

# Judith Shatin

## LA Frontera

For TTBB 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](http://www.caircoalition.org)) as will be profits from this composition. For more information visit [www.judithshatin.com](http://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

Tenor 1 & 2

Bass 1 & 2

Piano

**f**

La fron -

**f**

La fron -

5

T 1/2

B 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

T 1/2

B 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 —

12 *mf*

T 1/2 al te - ner un sue - ño, te - ner un

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

Pno. *mf*

17 *f*

T 1/2 sue - ño y ver a mi fa - mi - lia fe - liz

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

Pno. *f*

21 *cresc.*

T 1/2 Pe - ro no, pe - ro no, pe - ro no, no, no, no, no, no, no, no,

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

Pno. *cresc.*

25 *ff* *f*

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

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

Pno. *ff* *f*

29

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

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

Pno.

33

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

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

Pno. *mf*

37

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*f*

se - res hu - ma - nos so - mos los mis - mos

se - res hu - ma - nos so - mos los mis - mos

41

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

no te - ne - mos pa - pe - les, pa - pe - les,

no te - ne - mos pa - pe - les pa - pe - les

45

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*mp* *mf*

por - que e - sta - mos te - ne - mos, te - ne - mos sen - ti -

*mp* *mf*

en el mis - mo mun - do te - ne - mos, te - ne - mos, sen - ti

45

*mp* *mf*

49

T 1/2

8

mien - tos i - gua - les, i - gua - les, i - gua - les

B 1/2

mien - tos i - gua - les, i - gua - les, i - gua - les

Pno.

53

T 1/2

8

el co - lor de piel

B 1/2

el co - lor de piel

Pno.

57

T 1/2

8

es di - fe - ren - te Pe - ro es - so no

B 1/2

es di - fe - ren - te Pe - ro es - so no

Pno.



61 *mf*

T 1/2  
8  
que - re de - cir que no so - mos i - gua - les

B 1/2  
*mf*  
que - re de cir que no so - mos i - gua - les

Pno.  
*mf*

65 *mf*

T 1/2  
8  
es - que en es - te pa ís, en mi pa -

B 1/2  
*mf*  
es - que en es - te pa - ís, en mi pa -

Pno.  
65

69 *f*

T 1/2  
8  
is hay mu - cha gen - te ra -

B 1/2  
*f*  
is hay mu - cha gen - te

Pno.  
*f*

73

T 1/2

cis - ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta ra - cis - ta

B 1/2

cis - ta, ra - cis - ta, ra - cis - ta ra - cis - ta

Pno.

*ff*

77

*poco più mosso*

T 1/2

el ser blan - co

B 1/2

el ser

Pno.

*p*

*mp*

84

T 1/2

no - que - re de - cir que no so - mos i - gua - les -

B 1/2

ne - ro - no - que - re de - cir que no so - mos i - gua - les -

Pno.

*f*

**Assertive**

90

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*mf*

Te - ne - mos la mis - ma men - te, — la mis - ma me - ta —

Te - ne - mos la mis - ma men - te, — la mis - ma me - ta —

Resigned ♩ = 68

95

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*mf*

Resigned ♩ = 68

103

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*p*

*mp*

el ca - mi - nar di - as,

el ca - mi - nar di - as

108 *mp*

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

B 1/2  
ca - mi - nar, ca - mi - nar di - as por el de -

Pno. *mp*

115 *mf* *cresc.*

T 1/2  
al in - mi - rar nos a -

B 1/2  
sier - to al in - mi - rar nos a -

Pno. *mf* *cresc.*

122 *f*

T 1/2  
ga - rra, nos a - ga - rra al

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

Pno. *f*

126

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*mf*

in - mi - grar, al ca - mi - nar di - as

in - mi - grar, al ca - mi - nar di - as

*mf*

130

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*mp*

al ca - mi - nar di - as, al ca - mi - nar di - as,

al ca - mi - nar di - as, al ca - mi - nar di - as

*mp*

*p*

137

T 1/2

B 1/2

Pno.

*pp*

di - as di - - - as.

di - as di - - - as

*p*

*pp*

*p*

*n*