

# Y Comienzo a Bailar

*Pensamientos sobre El Día de Los Muertos*



SATB, soprano, and piano

## Elizabeth Alexander

*Seafarer Press*

## Y Comienzo a Bailar

### *Pensamientos sobre El Día de los Muertos*

Al preparar la habitación para los invitados, sacudo la mesa,  
el trapo en mis manos un sepulcro suave para lo que ahora es polvo.  
Todo a mi alrededor, cada repisa y cada rincón albergan un pequeño cementerio.

Más tarde, cuando llegan las sombras de nuestras madres y nuestros padres,  
las palabras se atropellan impotentes en nuestra boca: los amamos,  
los extrañamos, los recordamos.

Extendemos nuestras manos ofreciendo pan, chocolate,  
los regalos más preciados de nuestro jardín.

Las sombras no nos responden, ni comen, pero sonríen  
de forma imperceptible, como siempre sonríe la muerte —

así que de repente los tomates brillan en la cazuela azul.  
la sal húmeda crepita en nuestros labios,  
la caricia del viento dentro de nosotros es más fresca y más dulce, y  
(segura de que los músicos han llegado por fin)  
me levanto de mi silla y comienzo a bailar.

*Elizabeth Alexander, translation by Agustin Cadena*  
*Translation © 2011 by Elizabeth Alexander*

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## And I Begin To Dance

### *Thoughts on the Day of the Dead*

Preparing the room for guests, I wipe the table clean,  
the cloth in my hands a soft grave for what is now dust.  
All around me, every ledge and corner harbors a small cemetery.

Later, when the shadows of our mothers and fathers arrive, words  
tumble helplessly from our mouths: we love you,  
we miss you, we remember you.

We hold out our hands, offering bread, chocolate, our garden's tenderest gifts.

The shadows neither answer us nor eat, but smile  
in the imperceptible way the dead always smile —

so that suddenly the tomatos gleam bright in the blue bowl,  
the wet salt on our lips crackles,  
the wind's caress within us is cooler and sweeter, and  
(certain that the musicians have finally arrived)  
I rise from my chair and begin to dance.

*Elizabeth Alexander*  
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# Y Comienzo a Bailar

(“And I Begin to Dance”)

Original poem in English by Elizabeth Alexander  
Translation to Spanish by Agustin Cadena

Elizabeth Alexander

Gently (♩ = 66-69)

Solo

S

A

T

B

Piano

*p*

*Ped.*

5

*Ped.*

9

*p pensively*

Al pre - pa - rar la ha - bi - ta - ción pa-ra los in - vi -  
Preparing the room for guests

*Ped.*

2

13

Solo

- ta - dos, sa - cu-do la me - sa,

*I dust the table*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

17

Solo

el tra - po en mis ma - nos, sa - cu-do la

*The cloth in my hands*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

22

Solo

me - sa, el

*more passionately*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

26

Solo

tra - po en mis man - os un se - pul - cro sua - ve,

*a grave soft*

*rit. molto* *mf*

*Ped.* *mf*

30 **Senza misura, freely** *mp*

Solo  
 un se - pul - cro pa - ra lo que aho - ra es pol - vo, aho - ra es  
 for [that which] now is dust

Tutti  
*p* *whispered once, with slightly staggered entrances:*  
 un sepulcro... polvo...

*mp*

Ped.

33 **A** **A Tempo** *p*

Solo  
 pol - - - - - vo.

Tutti  
 polvo...

Ped. Ped. Ped.

38

Ped. Ped. Ped.

43 *pp*

S/A  
 To - do a mi al - re - de - dor, To - do a mi al - re -  
 all me around

T/B  
*whispered, in rhythm: mp*  
 To - do al - re - de - dor,  
 all around

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

4

47

S/A  
- de-dor, To-do al-re - de - dor ca-da re - every ledge

T/B  
To - do al - re - de - dor, —

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

51

S/A  
- pi - sa y ca - da rin - cón al - ber-gan un pe - queñ - o ce - men -  
and every corner harbors a small cemetery

*mp*

*mp*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

54

S/A  
- te - rio, al - ber-gan un pe - queñ - o ce - men -

T/B  
*whispered with staggered entrances:*  
polvo...

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

58

Solo

S/A

T/B

un ce - men - te - -

- te - - rio.

polvo...

**B**

61

Solo

meno mosso

- rio.

*p*

Led. Led. Led. Led.

67

T

B

Más tar - de, \_\_\_\_\_ cuan - do

later later when

Más tar - de, \_\_\_\_\_ cuan - do

later later when

Led. Led. Led.

6

73

S *p*  
cuan - do  
when

A *p*  
cuan - do  
when

T  
lle - gan las som-bras de nues - tras ma-dres y nues - tros pa - dres, —  
arrive the shadows of our mothers and our fathers

B  
lle - gan las som-bras de nues - tras ma-dres y nues - tros pa - dres, —  
arrive the shadows of our mothers and our fathers

Ped. Ped. Ped.

S  
lle - gan las som-bras de neus - tras ma-dres y nues - tros pa - dres, — lle - gan las  
arrive the shadows of our mothers and our fathers

A  
lle - gan las som-bras de neus - tras ma-dres y nues - tros pa - dres, — lle - gan las  
arrive the shadows of our mothers and our fathers

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

81 *mp* *mf*

S som - bras, las pa - la - bras se a - tro - pe - llan im - po -  
 (the) words (the) words rush/fall helplessly

A som - bras, (Cue notes optional) *mf* las pa - la - bras se a - tro - pe - llan im - po -  
 (the) words (the) words rush/fall helplessly

T las pa - la - - bras se a - tro - pe - llan,  
 (the) words fall/rush

B las pa - la - - bras se a - tro - pe - llan,  
 (the) words fall/rush

*mf*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

85

S - ten - - tes en nues - tra bo - - ca: im - po -  
 in our mouths

A - ten - - tes en nues - tra bo - - ca: im - po -  
 in our mouths

T en nues - - - tra bo - - - ca im - - - po -  
 in our mouths

B en nues - - - tra bo - - - ca im - - - po -  
 in our mouths

*espressivo*

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

8

89 *f* *agitato*

S - ten - - tes, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we love

A - ten - - tes, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we love

T - ten - - tes, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we love

B - ten - - tes, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we love

*f* *agitato*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

93 **C** *passionately*

S - ma - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los ex-tra - ña - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los re-cor - da - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we miss you we remember

A - ma - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los ex-tra - ña - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los re-cor - da - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we miss you we remember

T - ma - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los ex-tra - ña - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los re-cor - da - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we miss you we remember

B - ma - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los ex-tra - ña - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los re-cor - da - mos, \_\_\_\_\_ los a -  
you we miss you we remember

*marcato*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

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**A lot of hard work  
and creativity went  
into bringing this  
music to you...**



**...and some of it  
was even mine.**

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106

S  
ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ Ex - ten - de - mos nues - tras ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_  
*hands*

A  
ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ Ex - ten - de - mos nues - tras ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_  
*hands*

T  
- de - mos nues - tras ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ Ex - ten - de - mos nues - tras  
*our hands*

B  
- de - mos nues - tras ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ Ex - ten - de - mos nues - tras  
*our hands*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

110

S  
nues - tras ma - nos, o - fre - cien - do  
*p* **meno mosso** *offering* **rit.**

A  
nues - tras ma - nos, o - fre - cien - do  
*p* *offering*

T  
ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ nues - tras ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ o - fre - cien - do  
*p* *offering*

B  
ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ nues - tras ma - nos, \_\_\_\_\_ o - fre - cien - do  
*p* *offering*

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

**D** **A Tempo**

114 *dolce, of course* **p**

S pan, cho - co -  
bread chocolate

A *dolce, of course* **p** pan, cho - co -  
bread chocolate

T *dolce, of course* **p** pan, cho - co -  
bread chocolate

B *dolce, of course* **p** pan, cho - co -  
bread chocolate

*p dolce, of course*

*Red.*

116

S - la - te,

A - la - te, los re - ga - los más pre - cia -  
the gifts most tender

T - la - te,

B - la - te,

*Red.* *Red.*

12

119

A

- dos de nues - tros jar - di - - nes.\*  
from our gardens

121

rit.

**E** meno mosso

124

*p*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

130

**A Tempo**

S

A

T

B

*p*

Las som - bras no nos res - pon - den,  
The shadows not to us respond

Las som - bras no nos res - pon - den,  
The shadows not to us respond

ten. ten.

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

\* For musical reasons, I used the plural of garden here, "jardines," instead of "jardín." -E.A.

135

S *whispered: p*  $\overbrace{\text{no nos res - pon - den,}}^3$   
*not to us respond*

A ni co - men, pe - ro son -  
*neither eat but smile*

T *whispered: p*  $\overbrace{\text{no nos res - pon - den,}}^3$   
*not to us respond*

B ni co - men, pe - ro son -  
*neither eat but smile*

*Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.*

140

S *mp*  $\overbrace{\text{im - per - cep - ti - ble}}^3$  co - mo  
*imperceptible as*

A  $\overbrace{\text{- rí - en de for - ma}}^3$   $\overbrace{\text{im - per - cep - ti - ble}}^3$  co - mo  
*in the way imperceptible as*

T *mp*  $\overbrace{\text{im - per - cep - ti - ble}}^3$  co - mo  
*imperceptible as*

B  $\overbrace{\text{- rí - en de for - ma}}^3$   $\overbrace{\text{im - per - cep - ti - ble}}^3$  co - mo  
*in the way imperceptible as*

*Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.*

14

144 *mf*

S  
 siem - pre son - ríe la muer - te, — son-ríe a - sí que de re-  
 always smile the dead so that

A  
 siem - pre son - ríe la muer - te, — son-ríe a - sí que de re-  
 always smile the dead so that

T  
 siem - pre son - ríe la muer - te, — son-ríe a - sí que de re-  
 always smile the dead so that

B  
 siem - pre son - ríe la muer - te, — son-ríe a - sí que de re-  
 always smile the dead so that

*Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

148 *f warm, bright*

S  
 - pen - - te — los to - ma - tes bri - - llan — en la ca -  
 suddenly the tomatos gleam in the bowl

A  
 - pen - - te — los to - ma - tes bri - - llan — en la ca -  
 suddenly the tomatos gleam in the bowl

T  
 - pen - - te — los to - ma - tes bri - - llan — en la ca -  
 suddenly the tomatos gleam in the bowl

B  
 - pen - - te — los to - ma - tes bri - - llan — en la ca -  
 suddenly the tomatos gleam in the bowl

*f* *Ped.* *Ped.*

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16

156

*legatissimo mf*

S del vien - to den - tro de no -  
of the wind inside of us

A del vien - to den - tro de no -  
of the wind inside of us

T - ri - - cia del vien - to, del vien - to den - tro de no -  
of the wind inside of us

B - ri - - cia del vien - to, den - tro de no -  
of the wind inside of us

*Red.*

159

S - so - tros es más fres - ca, es más fres - ca y más  
is more cool and more

A - so - tros es más fres - ca, es más fres - ca y más  
is more cool and more

T - so - tros es más fres - ca, es más fres - ca, y más  
is more cool and more

B - so - tros es más fres - ca, es más fres - ca, y más  
is more cool and more

*Red.* *Red.*

163 *freely mp*

Solo *freely mp*  
 y (se - gu - ra de que los mú - si - cos\_ han lle -  
 and certain that the musicians have arrived

S dul - - ce,  
 sweet

A dul - - ce,  
 sweet

T dul - - ce,  
 sweet

B dul - - ce,  
 sweet

*colla voce mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

166 *poco accel.* *A Tempo*

Solo  
 - ga - do por fin)  
 at last

S

A *mf*  
 los  
 the

T *mf*  
 los  
 the

B

*with forward motion mf*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

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177

S *mp*  
 — han lle - ga - do, — me le -  
 / rise

A *mp*  
 — han lle - ga - do, — me le -  
 / rise

T *mp*  
 — han lle - ga - do, — me le -  
 / rise

B *mp*  
 — han lle - ga - do, — me le -  
 / rise

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

182

S  
 - van - to de mi si - lla y co - mien - zo, y co - mien - zo a bai -  
 from my chair and begin to dance

A  
 - van - to de mi si - lla y co - mien - zo, y co - mien - zo a bai -  
 from my chair and begin to dance

T  
 - van - to de mi si - lla y co - mien - zo, y co - mien - zo a bai -  
 from my chair and begin to dance

B  
 - van - to de mi si - lla y co - mien - zo, y co - mien - zo a bai -  
 from my chair and begin to dance

pedal with right hand

186

Solo *mf* a bai -

S *mf* - lar, a bai - lar,

A *mf* - lar, a bai - lar, a bai - lar,

T *mf* - lar, a bai - lar, a bai - lar,

B *mf* - lar, a bai - lar,

*strumming, like a guitar*

*mf*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

190

Solo lar, y co-mien - zo a bai - lar,

S y co-mien- zo, y co - mien - zo a bai -

A y co-mien- zo, y co - mien - zo a bai -

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

194

S - lar, a bai - lar, a bai -

A - lar, a bai - lar, a bai -

T *espressivo* los a - ma - mos, los ex-tra - ña - mos,

B *espressivo* los a - ma - mos, los ex-tra - ña - mos,

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

198

S - lar, y co - mien - zo a bai - lar. *rit molto* *meno mosso*

A - lar, a bai - lar, y co - mien - zo a bai - lar.

T los re - cor - da - mos, los re - cor- *mp*

B los re - cor - da - mos, los re - cor- *mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

**rallentando molto***whispered, trailing off naturally  
as singers run out of breath.*

202

S/A

T

B

bai - lar... bai -

da - mos, — los ex - tra - ña - mos, —

da - mos, — los ex - tra - ña - mos, —

Ped.

205

S/A

T

B

- lar... bai - lar...

los a - ma - mos.

los a - ma - mos.

Ped. Ped. Ped.

209

Tutti

**p** *whispered, with staggered entrances:*

bailar... bailar... bailar...

8va