Why the Caged Bird Sings

for treble voices, horn and strings

Sympathy

I know what the caged bird feels, alas!
When the sun is bright on the upland slopes,
When the wind blows soft through the springing grass
And the river floats like a sheet of glass,
When the first bird sings and the first bud opens,
And the faint perfume from its chalice steals -

I know what the caged bird feels,
I know why the caged bird beats his wing
Til its blood is red on the cruel bars;
For he must fly back to his perch and cling,

...I know why he beats his wing
When his wings are bruised and his bosom sore, -
When he beats his bars and would be free;

It's not a carol of joy or glee,
But a prayer the he sends from his heart's deep core,
But a plea that upward to Heaven he flings -
I know why the caged bird sings!

Paul Lawrence Dunbar (1872-1906)
I know what the caged bird feels, al- as!

Ah, the caged bird feels

When the wind blows soft through the springing grass

I know what the caged bird feels, I know what the caged bird feels, The sun is bright up-on the up-land slopes,

The sun is bright up-on the up-land slopes,

I know what the caged bird feels, I know what the caged bird feels, The sun is bright up-on the up-land slopes,
When the river floats like sheets of glass,

Ah, what the

and the first bud o - pens. And the faint per - fume from its cha - lice steals,

(poco agitato)
I know why he beats his wings; when the sun is bright and the wind blows soft.
I know how the caged bird feels when the sun shines bright and the wind blows soft. I know why the caged bird sings.

I know how when the sun shines bright and the wind blows soft. I know why the caged bird sings.

I know why the caged bird sings and beats his wings on the bars, I know why the caged bird sings and beats his wings on the bars,
Why he beats his wings un-till blood is red on the cruel (el) bars. for he must hop back to his

perch and cling when he'd hoped to fly. (voce tacit al 68)

Why he beats his wings un-till blood is red on the cruel (el) bars. for he must hop back to his

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Why he beats his wings un-till blood is red on the cruel (el) bars. for he must hop back to his
I know why the caged bird sings. I know why he beats his wings, against the bars.

p dolce

I know why he beats his wings, against the bars.

p dolce

I know why he beats his wings, against the bars.
I know why he beats his wings; when the sun is bright and the wind blows soft.
It's not a cry of joy or glee,
I know the caged bird feels;
oh,
I know the caged bird feels;
It's not a cry of joy or glee.

(dolce)

I know why he beats his wings, when the sun is bright and the wind blows soft
It's not a cry of joy or glee.

(dolce)

I know why he beats his wings, when the sun is bright and the wind blows soft
It's not a cry of joy or glee.
(O) Musician, a prayer.
(a) A prayer, a plea, from his heart's deep core.
Up to heav'n he prays.
(a) A prayer, a plea.
but a prayer from his heart's deep core.
(a) A prayer, a plea.
but a prayer from his heart's deep core.
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Ossia con sordino al fine

Dolce lontano cantabile

November 2002 Edition
poco agitato piangere

When the river floats like sheets of glass,

I know what the caged bird feels, The sun is bright on the up land slopes.

Ah, the caged bird feels When the wind blows soft through the springing grass.

When the river floats like sheets of glass.
Ah, what the caged bird feels.
I know how the caged bird feels; oh, I know why he beats his wings, when the sun shines bright and the wind blows soft. I know why the caged bird sings.
I know why the caged bird sings and beats his wings on the bars,
for he must hop back to his perch and cling when he’d hoped to fly.

for he must hop back to his perch and cling when he’d hoped to fly.

for he must hop back to his perch and cling when he’d hoped to fly.

for he must hop back to his perch and cling when he’d hoped to fly.
I know why the caged bird sings.
I know why the caged bird feels;
Oh, I know why he beats his wings,
Against the bars.
I know how the caged bird feels,
Cantabile.
wings, when the sun is bright and the wind blows soft.

It's not joy or glee, but a pray'r, a plea,
subito dolce

wings, when the sun is bright and the wind blows soft.

It's not a cry of joy or glee, but a pray'r, a plea,
subito dolce

a pray'r, from his heart's deep core, Up to heav'n he flings his prayer.

wings, when the sun is bright and the wind blows soft.

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