

## I NEVER WANTED TO FLY HIGH

Welsh singer-songwriter Anne Lister graciously gave us her permission to reprint this song. A modern rendering of the Greek myth by the same name, this song moves me as much as any I have ever heard. I first heard it in England performed by a young artist named Greg Russell <http://www.russellalgar.co.uk/> at the Chester Folk Festival. You can hear this song performed by the wonderful guitarist Martin Simpson at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-OhlOsL\\_bs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c-OhlOsL_bs) Martin does the song in a much higher key. Capo to fit your vocal range comfortably.

### ICARUS

Capo III

*By Anne Lister*

**G      G/F#      Em                      C              Bm**  
I never wanted to fly high -- I was too fond of walking.  
**G              G/F#      Em                                      C              D**  
When you said you'd touch the sky – thought it was your way of talking.  
**Em              D              C              G/B              Am                      G/B**  
And then you said you'd built some wings – you'd found it could be done.  
**G              G/F#      Em              C      D                                      G**  
And I was doubtful of everything. I never thought you'd reach the sun.

But you were so clever with your hands. I watched you for hours  
With the glue and rubber bands -- the feathers, the lace and the flowers –  
And the finished wings they glowed so bright. Like some bird of glory  
I began to envy you your flight – like some old hero's story.

You tried to get me to go with you, and you tried always to dare me.  
When I looked at the sky so blue, I thought the height would scare me,  
But I carried those wings for you – up the path and to the cliff face  
Kissed goodbye and watched your eyes – already bright with sunlight.

And it was so grand at the start, to watch you soaring higher.  
There was a pain deep in my heart – your wings seemed tipped with fire.  
Like some seagull or a lark, rising up forever  
Like an ember or a spark, drifting from earth to ever.

And I believed all that you'd said, and I believed all that you'd told me  
Do a thing no man had ever done, and touch the stars to please me.  
And then I saw your white wings fail, and I saw your feathers falter –  
Watched you drop like a bore of gold into the wide green water.

Now some are born to fly high, and some are born to follow.  
Some are born to touch the sky, and some walk in the hollow.  
And as I watched your body fall, I knew really you had won.  
Your grave was not the earth, but your reflection in the sun.

I never wanted to fly high...