

*The Little Book of Gifts*  
**LOVE**



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**Marcus**



**Sarah**



**Albert**

**Isadora**



**Zeus**

Sarah had been at her best friend Marcus's fifth birthday party with her friends and they had played and played all day and now she was was tired and ready for sleep.

Her father sat on the edge of her bed and started reading her a story, but she drifted off to sleep soon after he began. As she slept she dreamed she drifted out of her bed, out through the bedroom window on to the adjacent garage roof, where it was daylight and a large, youthful looking friendly dragon, with greeny blue scales, sparkling eyes and magic powers was waiting for her.

The dragon gave a couple of little snorts emitting puffs of grey smoke followed by a larger snort that produced a burst of flame, bowed his head and introduced himself as Zeus. He told Sarah of a magic kingdom where where all the gifts to have a happy life lived.

“Come on” he snorted “let's go for an adventure, much more exciting than laying in bed asleep!”

Sarah thought this was a really good idea and said so.

With that he lowered his long scaly neck and with a wave of a scaly front

leg invited Sarah to grab his shiny scales climb up onto his back.

Sarah felt thrilled to be invited to ride on a dragon and using his scales to help her, climbed onto Zeus's back and settled on the smaller hairy scales in the hollow between his bony shoulders, ready for the journey to this magical place.

“Hold on tight!” exclaimed Zeus, “I've never had a passenger before so it may be a little bit of a bumpy ride” he then gave a snort of fiery breath and with a powerful flap of his mighty wings and a swish of his long slender tail Zeus took to the sky and headed towards the Sun.

Initially Sarah held on tightly to the hairy scales as Zeus sped at great speed through the air, but in short time she adjusted to the rhythm of his wing beats and relaxed her hold, enjoying the feeling of the air rushing past her and the view she had from this lofty perch.

There was one thing that was not quite so enjoyable and that was that Zeus quite often let out smokey breaths as he beat his wings, causing Sarah to cough as she was engulfed by the smoke from his exhalations.

“Mmm, I must have a word with Zeus about this” she thought



Before long she could see, in the distance, a small hill covered in what looked like a woodland. As they rapidly drew closer she could see some amazing ancient looking, trees of enormous size. Zeus headed towards these trees and with the strong beats of his wings soon arrive.

“Zeus is going much too fast” thought Sarah as they hurtled towards the trees and braced herself waiting for the impending crash. She need not have worried. With expert precision, Zeus extended his legs, lifted his body upright, catching Sarah by surprise such that she had to quickly change her grip on the scales on Zeus's back to prevent her from falling off, and gracefully landed by the gnarled trunk of one of the large ancient looking trees.

“How beautiful is this” thought Sarah as she felt the calm atmosphere and breathed in the vibrant scent filled air and looked down at the ground spread with a soft looking grass and moss mixture with flowers of colourful hues of pink and yellow and blue clumps spread around where they had landed.

Sarah looked around and noticed that two of the trees seemed to be growing from the same point, moving away from each other as they grew higher, only for the branches and leaves at the top to come together again, forming an amazing heart shaped opening.

Zeus was quite excited and started breathing smoke and flames as he tried to tell her something.

“Zeus, calm down” Sarah implored, “You brought me here for an adventure not to choke me and burn me alive”

She spluttered, coughed and laughed as she felt his excitement.

Zeus calmed down enough to tell her to go through the heart shaped opening where she would see the way to the Kingdom of Gifts.

Zeus lowered his long neck between his front legs to allow Sarah to climb off and approach the opening in the trees.

Sarah climbed down as graciously as she could and with some hesitation started walking towards the heart shaped opening. She didn't really want to go through on her own.

She stopped and turned towards Zeus

“Are you leaving me now Zeus?” she asked

“Oh no!” exclaimed Zeus “I will follow you through the heart and into

the kingdom, but you must lead the way.” and with that gave her a nudge in the back, with his hard bony nose, pushing her in the direction of the opening.

Sarah thought it was a bit rude for Zeus to nudge her as she knew her mother would tell her off for doing the same thing, but he was a dragon and things were different here, so she did not say anything, especially as she was glad Zeus was going to be with her, and she felt safe in his company.

Sarah was again reminded of how wonderful this place was as she felt the energy the ground through her feet. As she continued to head towards the heart shaped opening. She could hear the soft padding of Zeus following behind her.

The heart shaped space opened out invitingly. She was nearly there when the figure of a small boy leaped out, startling her and making her jump. When she recovered enough from this surprise to look she realised it was her friend Marcus.

“Marcus, what are you doing here?” Sarah cried happily.

“Oh Sarah, isn't this magical” Marcus replied “I'm here to share this adventure with you and wow, you've brought a dragon! I've never ridden



on a dragon before.” he exclaimed excitedly.

“Come on, let's get on with it, I've been waiting here ages.” he added a little impatiently

For an instant Sarah was reluctant to sharing Zeus with Marcus as she thought “Zeus is mine”

She quickly pushed the feeling aside as Marcus was her friend and needed to share Zeus to come on the adventure. She let her happiness at having Marcus there wash over her and like him was excited to be going on an adventure.

She took Marcus's hand and with Zeus following, they walked through the heart shaped opening made by the magnificent trees, wondering what to expect and feeling their hearts thumping in excited anticipation.

Sarah felt a comforting warmth spread through her whole body. As she looked around she saw, hovering a small distance off the ground, a shimmering doorway of light. Sarah marvelled at this doorway and happily approached it. Hearing a loud “Wow!” from Marcus as he too saw the doorway. Feeling both curious and bold, she stepped through.

Marcus was not keen to be left behind with a dragon, so he quickly followed her through the opening.

Sarah was taken aback by what she saw and was actually a bit disappointed. It looked the same as the world she had just come from. A loud flapping of wings to her right made her look in that direction and she saw Zeus flying a figure of eight in the clear blue sky, before coming in to land next to them with a loud flapping sound from his wings and a belch of smoke and flame.

Sarah felt a little annoyed that Zeus had gone and had a play, leaving them there in a strange place where anything could happen to them, but deep down she was pleased he was back with her, especially as she wanted to know what was going on there.

She turned to Zeus and said in her haughtiest voice “Why does this place look the same as where we've just come from? I thought it was supposed to be magical?”

Zeus told them the magic would soon arrive and to look up in the sky, where he pointed with his wing tip to a fast approaching dot.

As they looked the dot became bigger and bigger and in a soft glowing

light and a flurry of beautiful blue and white feathers from elegantly beating wings a amazing bird like creature landed.

Sarah and Marcus stood in awe with their mouths open, staring at this magnificent site.

The bird like creature, raised one of it's soft downy wing tips to it's beak and coughed politely to gain their attention.

“Allow me to introduce myself, you have probably never seen anything like me before because I am a Phoenix, my name is Isadora. You only have to ask for my help with your thoughts and I will be there for you. I know you have come here to have an adventure. This is the land of Gifts. You come here to receive a gift to help make your life happier and to have an adventure to help you understand how best to use the gift you receive. I now give to you Sarah and you Marcus, your first gift, the gift of love”

She then passed to each of them a small glowing ball of light, like a miniature Sun.

“What is love ?” said Sarah



“What does it do?” said Marcus

Isadora told them to take the small glowing sun in their hands and bring it to their hearts region in the centre of their chests and allow the glowing sun to pass into their bodies filling them with Love.

As they did this their surroundings became full of beautiful light, everything they saw felt wonderful to view. They felt full of life and energy. They turned to each other and at the same time said “Wouldn't it be brilliant to share this with everyone.”

They both felt so good and and wanted to share their gift with everything around them.

“Let us show you what this gift means” said Isadora

“Follow me” and with that she took off

Zeus lowered his neck and said “Climb aboard we don't want to lose Isadora”

Sarah and Marcus quickly clambered onto Zeus's back and with a hop and a skip and powerful beats of his wings, took off after Isadora

“Wow this is fun” Marcus shouted into Sarah's ear as the wind rushed past his cheeks accompanied by the odd cloud of smoke from Zeus and the flapping noise from his beating wings as he strained to keep up with the graceful figure of Isadora gliding effortlessly through the warm blue sky.

They soared high in the sky and everywhere they looked seemed full of life and happiness, except for a small light grey smudge near the horizon. They seemed to be heading for this smudge.

“I wonder what that grey smudge is?” shouted Sarah

“Probably a bonfire” replied Marcus “There's always bonfires burning somewhere”

Sarah laughed, as she knew Marcus enjoyed helping his father in their back garden when he had a bonfire to burn rubbish and dead leaves and was always asking when the next one was.

“He would just love having a bonfire here in this magical place” she thought

Displaying both graceful balance and manoeuvring skill, Isadora drew

alongside them and turned her head their way.

“To help you know what love is, it is helpful to know what it is not. That grey smudge we are heading for is an area where people never knew or have forgotten what LOVE is” she said

This love feels so wonderful how can anyone forget what it is?” asked Sarah

“There are many reasons” replied Isadora, “these people live in a world that keeps telling them to be in fear, fear of strangers, fear of being robbed or losing the things they own, fear that they will not have enough money to live on, fear that they have no power to shape their lives, fear of getting hurt, the list goes on and on. They have been taught these fears since they were babies and these fears take their power away and hide the power of LOVE from them.”

Marcus being very practical said “Surely some fears are useful, they stop you walking off cliffs or touching hot things, like bonfires”

“That is very true Marcus, these useful fears are an aspect of the gift of LOVE, they help keep you healthy and alive. The other fears do not do this, they can make you ill and unhappy.”



They arrived at the grey murky area, even the sky had turned murky. Looking down they could see an area that looked uncared for, unsmiling people walking with bowed backs and heads looking down, going to and from work, school and home. People arguing, people crying, people beating one another, dogs being mistreated, animals confined to small cages, people using money to control other people and not caring about the misery they were creating. Every where they looked they saw lack of care and consideration. No one seemed to be caring about themselves or others, especially not at the same time.

“Is this really what not having LOVE is like?” asked Sarah “Those poor people look so unhappy, is there anything we can do to help?”

“When you use the Gift of LOVE you can bring about amazing changes” said Isadora, “but first you must learn to love yourself to be able to use your gift most effectively”

“What do you mean, love ourselves?” asked Marcus

Isadora replied “Love is about doing the best you can, for yourself and others. Look after yourself, eat well and keep fit and you will be stronger and more able to help others. Accept yourself for who you are, even

though you may not consider yourself perfect. You are what you are and that's OK. When you look in a mirror accept what you see there. You are still children growing up and can make changes as you grow. Grown ups call it a Work in Progress.

Avoid judging others, events and situations. They are what they are. They are all works of the creator. Other people may call you names or be unkind to you, they only do this because they are looking for LOVE and don't know where or how to find it. You can help them find LOVE by sending Loving thoughts to them. Thank them for giving you an opportunity to share this wonderful GIFT of LOVE. Love shines light in the dark place that is Fear. Shine your Light. Loving yourself enables you to share your love and help others find their own Gift of Love.”

“Wow!” exclaimed Sarah “I feel so special to have this Gift and now I know I can give more of it to myself and also share it with others.”

“Does it really work?” enquired Marcus

“Let's demonstrate” said Isadora “Close your eyes and I want you to feel your GIFT of LOVE filling your whole body with this wonderful feeling, from the top of your head to the tips of your fingers and toes. Now, send this loving feeling to this grey murky unhappy area and all

those in it. Send loving smiles and feelings to everyone and everything there, all the people, the animals, the plants and the earth. Picture the grey murk that is the fear being blown away and replaced by this wonderful feeling of LOVE. Feel how incredible that is and how incredible you are for doing it. Keep this going for a few moments and then allow this loving feeling to spread out into the world to help others. Now, when you are ready, open your eyes and look what has happened to this murky area”

Sarah opened her eyes and looked down. She could not believe what she saw. The murkiness was disappearing and being replaced by a warm loving light. The people who had been fighting and arguing were now embracing like long lost friends. It was fear that had parted them, now LOVE had brought them back together again. Plants and trees were starting to blossom. People and their pet animals were playing together. It was a truly wonderful sight.

“Is that what LOVE does?” asked Sarah

“Oh yes” replied Isadora “that and so much more. Always remember you have this GIFT of LOVE and now you know how to use it. Use it on yourself all the time and use it on other people and situations. Whenever you see the need for LOVE, send it”

“Can Sarah and I use it at the same time?” asked Marcus

“The more of you that get together and use it the more powerful it is” Isadora replied “Use it at school with your friends, in your after school groups, in fact, anywhere. It is your GIFT of LOVE and the more you use it the happier your world becomes.”

By now the murky area had completely disappeared and warm sunlight shone down from a clear blue sky.

Isadora looked at Sarah and Marcus. “It has been a pleasure to meet you. You now know you have the GIFT of LOVE. You have seen how to use it and how effective it is when you use it. Take it with you and use it on yourself from when you wake up in the morning to when you go to sleep at night. Share it with others during the day and remember to include all the plants and animals. With this GIFT you can always be HAPPY. Enjoy!”

With that she flapped her wings in a few graceful strokes, rose into the air. There was the sound of “POP!” and Isadora vanished.

Zeus turned his head to look at the surprised faces of Sarah and Marcus and gave a laugh, accompanied as ever by smoke from his nostrils.

“Now you are full of this GIFT of LOVE are you ready to go?” he said

Sarah and Marcus looked at one another, smiled and said “Yes”

Zeus flapped his wings and with his skip and jump climbed into the sky. They rose quickly, looking back on the now beautiful sunlit place they had just visited with loving gazes. It did not take Zeus very long to return them to the gateway in the trees where Marcus was met by an owl called Albert waiting to take him home.

Zeus explained to Sarah that aside from being a playmate of his, one of Albert's many jobs was the “keeper of the gateway”. He was also able to do magic things and to grow or shrink his size as he needed to do his job.

Right now as he sat above the opening he was normal owl size but quickly grew big enough to allow Marcus to climb on his back. He then lifted into the sky with Marcus on his back waving at Sarah and Zeus.

Zeus took off once more, flying Sarah back to her house and settled on the ridge of the garage attached Sarah's house. He was near the window of Sarah's bedroom. He lowered his neck to allow her to climb down. As she climbed on the roof she blinked and the sky turned from day to

night. She gave Zeus a big hug and then found herself gracefully floating through the window into her bedroom and into her bed.

As Sarah settled sleepily into bed she looked out of the window at Zeus. He flapped his wings and flew up into the night sky becoming ever smaller until he eventually disappeared.

“Thank you Zeus” Sarah whispered, “for a wonderful adventure. I have this GIFT of LOVE and I know to use it every day helps me and others have a wonderful life. What a magical journey this has been. I know I'm going to have lots more of these adventures with Marcus and I so want to know more about Zeus, Isadora and that funny old owl Albert. I think I could learn so much and have amazing times ”

With a big smile on her face Sarah slipped back into a peaceful dreamless sleep

**The End**