

Hymn of Breaking Strain

*He went over it in his head, plate by plate, span by span, brick by brick, pier by pier,
remembering, comparing, estimating, and recalculating, lest there should be any mistake;
and through the long hours and through the flights of formulae that danced
and wheeled before him, a cold fear would come to pinch his heart...*

Text: Rudyard Kipling, 1935, alt.

Music: Leslie Fish, 1983

BREAKING STRAIN 76.76.76.76.6

arr. Kenan Schaeffkofer, 2021

1 The care-ful text-books mea-sure
(Let all who build be - ware!)

the load, the shock, the pres-ure
ma - ter - i - al can bear.



So when a buck - led gir-der lets down a steel cas - cade,

the blame for loss, or mur-der is on the ma - ker laid.

Oh _____ the ma - ker, not the made!

Oh _____

2 But in our dai - ly deal-ing with stone and steel, we find

the gods have no such feel-ing of guilt for hu - man - kind.

To no set gauge they make us,
for no laid course pre - pare,

and pres-ent - ly o'er - take us
with loads we can - not bear:

A musical score for soprano and basso continuo. The soprano part (top staff) starts with a half note rest, followed by a eighth-note pair with a fermata, a eighth-note pair, a eighth-note pair, a eighth-note pair with a fermata, and a eighth-note pair with a fermata. The basso continuo part (bottom staff) starts with a eighth-note pair, followed by a eighth-note pair with a fermata, a eighth-note pair, a eighth-note pair, a eighth-note pair with a fermata, and a eighth-note pair with a fermata. The lyrics "Oh too mer - ci - less to bear." are written below the soprano staff, with "Oh" on the first measure and "too mer - ci - less to bear." on the second measure. The music concludes with a half note rest and a eighth-note pair.

Oh

too mer - ci - less to bear.

Oh

3 The pru-dent text-books give it in ta - bles at the end:

This musical score is in 2/2 time with a key signature of one sharp. The vocal line consists of eighth and sixteenth notes, with a fermata over the eighth note of the first measure. The piano accompaniment provides harmonic support with sustained chords. The lyrics describe the traditional ways of learning about the Mariner's curse.

the stress that shears a riv-et, or makes a tie - bar bend,

This musical score continues the 2/2 time and one sharp key signature. The vocal line and piano accompaniment are present. The lyrics describe the physical effects of the curse, such as the stress that breaks rivets and bends tie-bars.

what traf - fic wrecks mac - a-dam, what con - crete should en - dure.

But we, of Eve and A-dam have no such lit' - ra-ture,

Soprano (Treble Clef, Key of G, Common Time):

Basso Continuo (Bass Clef, Key of G, Common Time):

Lyrics:

Oh____ to warn us or make sure!

4 We on-ly of Cre - a-tion (Oh, luck - ier bridge and rail)

This musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and has a key signature of one sharp. The bottom staff is in bass clef and has a key signature of one sharp. The music is in 2/2 time. The vocal line begins with a half note followed by a quarter note, then a dotted half note. The bass line consists of eighth-note chords. The lyrics "4 We on-ly of Cre - a-tion (Oh, luck - ier bridge and rail)" are written below the staves.

a - bide the twin dam - na-tion: To fail and know we fail.

This musical score consists of two staves. The top staff is in treble clef and has a key signature of one sharp. The bottom staff is in bass clef and has a key signature of one sharp. The music is in 2/2 time. The vocal line begins with a half note followed by a quarter note, then a dotted half note. The bass line consists of eighth-note chords. The lyrics "a - bide the twin dam - na-tion: To fail and know we fail." are written below the staves.



Yet we— by which sole to-ken we know we once were gods—

take shame in be - ing bro-ken, how - ev - er great the odds.

A musical score for a vocal and piano piece. The vocal part is in soprano clef, G major, and common time. The piano part is in bass clef, G major, and common time. The lyrics are: "Oh_____ the bur - den of the Odds." The vocal line includes a melodic line with eighth and sixteenth notes, and the piano line provides harmonic support with sustained notes and chords. The score is presented on two staves: the top staff for the vocal part and the bottom staff for the piano part.

Oh_____ the bur - den of the Odds.

Oh_____

5 Oh, veil-ed, se - cret Pow-er, whose paths we seek in vain,

be with us in our hour_ of ov - er-throw and pain;

that we— by which sure to-ken we know Thy ways are true—

be - cause of be - ing bro-ken, may rise and build a - new.

Oh stand up and build a - new.