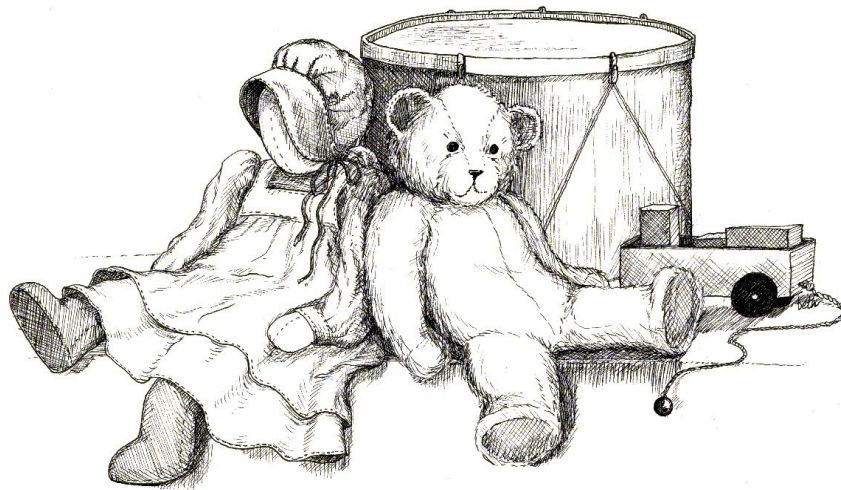


A Garret of Old Playthings

Five Carl Sandburg songs

high voice and piano



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

A Garret of Old Playthings

Upstairs

I too have a garret of old playthings.
I have tin soldiers with broken arms upstairs.
I have wagons with the wheels gone upstairs.
I have guns and a drum, and a jumping jack and a magic lantern.
And dust is on them, and I never look at them upstairs.
I too have a garret of old playthings.

God is No Gentleman

God gets up in the morning and says, "Another day?"
God goes to work every day at regular hours.
God is no gentleman, for God puts on overalls and gets dirty
 running the universe we know about and several other
 universes nobody knows about but Him.

Changing Light Winds

Changing light winds
blew over the sea,
came blue, came gold,
came silver with spray,
came white in dreamsnow
with long foam feathers,
long sleepy snowfalls,
then gray over the flats
an overcast of monotone--
night and stars a while
then night and no stars.

Spring Grass

Spring grass, there is a dance to be danced for you.
Come up, spring grass, if only for young feet.
Come up, spring grass, young feet ask you.
Smell of the young spring grass,
You're a mascot riding on the wind horses.
You came to my nose and spiffed me.
This is your lucky year.
Young spring grass just after the winter,
Shoots of the big green whisper of the year,
Come up, if only for young feet.
Come up, young feet ask you.

I Sang

I sang to you and the moon
But only the moon remembers.
 I sang
O reckless free-hearted free-throated rhythms,
Even the moon remembers them and is kind to me

“Upstairs” from *Cornhuskers* by Carl Sandburg, © 1918 by Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., © 1946 by Carl Sandburg, by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

“God is No Gentleman” from *Honey and Salt*, © 1963 by Carl Sandburg, by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

“Changing Light Winds” from *The Complete Poems of Carl Sandburg*; renewed 1978 by Margaret Sandburg, Helga Sandburg Crile and Janet Sandburg, by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

“Spring Grass” from *Good Morning, America*, © 1928, 1956 by Carl Sandburg by permission of Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, Inc.

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for Janet Youngdahl

A Garret of Old Playthings

Five Carl Sandburg Songs

I. A Garret of Old Playthings

Carl Sandburg

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 76-80) Warmly

mp
m.s.

p

Ped. una corda

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

3

p

2 2

I too have a gar - ret of old play - things.

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

5

I have tin sol - diers with bro - ken arms up - stairs.

pp

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

7

I have wag - ons with the wheels gone up - stairs.

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

9

I have guns, and a drum, and a jump - ing jack and a

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

11

mag - ic lan - tern. And

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

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**...and some of it
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2. God is No Gentleman

Carl Sandburg

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 66-69) *Matter of fact-ly* *mf*

God gets up in the morn - ing and

26

says, "A - noth - er - day?"

29 *mp*

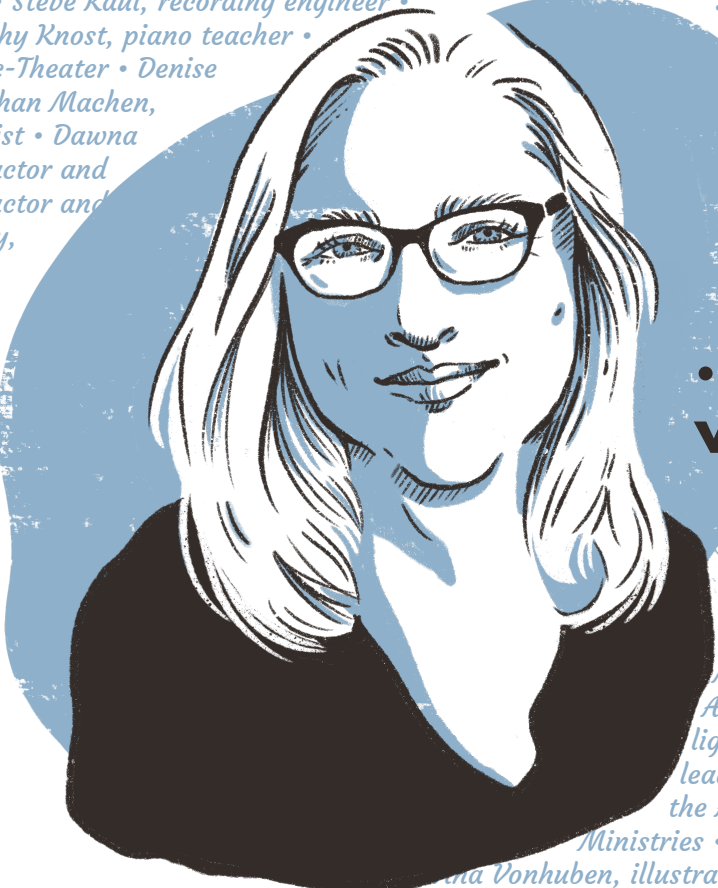
mechanically God goes to work eve - ry day at reg - u - lar hours.

34 *mf boldly*

God is no gen - tle - man, _____ for

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3. Changing Light Winds

Carl Sandburg

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 66-69) Undulating

with pedal, changing frequently

p

p

p

Detailed description: This block contains the first system of the piano introduction. It features a grand staff with treble and bass clefs in 3/4 time. The music is marked with a piano (*p*) dynamic and includes slurs and hairpins. The bass line is particularly active with frequent pedal changes.

p

p

Detailed description: This block contains the second system of the piano introduction, starting at measure 52. It continues the undulating texture with piano (*p*) dynamics and slurs.

54 *p*

Chang - ing light winds

p

p

Detailed description: This block contains the third system, starting at measure 54. It includes a vocal line in the treble clef with lyrics and piano accompaniment in the grand staff. The piano part is marked piano (*p*) and features slurs. The time signature changes to 4/4 at the end of the system.

57

blew o - ver the sea, o - ver the

p

p

3

3

Detailed description: This block contains the fourth system, starting at measure 57. It includes a vocal line in the treble clef with lyrics and piano accompaniment in the grand staff. The piano part is marked piano (*p*) and features slurs and triplets (marked '3'). The time signature is 4/4.

59 *mp*

sea, came blue, came

61 *p*

gold, came sil - ver with

63 *mp*

spray, came white in dream - - -

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71

flats, an o - ver - cast of mon - o - tone, —

8^{vb}.....

73 *pp*

Night and stars a -- while, then

pp

75 *freely, meno mosso*

night and no stars. —

pp

4. Spring Grass

Carl Sandburg

Elizabeth Alexander

 $\text{♩} = 132-138$ Mischievously

p

Spring grass, there is a

81

dance to be danced for you. Come

84

up, spring grass if on - ly for young feet. Come

87 *senza misura*

up, spring grass, young feet ask you.

Red.

90 *a tempo*

Smell of the young spring grass.

95 *mf*

You're a mas - cot ri - ding on the wind hors - es,

Red. *Red.*

99 *p*

You came to my nose and

Red. *Red.* ***

103: *sfz* *p*

spiffed me. _____

sfz *pp*

Ped. *

107 *pp*

This is _____ your luck - y

pp

109

year.

111 *mf*

Young spring grass, just af - ter the win - ter, ___

mf

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5. Even the Moon Remembers

Carl Sandburg

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 56-60) *Pensively**p wistfully*

The first system of the score consists of three staves. The top staff is a vocal line in 2/2 time, starting with a whole rest followed by a half note 'I'. The middle staff is the piano accompaniment, featuring a series of chords with a descending bass line. A 'sparkling' triplet of eighth notes is marked above the piano part. Pedal points are indicated below the piano part.

124

The second system begins at measure 124. The vocal line contains the lyrics 'sang to you and the moon,' followed by a long horizontal line indicating a sustained note. The piano accompaniment continues with a similar harmonic structure, including a sextuplet of eighth notes. Pedal points are marked below the piano part.

128

The third system begins at measure 128. The vocal line contains the lyrics 'but on - ly the moon' followed by a long horizontal line, and 're -' at the end. The piano accompaniment features a triplet of eighth notes and continues with a descending bass line. Pedal points are marked below the piano part.

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145 *p*

E - ven the moon re - mem - bers_____

p

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

150

and is kind_____ to me._____

pp

8va

6

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

155

rit.

8va

6

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

Composer Note:

Halfway through my sophomore year in college I started skipping music theory class. It wasn't that I disliked music theory – I LOVE music theory! – but many classes were devoted to reviewing material I already knew and I was bored. Cutting class wouldn't have been a big deal at a large university, but The College of Wooster had a small, engaged, teaching-focused music department. After a few weeks my theory professor had a little chat about my absences with composition professor Jack Gallagher, and together they came up with a special proposal for me. I would be officially exempted from attending certain “review-oriented” classes if I would write a series of theory-based composition exercises.

This was, of course, “an offer I couldn't refuse,” which was perfectly fine with me because I didn't want to refuse. Those modest exercises eventually became *A Garret of Old Playthings*. I wrote them for my friend Janet Youngdahl, who brought her pure soprano voice and wide-open heart to the songs' premiere.

By the end of the school year I was attending all the music theory classes again – we were studying 20th-century theory by then and I didn't want to miss a single beat! – and I had decided to declare a major in music composition. All in all, I'd say it was a pretty good bargain.

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Artist and quilt designer Beth Dix makes her home in the mountains of Western North Carolina.

www.bethdixart.com



Songs of Elizabeth Alexander

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A Garret of Old Playthings (Carl Sandburg) soprano and piano	SEA-028-00
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