

USUALLY UNUSUAL IS NOT USUAL

*I was the one
Different from the rest
The odd ball
Never passing the popular test.
But, a voice said one day, "Usually
Unusual is not Usual"
Did you hear it?
Was it you?
Was it me?
Or was it our destiny?
Pensacola Helene*



Hi! My name is Bobby.

Bobby the Bad Eagle and Pete the Peregrine Falcon grew up together in a bird village in North America. Bobby and Pete were close friends. Bobby didn't like being different from the rest of his classmates and he always felt like the odd ball out. There were a few other eagle families there too, but they seem to fit in just fine with the Falcons. Eagles and Falcons talked about their common hunting skills, the 100% no divorce rate among them, as well as the similar talons, and beaks. Unfortunately, Bobby focused only on how he was different. Maybe that was because his classmates always teased him about his long wings, or how he sometimes flew too high during a game, or how much slower he was than everyone else when it came to flying. Even though the Falcons were about 10 pounds lighter with a 40 inch wingspan; they were the fastest birds in the world. Pete always encouraged Bobby and told him he had the

most unusual traits of them all. Pete promised him constantly that one day his differences would become his destiny. Forget a destiny, Bobby would often think to himself. He didn't want to have unusual traits; he just wanted to fit in. Though he was an eagle, he was allowed on the Falcon football team because he had good eyesight and could see the game plays a mile away.

One day, in his last year of high school; the football team flew away to a nearby training camp. Of course on the way the Falcons took off leaving Bobby in the dust. When he arrived, he discovered the Falcons hadn't made it yet. They were surprised to find Bobby there before them and wondered how that had happened. Bobby discovered that even though the Falcons had speed they didn't have endurance and he could fly longer distances without stopping.

There were many discoveries for Bobby that year. A big storm hit their village and Bobby was able to fly to a high place and soar peacefully above the storm. His huge wings allowed the winds to lift him high until it was over. He didn't see any of his Falcon friends because they didn't possess the ability to soar like Bobby.

Another event left him speechless. He and the rest of the Football team were going through molting season. The Falcons lost all their feathers and could no longer fly. But Bobby lost his feathers in a rotational way which allowed him to continue to fly at all times.



Endurance



Soaring above the Storm

At graduation Bobby had about 7000 feathers and he looked awesome. School officials said Bobby's feathers weighed about one pound and his wingspan was about 8 or 9 feet long. His teammates had a new respect for his unusual differences. So did Bobby. Humans used Bobby's picture as a symbol of the United States. Bobby taught his fellow birds and humans that fast is not always better, if you have no endurance; that fitting in won't help, during the times, you need to soar above a stormy circumstance, and that having a different built or make-up, or look, or shape may be the very reason you will be able to fly when everyone else is grounded. Bobby, the Bald Eagle still models and teaches these principles to this very day.

What if being different is not so bad after all? Most people think if you don't fit the mold something is wrong, but maybe that's not true. Maybe your destiny is tied up with you being different and being the oddball in your family, your community, and among your peers. A man once said, he knew someone who gave his whole life for "a [group of] peculiar people." Maybe you are a member of that group and you were not designed to be "normal" or to "fit in" or "be like everyone else." Bobby, the Bad Eagle, wasn't disrespectful or unlawful or a bad person. He was just different.

So listen one more time to the voice that said, "Usually Unusual is not Usual..." Did you hear it? Is it YOU? Is it ME? Is it our DESTINY?