

## Icarus

And so it was that Daedalus, the inventor, found himself dragged before the great King Minos, in the dead of the night. "You!" roared the King, "you are the one who built the labyrinth. You are the one who led to my Ariadne being taken away by Theseus. It's your fault!" Waves of thunder raged across his angry face.

"But your majesty, you asked me to build the labyrinth..." Daedalus replied whilst pleading his innocence.

"No buts - take him and his snivelling son to the tower!" whilst slamming his fist on his throne. And so it was that Daedalus and Icarus found themselves being dragged to the tower in the dead of the night, up the winding steps and into the top room.

Time was a circus, always packing up and moving away but there was nothing Icarus could do- his frustration was mounting higher than Mount Olympus itself. Once a week, a new candle was provided so that at night they were not in complete darkness. A glimmer of light from a glimmer of kindness, (softening the darkness of their despair). Ranting and raving, with the roar of a lion, pacing up and down shouting about what he would say to the King - Icarus would not rest. But Daedalus just looked up at the great buzzards as they wheeled high in the sky, spiralling upwards and he saw a feather falling. Daedalus snatched the feather and as he held it in the palm of his hand- he had an idea, at first, just a seed of an idea, but soon it took root, (a glimmer of hope in the darkness of the tower)...

Daedalus gathered the candle stubs and hoarded them... like precious jewels, only he knew why! He took the bread and crumbled it, scattering the crumbs on the windowsill, as if sowing a field with seeds. At first, the sparrows came fluttering down. Later, the white finches and magpies came. Whenever a bird landed, Daedalus would lean out and 'snitch' a feather or two. When the pile of feathers was enough: he melted the wax in the midday sun and used it to bind together the feathers into two mighty pairs of wings; mightier than the greatest eagles.

Early one morning, as the sun rose higher and higher, before the guards were awake, Daedalus strapped the wings onto Icarus himself. Carefully, they stood on the window ledge, toes curled over the edge, holding hands. "Whatever happens Icarus, keep gliding straight- don't let the wind catch you and send you too high. The sun is too hot for our wings to last."

Without warning, he tugged Icarus and they swooped down, like fledglings on their inaugural flight. As the air filled their wings, they straightened up and began to glide over the city, across the hills and above the sea. "I can fly, I can fly", yelled Icarus with excitement. Tightening his grip on his son's hand, Daedalus flew straight ahead. But full of freedom, having escaped Minos, Icarus was in no mood for heeding his father's sense and he let go of his father's hand, swooping and dipping and diving - looping the loop till a thermal caught him and Icarus began to spiral upwards.

"Glide straight!" yelled Daedalus, "glide straight!" but already Icarus was too far above his father's calling; spiralling up and up. So high, so certain, so full of himself that he did not hear the steady drip, drip, drip nor did he notice the feathers falling. In one moment he hung in the air no longer, circling upwards and then in the next moment dropped like a rock. Plummeting down towards the sea, Icarus saw the blues and the greens and the white crests of the waves rushing to greet him.

And Daedalus too saw his son fall, 'crack-smack!' Into the sea! Wretchedly, Daedalus glided on to land, with his heart heavier than Mount Olympus itself, knowing that his son had died by his own invention, by his own invention...