

Kojo no Tsuki

(Moon Over the Ruined Castle)

Melancholy (♩ = 48)

Rentaro Taki (1879-1903)

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a tempo of ♩ = 48. It consists of two staves of music. The first staff contains measures 1 through 4, and the second staff contains measures 5 through 8. The melody is written in treble clef. The chord accompaniment is indicated by letters above the staff: Am, Dm, Em, Am, Dm, Em, Am in the first staff, and Am, Dm, Em, Dm, Em, Am, Dm, Em, Am in the second staff. The piece concludes with a double bar line at the end of the eighth measure.

Kojo no Tsuki is a well-known song, beloved by the Japanese people. The melody was written in 1901 by Rentaro Taki, a talented young pianist and composer who died at the age of 23. The lyrics were written by the poet Bansui Doi of Sendai; they speak of the moonlight that once fell upon the splendid feasts and shining swords of the castle in its glory, but which now shines only upon desolate ruins and lonely pine trees.

Though this tune is modern, and not pentatonic, it can be given a more traditional Japanese sound by using only the five notes A, B, C, E, and F in the accompaniment (try leaving the G out of the Em chords, and substituting an F chord for the Dm chords shown above).