

Phaethon

Apollo through the heavens rode
 In glinting gold attire;
His care was bright with chrysolite,
 His horses snorted fire.
He held them to their frantic course
 Across the blazing sky.
His darling son was Phaethon,
 Who begged to have a try.

"The chargers are ambrosia-fed
 They barely brook control;
On high beware the Crab, the Bear,
 The Serpent round the Pole;
Against the Archer and the Bull
 Thy form is all unsteeled!"
But Phaethon could lay it on;
 Apollo had to yield.

Out of the purple doors of dawn
 Phaethon drove the horses;
They felt his hand could not command.
 They left their wonted courses.
And from the chariot Phaethon
 Plunged like a falling star --
And so, my boy, no, no, my boy,
 You cannot take the car.

Morris Bishop