



# Let it Matter

SATB and piano



# Elizabeth Alexander

*Seafarer Press*

## Let it Matter

Lyrics and Music by Elizabeth Alexander

You've got your own story –  
You and everybody else have got a bone story.  
Sunrise certain and touchstone true.  
A homegrown story that you've known  
ever since you could say the words for  
“us” and “them” and “you.”  
But every story's got a flip side –  
Underneath the surface there's a rip tide  
Powerful and yet denied.  
To know the story of a stranger:  
That can be a mighty re-arranger.  
Let it be a downright game changer.

REFRAIN:

Let that story in. Let it matter.  
Let it open up the prison of your mind.  
There's so much pain and glory in everybody's story –  
Let it matter. Let it in.

Let it lead to honest conversation.  
Let it shape the things you say and do.  
Let it be the bridge that heals a nation.  
No matter what you've been through.  
Your own point of view  
Is just a little part of what is true.  
Don't be afraid to let that story in.

REFRAIN

It's about the fears that lead to fences.  
It's about the dreams that fall apart.  
It's about what builds up our defenses.  
You've got to open your heart  
Your most tender part  
You'll find yourself alone until you start –  
Until you start to let that story in.

This is the work of justice.  
This is the work of trust.  
This is the work that is asked of us today.  
No one would ever call this “easy listening” –  
Listen anyway.

REFRAIN

No one would ever call this “easy listening.”

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## Composer's Note on *Let it Matter*

Singing is a hopeful and revolutionary act. This is especially true when songs bend toward the difficult and unfamiliar, for that is when music's grace gives us access to things that words alone can't express.

*Let It Matter* grew out of my own experience of facing some unfamiliar and difficult things. As a "white American" I had always known that my life experiences were different from those of people of color. Nevertheless, I found that I had an inner resistance to believing that racism was deeply entrenched in my country's law enforcement departments. I had never witnessed or experienced police brutality myself, so it was tempting for me to presume that it was a rare occurrence. Yet evidence increasingly showed that that was clearly not the case. This concerned me greatly. I had some work to do.

While I was wrapping my head around this appalling reality, something else began to concern me. In their zeal to be heard and effect change, some protesters issued sweeping condemnations of absolutely everyone in law enforcement, or even everyone identifying as white. I worried that such blanket accusations could shut down the very conversations that might bring about change.



Cover art by Guy Denning  
[www.guydenning.com](http://www.guydenning.com)

Over time I came to realize that both of these world views were deeply rooted in authentic personal experience. Because of this, both held important pieces of the truth. But neither one encompassed the whole truth. As the opening lyric of *Let It Matter* asserts, "Every story has a flip side."

A third source of inspiration for *Let it Matter* was Circle of Peace, a neighborhood group that has met at my church for dinner every week for the past ten years. Circle of Peace is comprised of youth, parents, grandparents, police officers, business owners and community members. The agenda of these meetings is simple: To listen to and to speak personal stories, experiences and concerns in order to create a safer, more compassionate, and more just world.

It is an act of courage to simultaneously hold your own story and someone else's story in your hands with gentleness, without dismissing either one. But that is exactly what the members of Circle of Peace endeavor to do. I hope *Let it Matter* reflects in some way the dedication, pain, grit and hope that keep that circle alive week after week. I do know that for me, writing this song brought me a few steps closer to "opening up the prison of my mind."

# Let it Matter

SATB and piano

Straightforward, passionately  
(Somewhere around ♩ = 100)

Elizabeth Alexander

S  
A  
T  
B

*mp*  
You've got your  
*mp*  
You've got your

G C/G B<sup>b6</sup> F<sup>9/A</sup> G C/G B<sup>b6</sup> F<sup>9/A</sup>

*mp*

Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped

5  
S  
A  
T  
B

*mp*  
sun - rise cer - tain and touch - stone true.  
*mp*  
sun - rise cer - tain and touch - stone true.

own sto - ry; You and ev' - ry - bo - dy else have got a bone\* sto - ry. A

own sto - ry; You and ev' - ry - bo - dy else have got a bone\* sto - ry. A

G C/G B<sup>b6</sup> F<sup>9/A</sup> G C/G B<sup>b6</sup> F

Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped Ped

\* Go ahead and slide up from the minor 3rd into blue notes such as these. Make 'em twang a little bit.

9

S "us" and "them," and "you."

A "us" and "them," and "you."

T home - grown sto - ry that you've known ev - er since you could say the words for "us" and "them," and "you."

B home - grown sto - ry that you've known ev - er since you could say the words for "us" and "them," and "you."

G C/G B<sup>6</sup> F<sup>9</sup>/A G B<sup>6</sup>

Red. Red. Red. Red.

12

S *mp* But ev' - ry sto - ry's got a flip side,

A *mp* But ev' - ry sto - ry's got a flip side,

T

B

C<sup>omit 1</sup> *mf* *mp*

Red. Red.

15

"stealth notes"\*

*mf*

S (un - der - neath the sur - face) there's a rip - tide pow - er - ful and yet de - nied. \_

A "stealth notes"\*

*mf*

(un - der - neath the sur - face) there's a rip - tide pow - er - ful and yet de - nied. \_ To know the

T *mp*

*mf*

un - der - neath the sur - face there's a rip - tide pow - er - ful and yet de - nied. \_ (To know the

B *mp*

*mf*

un - der - neath the sur - face there's a rip - tide pow - er - ful and yet de - nied. \_ (To know the

B $\flat$  F $\sharp$ /A G C/G B $\flat$ /F F

*mf*

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

18

*sfz*

S That can be a migh - ty re - ar - rang - er. Let it be a down - right game chang

A *sfz*

strug - gle of a stran - ger: That can be a migh - ty re - ar - rang - er. Let it be a down - right game chang

T *sfz*

strug - gle of a stran - ger) That can be a migh - ty re - ar - rang - er. Let it be a down - right game chang

B *sfz*

strug - gle of a stran - ger) That can be a migh - ty re - ar - rang - er. Let it be a down - right game chang

C/E G/D C G/B B $\flat$  B $\flat$ /F F

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

\* What are "stealth notes"? I'm glad you asked. They are little cue notes which you may sing quietly during early rehearsals, until you learn to confidently pull your next entrance note out of the air.

22 *f*

S - er, Oh let that sto - ry in, -

A - er, Let it in, let it in, Oh let that sto - ry in, -

T - er. Let it in, Oh let that sto - ry in.

B - er. Let it in, Oh let that sto - ry in, -

*F/E<sup>b</sup> Eb D<sup>7</sup>(sus4)*

*Ped. Ped.*

**A** 26 *mp*

S — Let it mat - ter, Let it o - pen up the pri - son of your mind, There's so much

A — Let it mat - ter, Let it o - pen up the pri - son of your mind, There's so much

T Let it in, let it mat - ter, Let it o - pen up the pri - son of your mind.

B — Let it mat - ter, Let it o - pen up the pri - son of your mind.

*C<sup>9</sup>(sus4) D<sup>7</sup>(sus4) G C<sup>9</sup>(sus4) D<sup>7</sup>(sus4) G*

*mp Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.*

30

S pain\_ and glo - ry in ev'-ry- bo- dy's sto - ry: Let it mat-ter, \_ let it in. \_ Let that sto - ry in.

A pain and glo - ry in ev'-ry- bo- dy's sto - ry: Let it mat-ter, \_ let it in. \_

T

B

C/E D/F# F C/E C C/D G<sup>9</sup> *espressivo*

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

**B**

34

S

A Let it lead to hon - est con-ver - sa - tion. \_ Let it shape the things \_ you say and \_

T Let that sto - ry in, \_ to shape the things \_ you say and

B

C<sup>(9/11/14)</sup> C G<sup>(9/11/14)</sup> G C<sup>(9/11/14)</sup> C

*mp*

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



Let it Matter (SATB and piano) - Choral Score

37

S Let it in, let it in, No mat - ter

A do. No mat - ter

T do. Let it be the bridge that heals a na - tion. No mat - ter

B Let it be the bridge that heals a na - tion. No mat - ter

G(sus4) G C G(sus4) G

Ped. Ped. Ped.

40

S what you've been through, your own point of view is just a lit - tle part of what is

A what you've been through, your own point of view is just a lit - tle part of what is

T what you've been through, your own point of view is just a lit - tle part of what is

B what you've been through, your own point of view is just a lit - tle part of what is

Am7 G/B C G/B Am7 G/B

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

42

S true, don't be a - fraid to let that stor - y in, —

A true. don't be a - fraid to let that stor - y in, —

T true, don't be a - fraid to let that stor - y in, —

B true. don't be a - fraid to let that stor - y in, —

F9(b) D7(sus4)

Ped. Ped.

**C**

44

S *mf* Let it in, —

A *mf* Let it in, — Let it mat - ter. Let it o - pen up the pri-son of — your mind. *mf*

T *mf* There's so much

B *mf* — Let it mat - ter. Let it o - pen up the pri-son of — your mind. There's so much

C9(sus4) D7(sus4) G C9(sus4) D7(sus4) G

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

48 *mp*

S Oh, Oh, Let it mat-ter, let it in, let it in.

A *mp*  
Oh, Let it mat-ter, let it in, let it in, let it in.

T pain and glo - ry in ev'-ry-bo-dy's sto - ry: Oh, let it in, let it in, let it in.

B pain and glo - ry in ev'-ry-bo-dy's sto - ry: Oh, let it in.

C/E D/F# F C/E C C/D G°

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

**D**

52 *mp* *mf*

S — Oh, It's a-bout the dreams that fall a - part.

A *mp*  
— Oh, let that sto - ry in,

T *mp*  
— Oh, let that sto - ry in.

B *mf* *mp*  
It's a-bout the fears, that lead to fenc - es. Oh,

C°(sus4) C G°(sus4) G C°(sus4) C

*mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped.

Let it Matter (SATB and piano) - Choral Score

55

S It's a-bout what builds up our de - fen - ses. You've got to

A Oh, It's a-bout what builds up our de - fen - ses. You've got to

T Oh, It's a-bout what builds up our de - fen - ses. You've got to

B Let it in. let it in. You've got to

*mf*

G<sup>9</sup> C<sup>(95US4)</sup> C G<sup>(95US4)</sup> G

Ped

58

S o - pen your heart, the most ten - der part, you'll find your - self a - lone un - til you

A o - pen your heart, the most ten - der part, you'll find your - self a - lone un - til you

T o - pen your heart, the most ten - der part, you'll find your - self a - lone un - til you

B o - pen your heart, the most ten - der part, you'll find your - self a - lone un - til you

Am<sup>7</sup> G/B C G/B Am<sup>7</sup> G/B

Ped

60 *f*

S start, un - til you start to let that sto - ry in (n)...

A start, un - til you start to let that sto - ry in (n)...

T start. Oh,

B start. Oh,

*f*

F#6 D7(b9b4)

*f*

*ped.*

**E**

62 *pp* *p (but very intensely)*

S This \_\_\_ is the work\_ that is aske

A *pp* *p (but very intensely)*

T *p (but very intensely)* This is the work of jus-tice. this is the work of trust, this \_\_\_ is the work\_ that is aske

B *p (but very intensely)* This is the work of jus-tice. this is the work of trust, this \_\_\_ is the work\_ that is aske

C/E G/D C'

*p*

*ped.*

65

S of us to - day.

A of us. *mp* No - one would ev - er call this "eas - y lis - ten - ing."

T of us to - day.

B of us. *mp* No - one would ev - er call this "eas - y lis - ten - ing."

G/B C Am<sup>7</sup> G/B G

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

68

S *mp* Lis - ten an - y - way, Lis - ten an - y - way, \_\_\_\_\_

A *mp* Lis - ten an - y - way, \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* Let it in...

T *mp* Lis - ten an - y - way, \_\_\_\_\_

B Lis - ten an - y - way, \_\_\_\_\_ *mf* Let it in...

F<sup>omit3</sup> F<sup>omit3</sup> Am<sup>7</sup> Em D<sup>7sus4</sup>

*mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

**F**

Let it Matter (SATB and piano) - Choral Score

72 Solo or Tutti: *mf*

S Let it mat - ter, \_\_\_\_\_

A Let it mat - ter, Let it o - pen up the pri-son of your

T *mf* Let it in, let it mat - ter, Let it o - pen up the pri-son of your

B Let it mat - ter, Let it o - pen up the pri-son of your

*mf*

C<sup>9</sup>(sus4) D<sup>7</sup>(sus4) G C<sup>9</sup>(sus4) D<sup>7</sup>(sus4)

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

75 Tutti:

S Let it in, Oh let it in let it in,

A mind. There's so much pain and glo - ry in ev' - ry - bo-dy's sto - ry:

T mind. There's so much pain and glo - ry in ev' - ry - bo-dy's sto - ry:

B mind. Oh.

G C<sup>9</sup>/E D/F# F C/E

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

78 *insistently*

S — let it in, let it in, let it in, Oh, let it in, let it in. —

A Let it mat-ter, — let it mat - ter, — let it mat - ter, let that stor - y mat - ter.

T Oh, let it mat - ter, — let it mat - ter, let that stor - y mat - ter.

B *insistently*  
Oh, let it in, let it in, let it in, — let that stor - y mat - ter.

Am<sup>7</sup> G/B C G/D

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

82 *with reverence*

S Let that stor-y mat - ter, let it in. —

A *with reverence*  
Let that stor-y mat - ter, let it in. —

T *with reverence*  
Let that stor-y mat - ter, let it in. —

B *with reverence*  
Let that stor-y mat - ter, let it in. —

C/E D/F G G/B F/C

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Keep pedal depressed for the remainder of the piece.



86 *p* sing directly to the audience

S  
No - one would ev - er call this "eas - y lis - ten - ing."

A

T  
*p* sing directly to the audience  
No - one would ev - er call this "eas - y lis - ten - ing."

B  
*p* sing directly to the audience  
No - one would ev - er call this

F<sup>9</sup>/C G<sup>7</sup>add<sup>9</sup>/D F<sup>9</sup>/C

*p*

89 *pp*

S  
No - one would ev - er call this

A  
*p* sing directly to the audience  
No - one would ev - er call this "eas - y lis - ten - ing."

T  
*pp*  
No - one would ev - er call this "eas - y lis - ten - ing."

B  
*pp*  
"eas - y lis - ten - ing."

G<sup>7</sup>add<sup>9</sup>/D F<sup>9</sup>/C G<sup>7</sup>add<sup>9</sup>/D

*pp*

92

S "eas - y lis - ten - ing."

A *pp*

T

B

Singers: gradually and unobtrusively close vowel to "ng"

F#m/C G7add9/D F#m/C

95

S niente

A niente

T niente

B niente

*rallentando*

G7add9/D