

**Take Something Like a Star**  
Robert Frost

O Star (the fairest one in sight),  
We grant your loftiness the right  
To some obscurity of cloud—  
It will not do to say of night,  
5 Since dark is what brings out your light.  
Some mystery becomes the proud.  
But to be wholly taciturn  
In your reserve is not allowed.  
Say something to us we can learn  
10 By heart and when alone repeat.  
Say something! And it says, “I burn.”  
But say with what degree of heat.  
Talk Fahrenheit, talk Centigrade.  
Use language we can comprehend.  
15 Tell us what elements you blend.  
It gives us strangely little aid,  
But does tell something in the end.  
And steadfast as Keats’ Eremite<sup>1</sup>,  
Not even stooping from its sphere,  
20 It asks a little of us here.  
It asks of us a certain height,  
So when at times the mob is swayed  
To carry praise or blame too far,  
We may take something like a star  
25 To stay our minds on and be staid.

Whom (or what) is the speaker addressing (more than one thing, in fact), and what is the speaker’s attitude (tone) toward his subject and audience?

What is the meaning of the word “becomes” (line 6)? “Reserve” (line 8)? What does the expression “the proud” (line 6) refer to?

What does the star represent for the speaker? (Consider the figurative significance of the word “height” in line 21.) Discuss the significance of the pun in line 25.

What is the “mob” to which the speaker refers in line 22, and what is his attitude toward it?

What is the speaker seeking, and what message is he trying to convey? (Consider the significance of the repetition of the word “something” in lines 9, 11, 17, and 24.)

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<sup>1</sup> **Keats’ Eremite:** An *eremite* is a hermit, specifically a religious recluse who lives a solitary life of contemplation to avoid getting caught up in the affairs of the world. (“Eremite” literally means “a person who dwells alone in a desert”). The poet John Keats used this image in his poem “Bright Star, Would I Were Stedfast.”