

To Make a Prairie

Emily Dickinson

SSA choir and piano



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

To make a prairie it takes a clover and one bee —
One clover, and a bee,
And revery.
The revery alone will do,
If bees are few.

Emily Dickinson

Composer’s Note: Emily Dickinson’s deceptively simple poem holds up three essential ingredients of creation: clover, bee, and revery. The clover is the raw material, the bee is its faithful courier, and the revery is...um...what exactly?

Revery is a luscious, old-fashioned word suggesting dreaming, imagination, and wonder. But when I first encountered this poem, I mistook it for an archaic form of “reverence,” which felt surprisingly apt. Meanwhile, my husband read the word as “revelry” – and I had to admit that celebration is pretty crucial, too!

Revery, reverence, or revelry? However it lands for you, Dickinson reminds us that creation is not about the mechanics. It springs from a mysterious, ineffable spark we can only imagine.

Performance Note: Whatever you do, don’t stress about about the meterless *senza misura* measure! Just enjoy singing it.

Cover: “Bee and Clover” was created especially for this publication by Jonathan Machen.

Jonathan lives in Boulder, Colorado with his wife and two children. He takes his inspiration from the people around him and the beauty of the Rocky Mountains and the American Southwest. Jonathan also manages the Solstice Center LLC, a healing arts facility in Boulder. Other loves are playing with his kids, playing guitar, backpacking, photography, skiing, bicycling and kayaking.



To see more of Jonathan’s art visit www.jonathanmachen.com

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(♩ = 52-56)

S I

S II

A

Pno

clear, bell-like

p

Red.

r.h.

5

Tutti

p

To make a prai - - rie, _____

Red.

l.h.

r.h.

9

Tutti

To make a prai - - - rie, _____

Red.

12
Tutti

it takes a clo - - ver

Ped.

15
Tutti

and one bee.

Ped.

18
S I
S II
A

One clo - ver, one clo - ver

One clo - ver, one clo - ver

One clo - ver, one clo - ver

Ped.

Ped.

Opal Palmer Adisa, poet • Paul Adams, technological hero • Stephen Alexander, lyric consultant • Ginny Allen, Agile coach and friend • The great people at American Composers Forum • Yehuda Amichai, poet • A. R. Ammons, poet • Jennifer Anderson, conductor and composer advocate • Scott Bates, poet • Abbie Betinis, initiator of collaborative endeavors • Beth Norton, conductor and composer advocate • Dennis Blubaugh, more than just a music dealer • Michael deVernon Boblett, poet • Edna Busby, my first piano teacher • Ray Bradbury, writer • Augustin Cadena, translator • Norbert Capek, minister and advocate for religious freedom • Jessica Corbett, editor • David Cummings, poet • Philip Dacey, poet • Catherine Dalton, composer and scrum partner • Emily Dickinson, poet • Evelyn Dudley, poet and caregiver • Rob Eller-Isaacs, minister and composer advocate • Ralph Waldo Emerson, philosopher and poet • Louise Erdrich, writer • David Allan Evans, poet • Sophia Lyon Fahs, writer • Richard M. Fewkes, minister and writer • Pasha Gertler, poet • Jack Gallagher, composer and teacher • Paul Gerike, proofreader • Jocelyn Hagen and Michael Hagan, founders of Graphite Marketplace • Steve Harper, just about everything • Steve Harkins, web designer • Edie Hill, composer and friend • Langston Hughes, poet • Margaret and George Heald, piano technician • Karel Husa, composer and teacher • David Ignatow, poet • Kabir, mystic • Linda Kachelmeier, composer and scrum partner • Ruth Palmer, conductor and composer advocate • Joan Wolf Prefontaine, poet • Paul Rardin, conductor and composer advocate • Kalidasa, poet • Steve Kaul, recording engineer • Søren Kierkegaard, philosopher and poet • Dorothy Knost, piano teacher • Ben Krywosz, artistic director of Nautilus Music-Theater • Denise Levertov, poet • George Ella Lyon, poet • Jonathan Machen, vocalist • Dawna Markova, writer • Anne Matlack, conductor and composer advocate • Nancy Menk, composer advocate • Edna St. Vincent Millay, poet • Jane Ramseyer Miller, conductor, composer, social activist • Joe Mish, conductor and composer advocate • J. David Moore, composer • Gerald Rich, poet • Carl Sandburg, poet • friend • King Sigismund III, religious reformer • Ann Silsbee, composer, poet and friend • Simon Alexander-Adams, sounding board, fellow creative, and awesome son • Steven Stucky, composer and teacher • Rabindranath Tagore, poet • Sister Peronne Marie Thibert, teacher and writer • Oliver Alexander-Adams, unconventional thinker and light of my life • Howard Thurman, civil rights leader and writer • Everyone whose work supports the Association for Unitarian Universalist Music Ministries • Charles Varney, high school choral director • Anna Vonhuben, illustrator and graphic designer • Nancy White, poet • John Greenleaf Whittier, poet • Theodore Chickering Williams, poet • Daniel Winter, pianist and teacher • Nancy Wood, poet • Yehudi Wyner, composer and teacher

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



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

**This page has been intentionally omitted.
(You know why.) A complete perusal score may be
purchased through any music store or dealer.**

Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

The Music of Elizabeth Alexander

www.seafarerpress.com

Freely, floating

29 *p dolce*

S I re - ve - ry, and re - - - -

S II re - ve - ry, and re - - - -

A * re - ve - ry, and re - - - -

ped. *ped.*

* Altos, your first instinct will be to sing a B \flat in measure 29.. You get extra points for every time you nail the C \flat !

32 *p*

S I - - - - ve - ry, and

S II - - - - ve - ry, and

A - - - - ve - ry, and

ped.

35

S I
re - - - - - ve - - ry.

S II
re - - - - - ve - - ry.

A
re - - - - - ve - - ry.

mp

Red.

Senza misura

37 *pp ethereal* , *pp*

Tutti
The re - ve - rie a - lone will do. If

pp

A tempo

38

Tutti
bees are bees few.

p

Red.

Selected Choral Music by Elizabeth Alexander

- A Palette To Paint Us As We Are** (Gerald Rich)
SATB, piano • SSA, piano
- Beware the Winter Settlin' In** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, Celtic band, opt. unison children's choir
- Blessed Be the Flower That Triumphs** (Michael Boblett)
SATB a cappella • SATB, orchestra
- Cherish Your Doubt** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • SSAA, piano
- Die Gedanken Sind Frei** (German protest song, arr.)
SATB, piano • vocal duet, piano
- Do Not Leave Your Cares at the Door** (Norman Naylor)
SATB a cappella • TTBB a cappella
- Even a Fist Was Once an Open Palm** (Yehuda Amichai)
SATB a cappella
- Faith Is the bird that feels the light** (Rabindranath Tagore)
SSA a cappella • SATB a cappella
- Fighting Over What We Believe** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, soloists, piano • SSA, soloists, piano
- Finally On My Way To Yes** (Pesha Gertler)
SSATB, piano
- Folks, I'm Telling You** (Langston Hughes)
SSATB, piano
- Get Curious** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSAA a cappella
- Glen Song** (Scott Bates)
SSATB, piano
- Grace** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • SSA, piano
- Handles** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSA, piano
- How To Sing Like a Planet** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • TBB, piano
- If You Can Walk You Can Dance** (Zimbabwean Proverb)
SAB, piano, claves • TBB, piano, claves
SSA, piano, claves • SATB, piano, claves
- Immortal Love** (John Greenleaf Whittier)
SATB a cappella
- Infant Holy, Infant Lowly** (Polish carol, arr.)
SSA a cappella
- Jump!** (Ray Bradbury)
SSA, piano • SSA, string quartet
- Kindling** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SATB, piano • SATB, chamber ensemble
- Let it Matter** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSA, piano • SATB, piano
- Like a Leaf** (Wendell Berry)
SATB, piano
- No Other People's Children** (Elizabeth Alexander)
1-4 part choir, soloist, piano
- ...or a musician** (Philip Dacey)
SATB, orchestra
- A Palette To Paint Us As We Are** (Gerald Rich)
SA, piano • SATB, piano
- Praise Wet Snow Falling Early** (Denise Levertov)
SATB, piano
- Reasons for the Perpetuation of Slavery** (Alexander)
SSAA a cappella
- Same Birds** (David Allen Evans)
SATB a cappella
- Sing Me Awake** (Gregory Orr)
SATB, piano, string quartet • SATB, piano, string orchestra
- Song of Kabir** (Kabir)
SATB a cappella
- The Gate is Open** (Sister Peronne Marie Thibert)
SATB a cappella
- They Have Freckles Everywhere** (Elizabeth Alexander)
SSAA, piano
- To Make a Prairie** (Emily Dickinson)
SSA, piano
- We Give Thanks for Being** (Traditional)
1-4 part choir, piano
- We Lift Up Our Hearts** (Richard Fewkes)
Unison children's choir, SATB, piano
- We Remember Them** (Sylvan Kamens, Jack Riemer)
SATB, piano
- Where there Is Light in the Soul** (Chinese proverb)
SAB a cappella • SATB a cappella
SSA a cappella • TBB a cappella
- When the Song of the Angels Is Stilled** (Howard Thurman)
SATB a cappella • TTBB a cappella
SSAA a cappella • SATB, flute
- Why I Pity the Woman Who Never Spills** (Joan Prefontaine)
SSAA a cappella

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