

# I Write this Poem out of Darkness

George Ella Lyon

SSA (with soloists), flute, violin and piano



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Elizabeth Alexander

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## Growing Light

I write this poem  
out of darkness  
to you  
who are also in darkness  
because our lives demand it.

This poem is a hand on your shoulder  
a bone touch to go with you  
through the hard birth of vision.  
In other words, love  
shapes this poem

is the fist that holds the chisel,  
muscle that drags marble  
and burns with the weight  
of believing a face  
lives in the stone  
a breathing word in the body.

I tell you  
though the darkness  
has been ours  
words will give us  
give our eyes, opened in promise  
a growing light.

George Ella Lyon

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**George Ella Lyon** grew up in the mountains of Kentucky, the daughter of a dry cleaner and a community worker. She has written over 30 books for children and adults in the forms of poetry, memoir and novel, as well as two plays. She maintains an active schedule leading writing workshops and giving talks at schools, arts programs, conferences and community events all over the country, making dozens of appearances every year. The mother of two sons, she makes her home in Lexington, Kentucky.

For more information, visit: [georgeellalyon.com](http://georgeellalyon.com)

**Elizabeth Alexander** spent her childhood in the Carolinas and Appalachian Ohio. Her passion for language, and in particular for modern American poems, is reflected in her catalogue of over 60 choral works, with performances by over 1000 choirs. Reviews of her vocal music have commented on “the close personal resonance between the composer and the words,” her music’s “delicacy and sincerity,” and its “elegance, subtle, unexpected harmonic turns, and...freshness within a well-known language.” Her many commissions include works for orchestras, chamber ensembles and choruses. Also the mother of two sons, Alexander lives in St. Paul, Minnesota.

For more information, visit: [www.elizabethalexander.com](http://www.elizabethalexander.com)

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- for Ann Silsbee -

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# I Write This Poem Out Of Darkness

George Ella Lyon

Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = 36 - 40)

Flute

Violin *sul G*  
*p*  
(dark - ness... out of dark - ness...)

S I

S II

A

Piano (♩ = 36 - 40) *delicate, pellucid*  
*p*  
Ped.

6

Vln

Pno

Ped.

Ped.

9

Vln

Pno

Ped.

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2

12

Vln

Pno

*mf*

*mf*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

14

Vln

Pno

*intensely*

*port.*

*mf*

*molto rit.*

*mf*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

17

Vln

Pno

*a tempo*

*gently*

*port.*

*a tempo*

Ped. Ped.

20

Vln

Pno

*with increasing intensity*

Ped. Ped.

22

Vln *f*

Solo I *f strong, solitary*

I write this po - em out of dark - ness,

Pno *f* *bell-like* *mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

26

Solo II *mp warmly, tenderly*

I write this po - em out of dark - ness,

Pno *p* *pp*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

29

Solo III *mf expansively, generously*

I write this po - em out of dark - ness to

Pno *mf* *pp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

Con moto

33 *mf*

Solo III  
you who are al - so in dark - ness,

S I  
you who are al - so in dark - ness, you who are

S II  
you who are al - so in dark - ness,

A  
you who are al - so in

Con moto

Pno  
*mf*

Ped.

38

S I  
al - so in dark - ness, you are in dark - ness,

S II  
you who are al - so in dark - ness, dark - ness,

A  
dark - ness, you who are al - so in dark - ness,

Pno  
Ped.



6

50 *f*

S I you, who are al - so in dark - ness,

S II you who are al - so in dark - ness,

A you, who are al - so in dark - ness,

Pno *f*

*Ped. sempre*

53

Fl. *f*

Vln *mf*

S I You who are al - so, are al - so in dark - ness

S II You who are al - so, are al - so in dark - ness *p subito*

A You who are al - so, are al - so in dark - ness

Pno



Fl.

Vln

S I *p subito*  
be - cause our lives, our lives de - mand it.

S II *p subito*  
be - cause our lives, our lives de - mand it.

A *p subito*  
be - cause our lives, our lives de - mand it.

Pno *p*

Fl. *mp*

Vln

Pno *p*

(♩ = 54) (♩ = ♩.) \*

Fl. *mp*

Pno *mp*

*Ped.* \* The pace of the quarter notes in m. 66 should be exactly the same as the pace of the previous measure's triplets.

70 *mp*

S II This po - em is a hand on your shoul - der.

A This po - em is a hand on your shoul - der.

Pno *mp*

*Ped.* *Ped.*

74 *mp*

Fl. *mp*

Pno *mp*

*Ped.* *Ped.*

78

Fl.

S I *mp*  
This po - em is a bone touch\_\_\_\_\_ to go with you through the

S II *mp*  
This po - em is a bone touch to go with you, with you through the

A *mp*  
This po - em is a bone touch to go with you, with you through the

Pno

82

Fl.

S I *mp* *f* *mf*  
hard birth, the hard birth of vi - sion, of vi - sion,

S II *f* *mf*  
hard\_ birth, the hard\_ birth of vi - sion, of vi - sion,

A *f* *mf*  
hard\_ birth, the hard\_ birth of vi - sion, of vi - sion,

Pno *f* *mp*  
Ped. Ped.



94 11

Fl. *rall.*

S I  
oth - er words, in oth - er words, in oth - er words,

S II  
words, in oth - er words, in oth - er words, in oth - er words,

A  
in oth - er words, in oth - er words, in oth - er words,

Pno *rall.*

*Ped.* *tre corde*

97 *a tempo*

Fl. *mf*

S I *f*  
Love shapes this po - em, is the fist that holds the chi - sel, is the

S II *f*  
Love shapes this po - em, is the fist that holds the chi - sel, the chi - sel, the

A *f*  
Love shapes this po - em, is the fist that holds the chi - sel, the chi - sel, the

Pno *a tempo* *mf*

*Ped.* *Ped.*

101 **meno mosso**

Solo IV and

S I mus - cle that drags, drags, drags, mar - ble,

S II mus - cle that drags drags, drags, mar - ble,

A mus - cle that drags, drags, drags, mar - ble,

Pno **meno mosso**

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

**meno mosso**  
warmly: let your voice have some folk music inflection here

104

Solo IV burns with the weight of be - liev - ing a face lives in the stone, in the

Pno *mf*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

108 **A tempo** *pp*

S I A breath - ing word \_\_\_\_\_ in the

S II stone. A breath - ing word \_\_\_\_\_ in the

A A breath - ing word \_\_\_\_\_ in the

Pno *pp*

Ped. Ped.

113 (♩ = 36) \*

Vln *p*

S I bo - dy. \_\_\_\_\_

S II bo - dy. \_\_\_\_\_

A bo - dy. \_\_\_\_\_

Pno (♩ = 36) \*

Ped. Ped.

\* The pace of the quarter notes in m. 115 should be exactly the same as the pace of the previous measure's dotted quarter notes.

14

119

Vln

S I *pp*  
I tell you, \_\_\_\_\_ I tell you, \_\_\_\_\_ I tell you

S II *pp*  
I tell you, \_\_\_\_\_ I tell you, \_\_\_\_\_ I tell you

A *pp*  
I tell you, \_\_\_\_\_ I tell you, \_\_\_\_\_ I tell you

Pno

*ped.* *ped.* *ped.*

123

Fl.

S I  
though the dark - ness \_\_\_\_\_ has been ours, \_\_\_\_\_

S II  
though the dark - ness \_\_\_\_\_ has been ours, \_\_\_\_\_

A  
though the dark - ness \_\_\_\_\_ has been ours, \_\_\_\_\_

Pno

*p* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *ped.*



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**...AND SOME OF IT WAS EVEN MINE.**

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136

Fl.

S I *mf* o - pened in pro-mise, a grow - ing light.

S II *mf* a grow - ing

A

Pno *sfz* *Ped.* *Ped.*

139

Fl. *mf* *port.*

S I

S II

A *mf*

Pno *sfz* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.* *Ped.*

143

Fl. *mf*

Vln *mf*

Pno

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

147

Fl. *dolce* *mp* *p*

Vln *mp*

Pno *mp* *p*

*Ped. sempre*

152

Fl. *pp*

Vln *p* (out of dark-ness...)

Pno *ppp*