

TRACE

**Traditional Children's Stories for a common
Future**

Icarus & Daedalus Wings



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Once upon a time, a long time ago, there lived a talented artist. His name was Daedalus. He used his art to make buildings and temples. He was probably the finest architect of his time.

King Minos invited Daedalus to the lovely island of Crete. The king wanted Daedalus to build a maze, a Labyrinth, as a home for the king's beloved pet, the Minotaur. The Minotaur was a horrible monster, with the head of a bull on a human body. The king loved that awful monster and wanted him to have a lovely home.

Daedalus was a bit amazed at the king's choice of pet, but a job was a job. Daedalus planned to make the maze a challenge, so complicated that anyone who entered it would be lost until rescued. That way, the king would be happy, the monster would be contained, and the people would be safe. Daedalus had no doubt he could design such a maze. He really was a fine architect.

Daedalus brought his young son Icarus with him. He was sure the child would enjoy swimming and playing with the other children on the island. Both Daedalus and Icarus were happy they had come. King Minos was happy with his maze. It was peaceful and pleasant on the island. Daedalus was in no hurry to leave.

One day, a group of Greek people sailed to the island. The next day, they sailed safely away, taking with them the king's lovely daughter, and leaving behind them one dead Minotaur.

King Minos was beside himself with grief. He did not believe anyone could have entered the maze and escape alive without help from someone, most probably help from the man who had designed the maze in the first place. (Actually, the children did have help, and not from Daedalus. King Minos punished the innocent Daedalus by keeping him and his young son (Icarus) prisoners on the island of Crete.

Daedalus tried to think of ways to escape. One day, Daedalus noticed birds flying overhead. It gave him an idea. Wings!!!. He needed wings. Daedalus began to gather all the bird feathers he could find. He glued them together with wax. When two pairs of wings were ready, he warned his young son not to fly too close to the sun or the wax would melt.

Daedalus fastened the wings to their arms. They flapped their wings and took to the sky. They left the island of Crete far behind them. Water sparkled beneath them as far as they could see. The sky was blue. The breeze was brisk, more than enough to keep them in the air. It was glorious!

Icarus flew higher and higher. He flew so high that before he knew what was happening, the sun had begun to melt the wax on his wings. Icarus felt himself falling. He flapped his arms faster and faster. But it was no use. Poor Icarus plunged into the water and drowned.

Sadly, Daedalus continued on alone.