

**I-Icarus, D-Daedalus, C-chorus**

*Prologue*

**C:** Weary of exile, hating Crete, his prison,  
Old Daedalus grew homesick for his country  
Far out of sight beyond his walls – the sea.

**D:** "Though Minos owns this island, rules the waves,  
the skies are open: my direction's clear.  
Though he commands all else on earth below  
His tyranny does not control the air."

*I*

**D:** "Everything is like a call, everything's tempting and luring you  
out of the room, out of home, out of yourself, out of mind;  
to flow over land and water, to go somewhere else,  
to be somewhere else, somebody else;  
the mind is its own beautiful prisoner.  
Heaven actually begins  
here at this very place  
beside us, around us  
and reaches up to those  
awe-inspiring stars.  
On such a night..."

**C:** So Daedalus turned his mind to subtle craft,  
An unknown art that seemed to outwit nature.

*II*

**D:** "Sometimes the great bones of my life feel so heavy,  
and all tricks my body knows -  
the opposable thumbs, the kneecaps,  
and the mind clicking and clicking -  
don't seem enough to carry me through this world  
and I think: how I would like to have wings –  
how I would like to open them and rise."

**C:** He placed a row of feathers in neat orders,  
Each longer than the one that came before it.

**I:** feathers

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**I, C:** feathers

**C:** With cord and wax  
He fixed them smartly at one end and middle,  
Then curved them till they looked like eagles' wings.

And as he worked, boy Icarus stood near him.  
His brilliant face lit up by his father's skill.  
He played at snatching feathers from the air  
And sealing them with wax.  
At last the wings were done and Daedalus  
Slipped them across his shoulders for a test  
And flapped them cautiously to keep his balance,  
And for a moment glided into air.  
**D:** "Though Minos owns this island, rules the waves,  
The skies are open.  
He doesn't know birds live  
In another time than man."

### III

**D:** "Heaven begins here.  
Remember  
**D, I:** To fly midway, for if you dip too low  
**D:** The waves will weight your wings  
**D, I:** with thick saltwater.  
**D:** And if you fly too high the flames of heaven  
**I:** heaven  
**D:** Will burn them from your sides. Then take your flight  
Between the two."  
**C:** With this he gave instructions how to fly  
And made a pair of wings to fit the boy.  
He kissed his son.  
And as a bird who drifts down from her nest  
Instructs her young to follow her in flight,  
So Daedalus flapped wings to guide his son.  
**D:** "Come."  
**I:** "Frightened thoughts  
take their heads from under their wings,"  
**D:** "Come."  
**I:** "stretch and look around  
as if thinking  
whether to take flight for a moment, to go wandering  
and achieve something great and proud  
or... "  
**D:** "Come."  
**I:** "All the pretty birds dive to the heart of the sky."  
**D:** "Come."  
**I:** "O make room for..."

### IV

**C:** Far off, below them some stray fisherman,  
Attention startled from his bending rod,  
Or a bland shepherd resting in his crook,  
Or a dazed farmer leaning on his plough  
Glanced up to see the pair float through the sky,  
And taking them for gods, stood still, in wonder.  
By this time Icarus began to feel the joy  
Of beating wings in air and steered his course  
Beyond his father 's lead: all the wide sky  
was there to tempt him as he steered toward heaven.  
**I, D:** "What once was great, now appeared small.  
What once could smite, now smites no more."  
**I:** "At my back, white clouds.  
I stare and stare, it seems I was called for this:

To glorify things just because they are.  
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ful sun  
moon stars the all.  
I am the wind."

*V*

**C:** Meanwhile the heat of sun struck at his back  
And where his wings were joined, sweet-smelling fluid  
Ran hot that once was wax. His naked arms  
Whirled into wind; his lips, still calling out  
His father's name, were gulfed in the dark sea.  
**D:** "Icarus, where are you, Icarus,  
Where are you hiding, Icarus, from me?  
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moon stars the all.  
Icarus, where are you, Icarus,  
Where are you hiding, Icarus, from me?"