

# Four Afro Cuban Poems

Odaline de la Martinez

poems by Nicolás Guillén

for Mezzo-Soprano & String Quartet

## Four Afro Cuban Poems

Music Odaline de la Martinez

Texts by Nicolas Guillen

### Búcate Plata

Búcate Plata  
búcate plata  
Porque no doy un paso má:  
etoy a arró con galleta  
na má.

Yo sé bien como etá to,  
Pero viejo, hay que comer:  
búcate plata,  
búcate plata,  
porque me voy a correr.

Ya dirán que yo soy mala,  
Y no me querrán tartar,

Zapato nuevo  
tanto reló  
Con tanto lujo mi viejo  
qué va!

### Tú No Sabe Inglés

Con tanto inglés que tú sabía  
Vito Manué,  
con tanto inglés, no sabe ahora  
decir: ye

Lamericana te buca  
y tú le tiene que hui  
tu inglés era de trái guan  
de trái guan y guan tu tri..

Vito Manué, tú no sabe inglés,  
tú no sabe inglés,  
tu no sabe ingle.

No te namore más nunca  
No te namore jamá.

Vito Manué  
si no sabe ingle,  
si no sabe inglés!

**Sigue**

Camina, caminante

Sigue;

camina y not te pare,

sigue.

Cuando pase por tu casa

no le diga que me viste

camina, caminante

camina y no te pare

no le diga que me viste:

sigue:

acuerdate de que e mala

mala, mala.

**Mi Chiquita**

La Chiquita que yo tengo

tan bonita como é

no la cambio por ninguna

por ninguna otra mujer,

Ella lava, plancha, cose,

cómo cocina!

Si la vienen a bucar,

pa bailar o

pa comer

ella tiene que llevarme

que llevarme o traer.

Ella me dice: Mi Santo,

tu negra no se te va:

búcame

búcame santo

pa gozar!

**Four AfroCuban Poems** is based on four poems taken from Nicolas Guillen's *Motivos de Son* (1930.) The work was strongly influenced by his meeting that year with the African American poet Langston Hughes.

*Motivos de son* mirrors the speech, music and highly rhythmic Afro Cuban language. Most of the poems are about the relationships between a man and a woman.

*Búcate Plata* is sassy and with attitude. A woman tells her lover to go find some money, so she can eat because she's down to rice and crackers. She knows things are not good, but if they don't get better, she's leaving. Her man has new shoes and a beautiful watch. No way!

*Tú No Sabe Inglés* A woman teases and tells Victor Manuel to stop boasting about his English because he doesn't even know how to say "yes". An American woman is looking for him, but he must get away because his English is down to strike one, two, three. She warns him not to fall in love with her because he doesn't speak English.

*Sigue* Is a short poem where a man warns another to keep walking, not to stop and talk to a certain woman. She's no good, no good.

*Mi Chiquita* Mi Chiquita means my little woman. It's joyful and looks at the Afro Cuban Culture from a 1930s-man point of view.

My little woman is so wonderful I wouldn't trade her for another one. She does the laundry, irons, sews and How she cooks!! When they invite her to dance or to dinner, she always comes to get me. She calls me Mi Santo (my saint)" I'll never leave you, she says. Come and get me so we can pleasure each other".

**Nicolás Guillén** (10 July 1903 – 17 July 1989) was a Cuban poet, journalist, political activist, and writer. He is best remembered as the national poet of Cuba.

Born in Camagüey, he studied law at the University of Havana, but abandoned a legal career working as both a typographer and journalist. His poetry was published in various magazines from the early 1920s, when Afro-Cuban sounds and instruments were changing the world of Cuban music and Afro-Cuban culture began to be expressed in art and literature as well. Guillén is probably the best-known representative of the "*poesía negra*" ("black poetry"), which tried to create a synthesis between black and white cultural elements. It was not until the 1930s that Guillén's poetry was acknowledged by many critics as the most influential of those Latin American poets who dealt with African themes and re-created African song and dance rhythms in literary form. He would express in literary terms a personal account of the struggles, dreams, and mannerisms of Afro-Cubans.

Guillen made his mark internationally with the publication of his first collection *Motivos de son* (1930). It was inspired by the living conditions of Afro-Cubans and the popular *son* music, drawing from *son* music in his poetry. The work consists of eight short poems using the everyday language of the Afro Cubans. The collection stood out in the literary world because it emphasized and established the importance of Afro-Cuban culture as a valid genre in Cuban literature.

**Bucate Plata: Pizzicato instructions for Violins I & II: Bow down, Pinch string with thumb and forefinger and pizz upwards to create a percussive, buzzy sound.**

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# Búcate plata

Poem: Nicolás Guillén

Odaline de la Martinez

$\text{♩} = 108$  Sassy, with attitude

Mezzo- Soprano

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

pinch pizz.

pinch pizz.

pizz.

arco battuto

*f*

5

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*f*

9

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 9 through 12. The M-S. part is silent, indicated by a horizontal line. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts play quarter notes in the second and fourth measures, with accents (>) and a 'v' marking. The Vla. part plays eighth notes in the first and third measures, with accents (>) and a 'v' marking. The Vc. part plays eighth notes in the first and third measures, with accents (>) and a 'v' marking.

13

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

Detailed description: This system contains measures 13 through 16. The M-S. part is silent, indicated by a horizontal line. The Vln. I and Vln. II parts play quarter notes in the second and fourth measures, with accents (>) and a 'v' marking. The Vla. part plays eighth notes in the first and third measures, with accents (>) and a 'v' marking. The Vc. part plays eighth notes in the first and third measures, with accents (>) and a 'v' marking.

17 *f*

M-S. *Bú-ca-te pla-ta, \_\_\_\_\_ Bú - ca-te pla-ta, \_\_\_\_\_*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

21

M-S. *por que no doy un pa-so má. \_\_\_\_\_*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

25 *mf* 5

M-S. *mf*  
 'Toy a - rró con ga-lle-ta, — A - rró con ga-lle-ta, —

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

29 *f* *mf*

M-S. *f* *mf*  
 Na má — Yo bien sé có-moes tá

Vln. I *mf* *mp*

Vln. II *mf* *mp*

Vla. *mf* *mp*

Vc. *mf* *mp*

6 33

M-S. *tó Yo bien sé có-moe-tá tó, Pe-ro vie-jo,—*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

37

M-S. *Hay que co-mé: Bú - ca-te Pla-ta, Bú*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*f*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

41

M-S. *- ca-te Pla-ta, Por que me voy a co-rré.*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

45

M-S. *mf*  
*Ya di-rán que yo soy ma-la,*

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla.

Vc. *mp*

*mp*

8 49 *f*

M-S. Y no me que rrán tra - tá, Za-pa-to nue-vo\_\_\_\_\_

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

53

M-S. — Tan-to re-ló, Con tan-to lu-jo mi vie-

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

57 9

M-S. jo, Qué va! \_\_\_\_\_

Vln. I *f*

Vln. II *f*

Vla. *f*

Vc. *f*

61

M-S.

Vln. I *diminuendo al fine* *p*

Vln. II *diminuendo al fine* *p*

Vla. *diminuendo al fine* *p*

Vc. *diminuendo al fine* *p*

# Tu no sabe inglés

Poem: Nicolás Guillén

Odaline de la Martinez

**♩=69 Teasing**

Mezzo-soprano

Violin I

*mf*

Violin II

*mf*

Viola

*mf*

Violoncello

*mf*

6

M-S.

Vln. I

*poco f*

Vln. II

*poco f*

Vla.

*poco f*

Vc.

*poco f*

9 **A** *mf*

M-S. *mf*

Con tan-toin-glé que tú sa-bí-a, Con tan-toin-glé que tú sa-bí-a, Bi-to Ma-nué

**A**

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

12

M-S.

Con tan-toin-glé que tú sa-bí-a, Con tan-toin-glé, no sa-bea-ho-ra

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

15

M-S. *de-sí ye. \_\_\_\_\_ La-me-ri-ca-na te bu-ca, La-me-ri-ca-na te bu-ca,*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

19

M-S. *y tú le tie-ne queu hi: y tú le tie-ne queu hi: Tuin-glé e - ra de trái*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

**B** *f*

**B**

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

22

M-S.

guan de trái guan y guan tu tri...

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

25

M-S.

Tuín-glé e - ra de trái guan de trái guan y guan tu tri...

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

28 *mf*

M-S. *mf*

Con tan-toin-glé que tú sa-bí-a, Con tan-toin-glé que tú sa-bí-a,

Vln. I *mp*

Vln. II *mp*

Vla. *mp*

Vc. *mp*

31

M-S.

Bi-to Ma-nué \_\_\_\_\_ Con tan-toin-glé que tú sa-bí-a,

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

34

M-S.    
Con tan-toin-glé, no sa-bea-ho-ra de - sí ye.

Vln. I 


Vln. II 


Vla. 


Vc. 


Detailed description: This system contains five staves. The top staff is for the vocal soloist (M-S.) and includes the lyrics 'Con tan-toin-glé, no sa-bea-ho-ra de - sí ye.' The melody features a triplet of eighth notes. The four instrumental staves (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc.) provide a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth-note patterns and rests.


37

M-S.    
La-me-ri-ca-na te bu - ca, La-me-ri-ca-na te bu - ca, y tú le tie-ne queu hi

Vln. I 

Vln. II 

Vla. 

Vc. 

Detailed description: This system contains five staves. The top staff is for the vocal soloist (M-S.) and includes the lyrics 'La-me-ri-ca-na te bu - ca, La-me-ri-ca-na te bu - ca, y tú le tie-ne queu hi'. The melody features a triplet of eighth notes. The four instrumental staves (Vln. I, Vln. II, Vla., and Vc.) provide a rhythmic accompaniment with eighth-note patterns and rests.

40

*f*

M-S. y tú le tie-ne queu hi Tuin-glé e - ra de trái guan de trái guan y guan

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

43

M-S. tu tri... Tuin-glé e - ra de trái guan de trái guan y guan

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

47

M-S. tu tri. — Bi - to Ma - nué tu - no sa - bein short

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

**C**

**C**

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

*mf*

50

M-S. glé tu - no sa - bein - glé tu - no sa - bein - glé tu - no sa - bein - glé tu - no sa - bein - glé

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

53

M-S. *short*

Bi-to Ma-nué tu-no sa-bein-glé tu-no sa-bein-glé tu-no sa-bein

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc. *mf*

56

M-S. glé tu-no sa-bein-glé tu-no sa-bein - glé

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

59

M-S. *No te-na-mo-re ma nun ca, No te-na-mo-re ma nun ca, no te-na-mo-re ja-má*

Vln. I *mf/p*

Vln. II *mf/p*

Vla. *mf/p*

Vc. *mf/p*

62

M-S. *no te-na-mo-re ja-má Bi-to Ma-nué si no sa-bein-glé si no sa-bein-glé si no sa-bein*

Vln. I *mf/p*

Vln. II *mf/p*

Vla. *mf/p*

Vc. *mf/p*

short

65

M-S.

glé si no sa-bein-glé si no sa-bein - glé!

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*f*

# Sigue

Poem: Nicolás Guillén

Odaline de la Martinez

♩=48 Distant, Shimmering

Mezzo-soprano

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

con. sord.

*pp*

7

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mp*

Ca-mi-na, \_\_\_\_\_ ca-

13

M-S. *mi-na, ca-mi-nan-te si-gue; ca - mi-nay no te pa-re,*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

18

M-S. *Si gue.*

Vln. I *Non legato*

Vln. II *mp Non legato*

Vla. *mp Non legato*

Vc. *mp Non legato*

*mp*

23

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

28

*Legatissimo*

M-S.

Cuan-do pa-se por tu ca-sa— no le di-ga que me vis-te:—

Vln. I

*pp*

Vln. II

*pp*

Vla.

*pp*

Vc.

*pp*

33

M-S. ca-mi-na ca-mi-nan-te, Ca-mi-nay no te pa-re,

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

37

M-S. no le di-ga que me vis-te: si-gue:

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

41

M-S. *a-cuér-da-te de queé ma-la, ma-la, ma-la.*

Vln. I *senza sord.*

Vln. II *senza sord.*

Vla. *senza sord.*

Vc. *senza sord.*

# MI CHIQUITA

26

Poem: Nicolás Guillén

Odaline de la Martinez

$\text{♩} = 72-74$  *Leggiero e molto ritmico*

**Tempo Giusto**

*mf*

Mezzo-soprano

La-chi-qui - ta que\_ yo ten-go, tan bo-ni - ta co - mo e,  
*Joyful*

$\text{♩} = 72-74$  *Leggiero e molto ritmico*  
**Tempo Giusto**

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

3

M-S.

No la cam - bio por\_ nin-gu - na, por nin-gu - nao - tra\_ mu-jer.


Vln. I


Vln. II

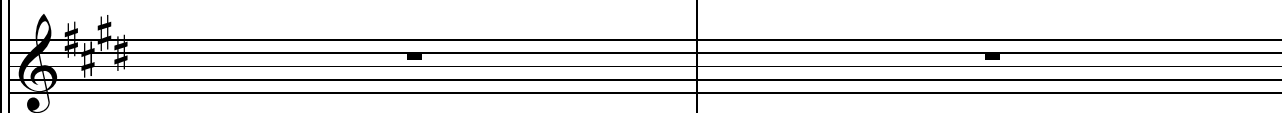
Vla.

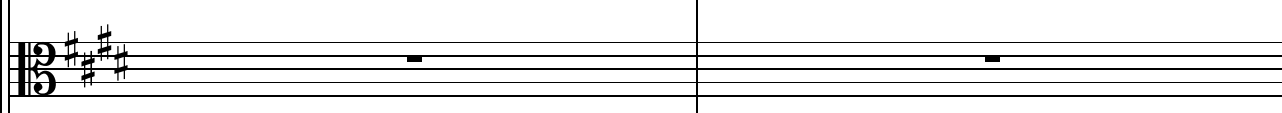
Vc.

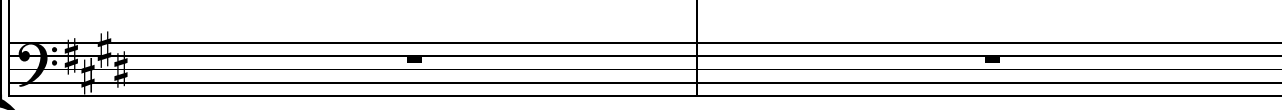
5

M-S.   
E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co-se, co-se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci - na!


Vln. I 


Vln. II 

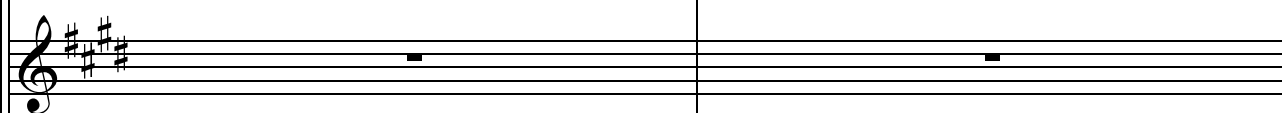
Vla. 

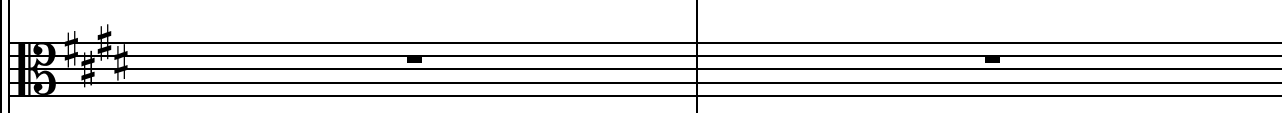
Vc. 

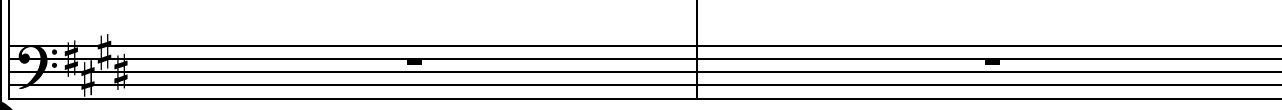
7

M-S.   
E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co-se, co-se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci - na!

Vln. I 

Vln. II 

Vla. 

Vc. 

9

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

12

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

15

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

*f*

18

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

*f*

20 *mf*

M-S. Si-la vie - nen a\_\_ bu-car, pa bai-lar o pa-co-me,

Vln. I

Vln. II (*mp*)

Vla.

Vc.

23

M-S. e - lla tie - ne que\_\_ lle-var - me, que lle-var - me o\_\_ tra-er.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

25 *mf*

M-S. *mf*  
Si - la vie - nen a\_\_ bu-car, pa bai - lar o pa\_\_ co-me,

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *(mp)*

Vc.

27

M-S.  
e - lla tie - ne que\_\_ lle-var - me, que lle-var - me o\_\_ tra - er.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

29 *f*

M-S. *E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co-se, co-se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci- na!*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *f*

31 *f*

M-S. *E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co-se, co-se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci- na!*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

33

M-S. *mf* *f* *mf*  
 E - lla me\_\_ di - ce\_\_ MI SAN-TO Tu ne-gra no se\_\_ te vá;

Vln. I

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc.

35

M-S. *f* *mf*  
 E - lla me\_\_ di - ce\_\_ MI SAN-TO Tu ne-gra no se\_\_ te vá;

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

37

M-S. *bu - ca - mé\_ bu - ca - mé SAN-TO Pa go - za\_ y pa\_ go - za!*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

39

M-S. *bu ca mé\_ bu-ca-mé SAN-TO Pa go - za, pa go - za, pa go - za, pa go - za!*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

*f* *ff*

*f* *f*

# MI CHIQUITA

## Alternative Transposition

Poem: Nicolás Guillén

Odaline de la Martinez

$\text{♩} = 72-74$  *Leggiero e molto ritmico*  
Tempo Giusto

Mezzo-soprano *mf*

La-chi-qui - ta que\_ yo ten-go, tan bo-ni - ta co - mo e,  
*Joyful*

$\text{♩} = 72-74$  *Leggiero e molto ritmico*  
Tempo Giusto

Violin I

Violin II

Viola

Violoncello

M-S. <sup>3</sup>

No la cam - bio por\_ nin-gu - na, por nin-gu - nao - tra\_ mu-je.


Vln. I


Vln. II

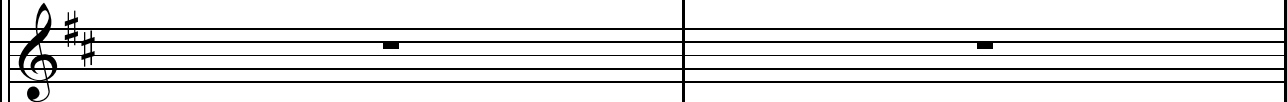
Vla.

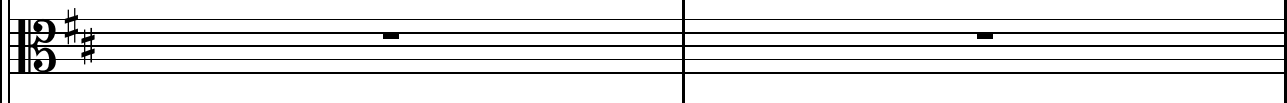
Vc.

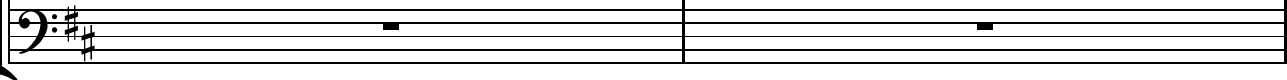
5

M-S.   
E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co-se, co-se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci - na!

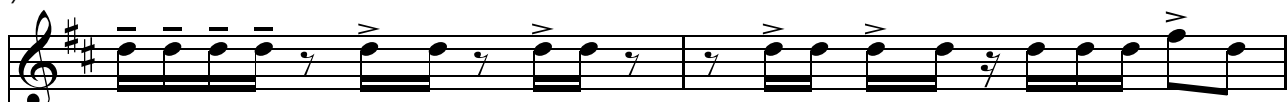
Vln. I 


Vln. II 

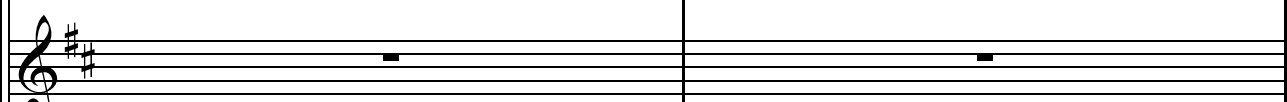
Vla. 

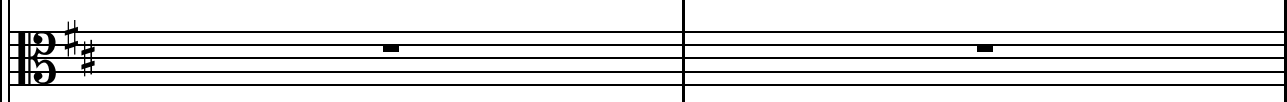
Vc. 

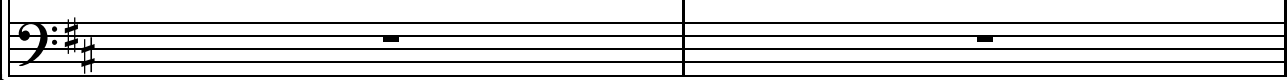
7

M-S.   
E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co-se, co-se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci - na!

Vln. I 

Vln. II 

Vla. 

Vc. 

9

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mf*

*mf*

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 9, 10, and 11. The key signature is two sharps (F# and C#). The M-S. part is silent. Vln. I plays a continuous eighth-note pattern starting in measure 9 with a *mf* dynamic. Vln. II is silent in measures 9 and 10, then enters in measure 11 with a similar eighth-note pattern, also marked *mf*. Vla. and Vc. are silent throughout.

12

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mf*

Detailed description: This system of musical notation covers measures 12, 13, and 14. The key signature remains two sharps. Vln. I continues its eighth-note pattern. Vln. II continues its eighth-note pattern, which begins in measure 12. Vla. enters in measure 13 with a sixteenth-note pattern, marked *mf*, and continues in measure 14. Vc. remains silent.

15

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

*mp*

*mp*

*mp*

*f*

18

M-S.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

20 *mf*

M-S. *mf*  
Si-la vie - nen a - bu-car, pa-bai-lar o pa-co-me,

Vln. I

Vln. II *(mp)*

Vla.

Vc.

23

M-S.  
e - lla tie - ne que - lle-var - me, que lle-var - me o - tra - er.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

25 *mf*

M-S. *mf*  
Si - la vie - nen a\_\_ bu-car, pa bai - lar o pa\_\_ co-me,

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla. *(mp)*

Vc.

27

M-S.  
e - lla tie - ne que\_\_ lle-var - me, que lle-var - me o\_\_ tra - er.

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

29 *f*

M-S. *E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co se, co se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci- na!*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *f*

31 *f*

M-S. *E-lla la-va, plan-cha, co se, co se, plan-cha, co-mo co-ci- na!*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

33 *mf* *f* *mf*

M-S. E - lla me\_\_ di - ce\_\_ MI SAN-TO Tu ne-gra no se\_\_ te vá;

Vln. I

Vln. II *mf*

Vla. *mf*

Vc.

35 *f* *mf*

M-S. E - lla me\_\_ di - ce\_\_ MI SAN TO Tu ne-gra no se\_\_ te vá;

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

37

M-S. *bu - ca - mé\_\_ bu - ca - mé SAN-TO Pa go - za\_\_ y pa\_\_ go - za!*

Vln. I

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc.

39

M-S. *bu ca - mé\_\_ bu - ca - mé SAN-TO Pa go - za, pa go - za, pa go - za, pa go - za!*

Vln. I *mf*

Vln. II

Vla.

Vc. *mf*

*f* *ff*

*f* *f*