Ayelet Peer, "Entry on: Icarus: The Boy Who Flew Too High by Kathryn Griffiths ", peer-reviewed by Lisa Maurice and Daniel A. Nkemleke. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2020). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/945. Entry version as of October 30, 2026.

Kathryn Griffiths

Icarus: The Boy Who Flew Too High

United States of America (2013)

TAGS: Daedalus Icarus Minos Minotaur





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

General information	
Title of the work	Icarus: The Boy Who Flew Too High
Country of the First Edition	United States of America
Country/countries of popularity	United States of America, United Kingdom, Canada
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2013
First Edition Details	Kathryn Griffiths, *Icarus: The Boy who Flew too High*. Birmingham and Shanghai: Gold World Publishing, 2013, 22 pp.
ISBN	9781909379039 (ebook)
Genre	Adaptations, Comics (Graphic works), Myths
Target Audience	Children (5–10 years)
Author of the Entry	Ayelet Peer, Bar-Ilan University, ayelet.peer@gmail.com
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Creators



Kathryn Griffiths (Author, Illustrator)

Kathryn Griffiths is an English author and illustrator from Manchester.

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Additional information

Summary

This is an adaptation of the myth of Daedalus and Icarus and their attempts to escape Crete. The story is built similarly to a comic book, with illustration and word balloons. Daedalus devises wings for his son and himself, but Icarus flies too high to the sun and falls. His father then prays to the gods and Icarus becomes the sea spirit Icaria, which protects the sea.

Analysis

This book depicts Icarus as a young boy who yearns for freedom and is bored on Crete. Daedalus refuses to work for King Minos and is threatened with execution. Icarus feels like he is wasting his life, because he has not done anything since he is locked in the tower in Crete. He wishes he could fly away. This sentiment is shared by many people who feel like their life is wasted without ever achieving anything substantial. The wish to fly away during difficult time is also understandable and common to many, in Icarus' situation flying is the only option for him to regain his freedom. Icarus is depicted as simply having fun and mistakenly get close to the sun. He is not blamed for a reckless behavior, although he does appear restless and agitated prior to their flight, due to his incarceration.

While the duo fly a passerby sees them and notes that they are like the gods. Yet they are mere mortals and their mortality is soon harshly realized when Icarus falls. Although after his death he becomes a kind of divinity.

In many adaptations, the fall of Icarus marks the climatic tragedy of the myth and where the stories usually end, or with the addition of the sad and lonely Daedalus. Examples are Celina Elmi's *Ovid for Fun* from 2012 or Jenny Oldfield's *Wings of Icarus* (2007) and many more.

Here we have an attempt at creating a happy ending after all. Icarus becomes Icaria, the guardian spirit of the sea (an invention of the author) and he even meets his father and tells him that he shall wait until they meet in heaven above one day. This is a combination of a Greek myth and a Judeo-Christian influence, since there is no heaven above in the ancient Greek religion, only Olympus. Yet it appears as if the author wished to end the story on a happier note of a future reunion between the father and son, and their walking hand in hand is

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	also the final illustration.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Daedalus Icarus Minos Minotaur
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Adventure Death Parents (and children)

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