

Judith Shatin

LA Frontera

For SSAA Choir & Piano

Poem by Unidentified Detained Immigrant Youth



**La Frontera (The Border)*

Translation by Seth Michelson

*un lugar a que todo el mundo
vamos al tener un sueño
y ver a mi familia feliz*

*pero no nos dejan llegar a la
frontera por ser de otro país*

*y me pregunto por qué
si todos somos seres
humanos somos los
mismos
no tenemos papeles
porque estamos en el mismo
mundo tenemos sentimientos
iguales*

*el color de piel es diferente
pero eso no quiere decir que no
somos iguales es que en este país en
mi país
hay mucha gente racista*

*el ser blanco, el ser
negro no quiere decir*

*que somos iguales
somos todos iguales
tenemos la misma
mente la misma
meta*

*el caminar días por el
desierto al inmigrar nos
agarra*

*a place the whole world
goes when we dream
and want to see our families happy*

*but they don't let us reach
the border because we're from
other countries*

*and I ask myself why
if we're all human
beings if we're all
the same don't we
have papers too
because we're all in the same
world have the same feelings*

*though our skin colors may differ
but that doesn't mean we're not
the same it means that in this
country in my country there are
lots of racists*

*to be white, to be black
doesn't mean we are
unequal*

*we're equal
we have the same
thoughts the same
goal*

*to walk for days across the
desert called to immigrate*

Program Note

La Frontera (The Border) is a poem by an undocumented immigrant youth held in an American maximum security detention center. Sadly, we cannot know the identity of the author due to government restrictions. I was drawn to set this poem because it captures the stark realities of the immigration process as well as the powerful desire to immigrate to America. As the granddaughter and wife of immigrants, indeed as a citizen of the United States, I am deeply aware of both the astonishing and ongoing contributions of immigrants as well as the despicable treatment so many experience. Why do we forget our own status as immigrants or descendants of immigrants, and then deny the status of those who descend from indigenous peoples?

This poem, and the others published in the collection *Dreaming America: Voices of Undocumented Youth in Maximum Security Detention* was written during workshops for immigrant youths in detention led by poet Seth Michelson. Some were created in collaboration with students from Washington and Lee University; others benefitted from visits by guest artists Jimmy Santiago Baca and Ricardo Dominguez. Larry Moffi, publisher of Settlement House Books, brought the book, *Dreaming America* to fruition, and kindly granted permission to set this poem. Profits from the book sales are donated to the Detained Children's Program of the Capital Area Immigrants' Rights Coalition (www.caircoalition.org) as will be profits from this composition. For more information visit www.judithshatin.com –JS

*From *Dreaming America: Voices of Undocumented Youth in Maximum-Security Detention*, used by kind permission of poet Seth Michelson and Larry Moffi, publisher of Settlement House Books, First Edition, ©2017.

Duration: 4:30

La Frontera

Unidentified Detained Immigrant Youth

Judith Shatin

Strong ♩ = 68

Sop. 1 & 2

Alto 1 & 2

Piano

f

La fron -

La fron -

5

S 1/2

A 1/2

Pno.

te - ra, la fron - te - ra, la fron - te - ra, fron - te - ra, fron -

te - ra la fron - te - ra la fron - te - ra fron - te - ra, fron

8

S 1/2

A 1/2

Pno.

te - ra un lu - gar a que to - do el mun - do va - mos —

te - ra un lu - gar a que to - do el mun - do va - mos —

S 1/2 *mf*
al te - ner un sue - ño, te - ner un

A 1/2 *mf*
al te - ner un sue - ño te - ner un

Pno. *mf*
al te - ner un

S 1/2 *f*
sue - ño y ver a mi fa - mi - lia fe - liz

A 1/2 *f*
sue - ño y ver a mi fa - mi - lia fe - liz

Pno. *f*

S 1/2 **21** *cresc.*
Pe - ro no, pe - ro no, pe - ro no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no,

A 1/2 *cresc.*
Pe - ro no, pe - ro no, pe - ro no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no,

Pno. *cresc.*

25 *ff* *f*

S 1/2 no, no, no, no, no pe - ro no, nos de - jan lle - gar

A 1/2 no, no, no, no, no pe - ro no, nos de - jan lle - gar

Pno. *ff* *f*

29

S 1/2 a la fron - te - ra por ser de o - tro pa - ís

A 1/2 a la fron - te - ra por ser de o - tro pa - ís

Pno.

33

S 1/2 Y me pre - gun - to por qué si to - dos so - mos

A 1/2 Y me pre - gun - to por que si to - dos so - mo

Pno. *mf*

S 1/2
se - res hu - ma - nos so - mos los mis - mos *f*

A 1/2
se - res hu - ma - nos so - mos los mis - mos *f*

Pno.
f

S 1/2
no te - ne - mos pa - pe - les, pa - pe - les,

A 1/2
no te - ne - mos pa - pe - les pa - pe - les

Pno.

S 1/2
por - que e - sta - mos *mp* *mf*
te - ne - mos, te - ne - mos sen - ti -

A 1/2
mp *mf*
en el mis - mo mun - do te - ne - mos, te - ne - mos, sen - ti

Pno.
mp *mf*

49

S 1/2
 mien - tos i - gua - les, i - gua - les, i - gua - les *f*

A 1/2
 mien - tos i - gua - les, i - gua - les, i - gua - les *f*

Pno.

53

S 1/2
 el co - lor de piel *mf*

A 1/2
 el co - lor de piel *mf*

Pno.

57

S 1/2
 es di - fe - ren - te Pe - ro es - so no *f*

A 1/2
 es di - fe - ren - te Pe - ro es - so no *f*

Pno.

61 *mf*

S 1/2
quie - re de - cir que so - mos i - gua - les

A 1/2
quie - re de cir que so - mos i - gua - les

Pno. *mf*

65 *mf*

S 1/2
es - que en es - te pa - ís, en mi pa -

A 1/2
es - que en es - te pa - ís, en mi pa -

Pno. *mf*

69 *f*

S 1/2
is hay mu - cha gen - te ra -

A 1/2
is hay mu - cha gen - te

Pno. *f*

73 *ff*

S 1/2
cis - ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta ra - cis - ta

A 1/2
cis - ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta ra - cis - ta

Pno. *ff*

77 *poco più mosso* *mp*

S 1/2
el ser blan - co

A 1/2
el ser

Pno. *p* *mp*

84 **Assertive** *f*

S 1/2
no quie - re de - cir que so - mos i - gua - les

A 1/2
ne - ro no quie - re de - cir que so - mos i - gua - les

Pno. *f*

90 *mf*

S 1/2 Te - ne - mos la mis - ma men - te, — la mis - ma me - ta —

A 1/2 Te - ne - mos la mis - ma men - te, — la mis - ma me - ta —

Pno. *mf*

Resigned ♩ = 68

95

S 1/2

A 1/2

Pno. *mf*

Resigned ♩ = 68

103 *p*

S 1/2 el ca - mi - nar di - as,

A 1/2 el ca - mi - nar di - as

Pno. *mp*

108 *mp*

S 1/2 ca - mi - nar, ca - mi - nar di - as por el de - sier - to

A 1/2 *mp* ca mi - nar, ca - mi - nar di - as por el de -

Pno. *mp*

115 *mf* *cresc.*

S 1/2 al in - mi - grar nos a -

A 1/2 *mf* *cresc.* sier - to al in mi - grar nos a -

Pno. *mf* *cresc.*

122 *f*

S 1/2 ga - rra nos a - ga - rra al

A 1/2 *f* ga - rra nos a - ga - rra al

Pno. *f*

126

S 1/2 *mf*
in - mi - grar, al ca - mi - nar di - as

A 1/2 *mf*
in - mi - grar, al ca - mi - nar di - as

Pno. *mf*

130

S 1/2 *mp* *p*
al ca - mi - nar di - as, al ca - mi - nar di - as,

A 1/2 *mp* *p*
al ca - mi - nar di - as, al ca - mi - nar di - as

Pno. *mp*

137

S 1/2 *pp* *n*
di - as di - - - as.

A 1/2 *p* *pp* *n*
di - as di - - - as

Pno. *p* *pp* *p*