because of her good looks. Only when she loses her beauty due to the curse, she realizes that inner beauty is most important.

As for Aphrodite, she is described as a beautiful blonde woman. The author follows other writers who depicted Aphrodite as blond and obsessive about her looks. 12 year old (blond) Aphrodite in the *Goddess Girls* series by Joan Holub and Susanne Williams constantly cares about her personal appearance. A similar blond, carefree girl is depicted in these authors' *Heroes in Training* series. In the *D'Aulaires' Book of Greek Myths* (1962), Aphrodite is described as being fond of "gaiety and glamour" and in the accompanied illustration she is portrayed as radiant blond. This of course does not mean that Aphrodite is always blond in children literature (in George O'Connor's *Olympians* comics she dons brown hair), yet the blonde hair does appear more often than not in Aphrodite's descriptions, probably due to the long Hollywood tradition of the beautiful and seductive, yet innocent, blond woman). The ancient texts disclose little on Aphrodite's appearance, besides illustrating her marvelous garments and her white breasts, a recurring feature connected to her role as mother of all things and her fertility powers (for example, in the *Iliad* 3. 396ff.). In the fifth Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite, she is named "Golden Aphrodite" or "Aphrodite rich in gold" (πολυχρύσου Ἀφροδίτης) which could refer to her glow and richness (having a golden crown) but possibly to her hair. In children's books, Aphrodite is understandably beautiful and not sensual or possessing generative powers.

Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts

Aphrodite Galatea Pygmalion Zeus

Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture

Adventure Appearances Love Travel

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.

Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Aphrodite Finds Her Inner Beauty (Taki and Toula Time Travelers, 5) by Josef Hill, Elena Paige", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Susan Deacy. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2019). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/921. Entry version as of November 21, 2026.

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.