

A Love Like That

Hafiz, rendered by Daniel Ladinsky

low voice and piano



Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

The Sun Never Says

Even
After
All this time
The sun never says to the earth,

“You owe
Me.”

Look
What happens
With a love like that,
It lights the
Whole
Sky.

Hafiz
translated and adapted by Daniel Ladinsky

From the Penguin publication, “The Gift: Poems by Hafiz,” copyright 1999 by Daniel Ladinsky.
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Composer’s Note: As a scholar, I am inclined to carefully scrutinize the texts I set to music, making sure they are authentic, accurate and properly attributed. My years of university training lead me to research sources, question assertions, and take great care with facts. However, as a composer, my behavior is more apt to resemble that of an eager lover or bright-eyed magpie. I say this with neither pride nor shame, but instead with self-knowledge, for artists are well known to love shiny things: beauty, delight, patterns, color, intoxicating sounds, musical turns of phrase, and ideas which open the mind and heart.

It was with both minds that I approached the lyrical and engaging work of poet Daniel Ladinsky. Neither a purist nor an academic, Ladinsky’s popular Hafiz-inspired renderings have inspired passionate debate among poetry lovers, Sufi scholars, and Farsi speakers, all trying to ascertain to what extent these poems are translations, as opposed to original poems. For this reason, I waited a long time before setting a Hafiz/Ladinsky poem to music — but in the end, the magpie in me won out. Spontaneous gratitude knows no restraint: I composed this song as a simple offering to the power of limitless generosity, in honor of my parents’ 50th wedding anniversary. -E.A.

Growing up in the Carolinas and Appalachian Ohio, **Elizabeth Alexander** gained her first love of language and music from her parents, a minister and a piano teacher. These twin passions are reflected in her catalogue of over 100 choral and vocal pieces, which have received over 20 national and international awards, and which have been performed by thousands of choirs. Her composition teachers have included Jack Gallagher at The College of Wooster, and Steven Stucky, Yehudi Wyner and Karel Husa at Cornell University, where she received her doctorate in music composition.

A recent McKnight Composition Fellow, Elizabeth lives in St. Paul, MN, where her frequent commissions include works for orchestra, chorus, chamber ensembles and solo musicians. In addition to composing, Elizabeth teaches little fingers to play, shamelessly encourages her teenagers’ jokes, and tends her garden during the three month period in Minnesota that is not winter. She believes she has the best job in the world.

Cover Art: “Ancient Sun” by Margaret Storer-Roche. Used by permission of the artist. All rights reserved.



For Margaret and George Alexander, after all this time.

A Love Like That

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(♩ = 108-116) Lovingly

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8

9 10 11 12

p warmly
E-ven af-ter all this time, e-ven af-ter all this time, e-ven af-ter

13 14 15 16

all this time.

17 18 19 20

E-ven af-ter all this time, the sun nev-er says to the earth,

21

the sun nev-er says to the

Ped.

26

earth, "You owe me,"

Ped. Ped.

32

A

mp with even more warmth

E - ven af - ter all, af - ter all this

mp

Ped. Ped.

36

time, all this time, E -

Ped. Ped.

40

- ven af - ter all this time, the sun nev - er says to the

Ped. Ped. Ped.

B Brightly, più mosso

63

Look what hap-pens with a love like that,

*

Ped.

67

Look what hap-pens with a love like that,

*

Ped.

71

Look what hap-pens with a love like that,

legatissimo

6

5

6

5

6

5

*

Ped.

Ped.

Senza Misura - very freely

No counting, accounting, discounting or calling to account, from here to the end of the piece.

However, you may count yourself fortunate, if you wish.

75

It lights the whole sky,

Repeat this and subsequent ascending scales an indefinite number of times, *colla voce*

6

5

p

Depending on the piano and performance space, use of *una corda* pedal may be effective.

76

It lights the whole sky,

77

First time only *mf*

Play lower octave the first time, and higher octave on repeats

It lights the whole sky,

78

pp

E - ven af - ter all this time, a love like that lights the

p

Ped. *Ped.*

Here, piano and voice are not synchronized in any way, other than that of love.

whole sky.

Slowly, thoughtfully

8va

p

Ped.

Songs of Elizabeth Alexander

* The Eternal One (Ralph Waldo Emerson, adapted)	SEA-093-00
Die Gedanken Sind Frei (16 th c. German protest song, arr.) [<i>duet</i>] alto, baritone, piano	SEA-087-01
A Garret of Old Playthings (Carl Sandburg) soprano and piano	SEA-028-00
I Write This Poem Out of Darkness (George Ella Lyon) SSA trio, flute, violin, piano	SEA-024-01
* A Love Like That (Hafiz, translated/adapted by Daniel Ladinsky)	SEA-094-00
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My Aunt Gives Me a Clarinet Lesson (Gregory Djanikian) soprano, flute, clarinet, violin, cello, piano, percussion	SEA-053-00
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