The Fall of No Angel

Soft, grippy bark was stuck firmly between my callused hands as I climbed. The familiar rhythm of pulling and scrabbling up the trunk of the tree led me to feel safe gazing up at the haphazardly scattered stars drowning amidst the endless moonlight. I saw a figure – seemingly not much older than my eleven-year-old self – surrounded by the night, sitting contentedly upon the rooftop of a nearby building. Another shadow was there – this one standing, looking quite agitated from my point of view. As day emerged from the moonlit sky, it became clear that their silhouettes elegantly displayed what must have been wings – sleek and feathered. Of course, flight was not very possible, but a slim chance is better than a missed opportunity.

Eyes closed, minds whirring and wishing, heads overwhelmed and flooded with fear, they leapt. At first, they fell, and so did their faces. Then, the wind hit them, propelling them upwards until they were soaring quite steadily. I could hear (very faintly) a few words of advice, directed towards the smaller winged person: ‘The sun is dangerous – be careful, Icarus. This threatens your life, my son – we cannot afford to be arrogant.’ It seems that he did not listen.

Ignoring these wise words, Icarus roamed carelessly towards the warm and bright, but deceiving glow of the sun. Now his wings were dripping wax – what was holding them together no longer stayed strong against the gusty currents of the sky. Feathers started drifting from the boy and he gazed at the world around him, glassy eyed, begging the universe for mercy. It was too late.

He FELL.

Grazing my arms and already scabby knees in my haste to get down from the branch on which I was sitting, I ran for the boy, praying that I would be able to find him. His body plummeted into the water below as his father became aware that he had lost his son. Although I searched, Icarus was not washed up onto a beach as I had wanted – he was given a legacy, a warning to others that you should never let the weight of vanity sink you to the depths of the ocean. He now lies beneath the ground of an island of his own, having been buried by his father. Its name: Icaria.

By Hannah Lumley | 7Z2