

# I Want to Write a Standard

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I want to write a standard  
One that all the cats will swing  
I want to write a standard  
Sung by Frank and Tony and Judy and Bing  
A song that hits what a million songs have missed before  
A song that'll still be sung in a thousand years or more—

I want to write a standard  
One that Ella would scat right through  
I want to write a standard  
One that Louis would play red, hot, and blue  
A song that Jerry or Jule might wish he'd written  
A song that would be to musicians like cream to a kitten—

I want to write a standard  
Like Burke and van Heusen wrote  
I want to write a standard  
Like Berlin did—every word and note  
A song whose tune was what you might call atmospheric  
A song that even Mercer would say, “By golly, that’s got some lyric!”—

I want to write a standard  
Like Hart and Rodgers did so well  
I want to write a standard  
One that’s got the Gershwins’ magic spell  
A song to be sung in a smoky bar by Billie  
Or covered by Bob, Paul, Linda, Lady Gaga, or Willie—

I want to write a standard  
To make Astaire step up and dance  
I want to write a standard  
One that’s filled with stardust and romance  
A song that Arlen might find at the end of the rainbow  
A song that Shaw has to play every night and disdain so—

I want to write a standard  
One that makes folks fall in love  
I want to write a standard  
More than anything I can think of  
A song that, I hope, when St. Peter is admitting  
Will rate me a chair at the table where  
Dorothy,  
and Irving,  
and Larry,  
and Richard,  
and Johnny,  
and Ira,

and Jimmy,  
and Hoagy,  
and Cole are all sitting—  
I want to write a standard!