

Rough draft. Feedback welcome.

Asterion by Richard Sylvan

Under the white shawl the young prince snuffles and suckles the warmth of his mothers breast. Her vacant gaze far beyond the nursery walls. The rhythm of her son's legs kicking in time with his hungry mouth. Her nipples sore from his sharp frustrated teeth careless as he tries to fill his belly with nourishment.

Pasiphae, for it is she, speaks in a dream like voice finding stories remembered from her own infancy. Her Persian doulas vowels pre-echo in her nursing trance and channel from her own lips; tales of the Celestial Cow holding the heavens for the gods to race their chariots, of Amun Ptah the ancient creator whose heart and words built the world, his bull-head proud divine. 'Like you sweet Asterion' she whispers.

Asterion woke to the scuttle and drag on the stone floor. The fruit and cheese of his uneaten supper has drawn the rats again. Though unlit his unusual eyes see in red monochrome and by his open cot three warm rats squabble and snatch his bait. Feigning deep sleep he rolls and snores. They pause with the alertness of the unneeded. He too has senses honed for the ever possibility of attack. He smells their sour urine, his own musky bed, the extinguished torches soaked in fat. Hungry he waits, breathing deep and slow.

Slam! His stubby fist drops and cracks the closest rats spine, the other two flee before their ruined companion twitches her last. He licks the ooze from his bruised knuckles; the warm red congealing milk. Then ravenously he peels open the rodent. Bassy rumbles and groans of satiation mingle with the mastication of sinew and muscle, the slurp of the brittle marrow straws. The flavour on the back of his thick red tongue, ferrous and rich.

His friend, Daeda has brought light through the curtained arch. Squinting, Asterion grins. 'I set trap. I catch with own hand. Ha.' His voice alight with triumph as Daedalus observes the scene, disgust hidden.

Notes;

story-arc Daedalus feeling culpable for the boy, apprentices him. Asterion learns of mechanical traps and puzzles and even helps design the Labyrinth 'playground' though he struggles with language.

A wrestling match with a sibling results in injury and the King resolves Asterion must be away for his own safety. The time of animal gods has passed with the Minoans and now Asterion is a monster an emblem of his parents crimes.

Daedalus feeds and entertains Asterion but in confinement the monster grows. King Minos works hard to resolve the defeat of Athens. In victory are many problems, to subdue the Athenians further he devises the deliverance of sacrifices to the labyrinth.

Confused Asterion tries to play with the terrified men and woman. Hide and seek. Dodge the trap. Losing them one by one and eating them. Daedalus is left to keep Asterion alive and monstrous on behalf of the King and Queen.
Perhaps their daughter helps theseus in order to put an end to the misery of her brother...

Specific questions;

What are my best sources for this myth?

What are Asterions siblings like (relative ages etc.) ?