

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art

transcribed for piano solo
Op. 10a

dedicated to Daniel Kuk

Lance Mok

London: April 2022

ca. 2½ mins

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art is a transcription of the composer's setting of John Keats's sonnet. The piece is set to a modified AABA form with a coda ending in a deceptive cadence as the sonnet deviates from the ideals of eternal love to contemplating death, and thus love's mortality. The stable pulse and tonality echo the tranquillity of the night and the steadfastness the poet vowed to his love.

The transcription was premiered by the composer on 1 May 2022 at Acton Hill Church, London, United Kingdom.

Instrumentation: piano solo

Text

Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art—
Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night
And watching, with eternal lids apart,
Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,
The moving waters at their priestlike task
Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,
Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask
Of snow upon the mountains and the moors—
No—yet still stedfast, still unchangeable,
Pillow'd upon my fair love's ripening breast,
To feel for ever its soft fall and swell,
Awake for ever in a sweet unrest,
Still, still to hear her tender-taken breath,
And so live ever—or else swoon to death.

John Keats

dedicated to Daniel Kuk
致 谷璋昭

Bright star, would I were steadfast as thou art

Op. 10a

Lance Mok

Adagietto ♩ = 66

The musical score is written for piano in 6/4 time, key of D major (indicated by two sharps). The tempo is Adagietto, with a quarter note equal to 66 beats per minute. The score is divided into four systems. The first system begins with a piano (p) dynamic and includes a pedal point (Ped.) marked '8...'. The second system continues the melody with triplet markings. The third system features a mezzo-forte (mp) dynamic followed by a piano (p) dynamic and a 'sim.' (simile) marking. The fourth system concludes the piece with a final triplet and a sustained bass line.