

ICARUS AND DAEDALUS

A GREEK MYTH

As enemies of King Minos, Daedalus and his son Icarus were imprisoned on the beautiful island of Crete – like songbirds trapped in a golden cage. And, like caged birds, they observed with envy those who could come and go as they pleased.

One day, as the sun began to go to sleep and the moon began to wake up, Daedalus turned his eyes towards the heavens and watched the birds as they danced in the winds that carried them. Suddenly, the seed of an idea was planted and it wasn't long before it began to germinate.

Night after night the two prisoners scoured the dusty ground for feathers long forgotten by the birds. Each night they continued to search, and when the pile had grown big enough, Daedalus set to work. As Icarus slept, Daedalus busily sewed the feathers onto four large pieces of cloth, sealing them with wax to secure them in place. At last their freedom was in sight!

As dawn stretched her arms, Daedalus walked with his son to the tops of the Cretan cliffs and looked out towards the Mediterranean Sea. A soft breeze ruffled their hair and stroked their wings.

'Remember. Even the birds can't shake hands with the gods,' Daedalus warned.

But Icarus did not listen to the words of his father.

Daedalus stepped off the cliff's edge. Icarus followed.

Like eagles they soared into the air.

'We're free father,' squawked Icarus. 'We can do anything we want!'

'Remember. Even the birds can't kiss the sun,' Daedalus warned.

But Icarus did not listen to the words of his father.

By now it was noon and the sun scorched the heavens with her mighty rays, and as Icarus climbed higher and higher the wax that held his wings together began to drip, drip, drip. Soon rivers of wax flowed down Icarus' arms and his feathers began to fall like tears from the sky. Icarus plummeted into the ocean, the huge waves swallowing him up.

Daedalus could only watch in horror as he saw his son fall, like a stone, to his death.

'If only you had listened to me,' he wept as his heart was forever broken in two.