

N-400
Erasure
Songs

for SATB chorus

Melissa Dunphy

Poetry by Laurel Chen,
Niina Pollari, and Melissa Dunphy

13 min

2021

Commissioned by Cantus

Arranged for the South Bend Chamber Singers 2023



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Erasure poetry is created by blacking out portions of a pre-existing text to create a new work. Each of the poems in this cycle uses and reshapes text from the N-400, the application form that foreign-born "aliens" submit to the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to be naturalized and become citizens of the United States.

1. Form N-400 Erasures

Niina Pollari

Do you
Have
awful
association s

Have you been in
total
terror

Yes/No

If you
EVER claim in writing or any other way
to
have no
country
are you
confined

2. N-400 (an erasure)

Laurel Chen

i.
notice: any immigration
notice: hearing
notice: see
notice: you

ii.
to the immigrant :
homeland is
a process
delayed.

iii.
fingerprints disposable
a number unpermitted
immigrants: are
all of the above

iv.
about the United States:
do not
support
the criminal history

v.
you are what
you have
abandoned

vi.
identify: alien
copy: self

vii. separate your open wounds in the process

viii. verify:
all has been destroyed

ix. naturalization can not capture your free
can not level your personal for political

x. this application simplified
is persecution of your own safety to ensure social security

xi. reschedule
reschedule
reschedule
reschedule
a time
time
time
again time
time
date and
time

xii. resubmit
resubmit
resubmit

xiii. please

xiv. you will never belong

3. change [y]our Country Melissa Dunphy

you Are Home
this IS where you live now
Home
your space
Your **Time**
Your History

How many have been
persecuted
occupied
arrested
detained charged
Have Been
Failed
lied to
removed, excluded
deported

but you did not
f al t e r
you
are willing
you
are true
release
re form
prepare
S t a n d Firm

you
are the best of u s
you will b re a the
free

N-400 Erasure Songs: 1

Form N-400 Erasures
Poetry by Niina Pollari

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Adagio ♩ = 66

Musical score for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, measures 1-6. The score is in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo is Adagio, marked with a quarter note equal to 66 beats per minute. The Soprano and Alto parts feature a rhythmic pattern of eighth notes with accents, alternating between 'Yes.' and 'No.'. The Tenor and Bass parts have a more melodic line, with the Tenor starting with 'Oo...' and the Bass with 'Do you have?'. Dynamics include *p* (piano) and *sim.* (sostenuto).

Soprano
Yes. No. Yes. No. Yes. No.

Alto
Yes. No. Yes. No. Yes. No.

Tenor
Oo. Do you have?

Bass
Oo. Do you have?

Musical score for Soprano, Alto, Tenor, and Bass, measures 7-10. The Soprano part continues with the 'Yes. No.' pattern. The Alto part has a melodic line with a *p* dynamic. The Tenor part has a melodic line with a *p* dynamic. The Bass part has a melodic line with a *p* dynamic. Dynamics include *p* (piano).

7

S.
No. Yes. No. Yes. No. Yes. No. Yes. No.

A.
No. Yes. No. Do you have? Do you have?

T.
Do you have aw-ful as-so-ci-a-tions-ss? Do you have aw-ful as-

B.
Do you have? Do you have? Do you have? Do you

13

S. Do you have aw-ful as - so - ci - a - tions? Do you

A. *p* Yes. *p* No. *p* Yes. *sim.* No. Yes. No. *p* Do you

T. so - ci - a - tion - s? Do you have aw-ful as - so - ci -

B. have? Do you have? Do you have?

18

S. have aw-ful as - so - ci - a - tions? Do you have aw-ful as - so - ci -

A. have? Do you have? *mp* Have you been in to - tal ter-ror?

T. a - tion - s? Do you have aw-ful as - so - ci - a - tion - s? Do you

B. Do you have? Have you been in to - tal, Have you

24

S. *mp* a - tions? *mf* Have you been in to - tal ter-ror? *mf* Yes. *f* No. *f* Yes. *f* If you

A. *mf* Have you been in to - tal ter-ror? *f* If you

T. have? Do you have aw-ful as - so - ci - a - tions? *f* Yes.

B. been? Have you been? Have you been?

30

S. *f* ev - er, ev - er claim in writ - ing or an - y

A. *f* ev - er, ev - er claim in writ - ing or an - y

T. *f* If you ev - er claim in writ - ing or an - y

B. *f* If, if you ev - er claim in writ - ing or an - y oth - er

35

S. *mf* oth - er way to have no coun - try, to have no

A. *mf* oth - er way to have no coun - try, to have no

T. *mf* oth - er, an - y oth - er way to have no coun - try, no

B. *mf* way, an - y oth - er way *p* to have no

41

S. *p* coun - try, are you con - fined?

A. *p* coun - try. are you con - fined? *mp* Are you con - fined? If

T. *p* coun - try, Yes.. No.. Yes.. *sim.* No.. Yes.. No..

B. *p* coun - try, are you con - fined? *mp* Are you con - fined? If

46 *mp*

S. If you ev - er, ev-er claim in writ-ing or an - y oth - er

A. you ev - er claim in writ-ing or an - y oth - er

T. *mp* If you ev - er, ev-er claim in writ - ing or an - y oth - er

B. you ev - er claim in writ - ing or in an-y oth - er

52 *p*

S. way to have no count - ry, to have no

A. way to have no count - ry to have no

T. *p* way, an - y oth - er way to have no count - ry, no

B. *p* way, an - y oth - er way to have no count - ry, no

57

S. count - ry, are you con - fined?

A. count - ry, are you con - fined? Are you con -

T. *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* count - ry. Yes. No. Yes. No. Yes.

B. count - ry, are you con - fined? Are you con -

61

S. Con - fined? Con - fined?

p

Do you have? Do you

A. fined? Yes. No. Yes. No. Yes.

p

T. No. Are you con - fined? Are you con -

B. fined? Are you con - fined? Are you con -

65

rit. *pp*

S. Con - fined? Con - fined?

pp

have? Do you have? Oo.

A. No. Yes. No. Yes. Oo.

pp

T. fined? are you con - fined? Oo.

B. fined? Are you con - fined? Oo.

N-400 Erasure Songs: 2

N-400: An Erasure
Poetry by Laurel Chen

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Driving ♩ = 120+

f

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

No-tice: an-y im-mi-gra-tion. No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: see. No-tice: an-y im-mi-gra-tion.

No-tice: an-y im-mi-gra-tion. No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: see. No-tice: an-y im-mi-gra-tion.

No-tice: an-y im-mi-gra-tion. No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: see. No-tice: an-y im-mi-gra-tion.

No-tice: an-y. No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: an-y.

4

S.

A.

T.

B.

fp

No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: see. No-tice: you. No-tice: you, you, you, you,

No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: see. You, you, you, you you. No-tice:

No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: see. No-tice: you, you. No-tice:

No-tice: hear-ing. No-tice: you, you. No-tice:

7 *fp* *p*

S. you. No-tice:you, you, you. No-tice:Fin-ger-prints dis-pos-a-ble, a num-ber un-per-mit-ted,

A. you, you, you. No-tice:you, you, you. No-tice:Fin-ger-prints dis-pos-a-ble, a num-ber un-per-mit-ted,

T. *fp* *fp* *p* you, you. Fin-ger-prints dis-pos-a-ble, a num-ber un-per-mit-ted,

B. *fp* *fp* *p* you, you. Fin - ger - prints dis - pos - a - ble.

11 *p*

S. im-mi - grants are all, im-mi - grants are all of the a - bove,

A. im-mi - grants are all of the a - bove, im-mi - grants are all of the a -

T. im-mi - grants are all of the a - bove, all of the a -

B. Im - mi - grants are all of the a - bove.

14 *mf* *mf* *mf*

S. im-mi - grants are all of the a - bove. Home-land is a pro - cess de-

A. bove. Home - land is a pro - cess de-layed, home-land is a

T. bove. To the im-mi - grant: home-land is a pro - cess de-

B. To the im-mi - grant: home-land is a

17

S. layed, _____ a pro-cess, to the im-mi-grant: _____ Home-land is, a home-land is a

A. pro - cess de-layed, _____ home-land is a pro-cess de-layed, home-land is a

T. layed, _____ a pro-cess de-layed. _____ home-land is, a home-land is a

B. pro - cess de-layed _____ To the im-mi-grant: _____ home-land is a

21

sub. p

S. pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess de - layed, de - layed,

A. pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess de - layed, de -

T. pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess de - layed, de-layed,

B. pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess, pro-cess de -

24

S. de - layed, de - layed. _____ de - layed, de - layed, de - layed. **f** A -

A. layed, de - layed, de - layed, de - layed, _____ de - layed. _____ **f** A -

T. _____ de - layed, _____ de - layed, de - layed, de - layed, de - layed, **f**

B. layed, _____ home - land _____ is a pro - cess de - layed. **f** A -

27

S. *bout the U-ni-ted States, do not sup - port_ the crim-in - al his-tor-y.*

A. *bout the U-ni-ted States, do not sup - port_ the crim-in - al his-tor-y.*

T. *de-layed, de-layed, de-layed, de-layed. His-tor-y.*

B. *bout, a - bout the U - ni - ted States, do not sup - port the_*

30

S. *A - bout the U-ni-ted States, do not sup-port_ the crim-in-al.*

A. *De-layed, de-layed, de-layed, de-layed.*

T. *A - bout the U-ni-ted States, do not sup-port_ the crim-in-al.*

B. *his - to - ry, a - bout, a - bout the U - ni - ted States.*

33

S. *You are what you have a - ban-doned. I-den - ti-fy,*

A. *I-den - ti-fy,*

T. *I-den - ti-fy,*

B. *You are what you have a - ban-doned. I-den - ti-fy,*

solo f *tutti p*

37

S. *mf* *f*
i-den - ti - fy, i - den - ti - fy: a - li - en... Cop - y, cop - y, cop - y self. Sep - a - rate your o - pen wounds,

A. *mf* *f*
i - den - ti - fy, i - den - ti - fy: a - li - en... Cop - y, cop - y, cop - y self. Sep - a - rate your o - pen wounds,

T. *mf* *f*
i - den - ti - fy, i - den - ti - fy: a - li - en... Cop - y, cop - y, cop - y self. Sep - a - rate your o - pen wounds,

B. *mf* *f*
i - den - ti - fy, i - den - ti - fy, a - li - en... Cop - y, cop - y, cop - y self. Sep - a - rate your, o - pen wounds,

41

S. *mf* *f*
sep - a - rate your o - pen wounds, in the pro - cess, pro - cess, pro - cess, pro - cess.

A. *mf* *f*
sep - a - rate your o - pen wounds in the pro - cess, pro - cess, pro - cess, pro - cess.

T. *mf* *f*
sep - a - rate your o - pen wounds in the pro - cess, pro - cess, pro - cess, pro - cess.

B. *mf* *f*
sep - a - rate your o - pen wounds in the pro - cess, in the pro - cess. And

44

S. *ff*
Ver - i - fy:___ all has been des - troyed, des - troyed, des - troyed, des - troyed, des -

A. *ff*
Ver - i - fy:___ all has been des - troyed, des - troyed, des - troyed, des - troyed, des -

T. *ff*
Ver - i - fy,___ ver - i - fy:___ all has been des - troyed,___ des -

B. *ff*
ver i - fy:___ all has been des - troyed, des - troyed, des -

47

S. *fp* *p*
 troyed, des - troyed. Ver-i-fy, _____ ver-i-fy: all has been des - troyed, _____ des-

A. *fp* *p*
 troyed, des-troyed. Ver - i - fy: all has been des-troyed, all has been des - troyed, _____ Des-

T. *f*
 troyed, des-troyed. Ver - i - fy: all has been des - troyed. _____ Nat-ur-al-i - za-tion

B. *fp* *p*
 troyed, des - troyed. Ver-i-fy: _____ all has been des - troyed, _____ des-

51

S. *p*
 troyed. _____ des - troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des-

A. *f* *p*
 troyed. _____ Nat-ur-al-i - za-tion can - not_ cap-ture your free. _____ Des-

T. *p* *f*
 can - not. cap-ture your free. Des - troyed. _____ Can - not. lev-el your

B. _____ troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des-

55

S. *f* *p*
 troyed. For pol - it-ic-al, _____ pol - it-ic-al. _____ Des - troyed, _____ des-

A. *f* *p*
 troyed. _____ Can - not lev-el your per - son - al. This ap-pli-ca-tion sim-pli-fied is

T. *p*
 per-son-al for pol - it-ic-al, _____ pol - it-ic-al. _____ Des - troyed, _____ des-

B. *p*
 troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des - troyed, _____ des-

59

S. troyed,___ oo._____ *p legato* Time, time, date and time, time, date and

A. per - se-cu-tion of your own safe-ty to en-sure so-cial se - cu-ri-ty._____

T. troyed,___ oo._____

B. troyed,___ oo._____

64

S. time, time, date and time, time, date and time, time, date and

A. *p* Re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule,

T. *p* Re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule,

B. *p* Re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule,

67

S. time, time, date and time, time, date and time, time, date and

A. re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule. Re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit. Re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule,

T. re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule. Re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit. Re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule,

B. re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule. Re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit. Re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule,

71

S. time, time, date and time, time, date and time, time, date and

A. time, time, date and De-layed, de-layed, de-layed, de-

T. re-sched-ule, re-sched-ule. Time, time, date and time, time, date and

B. re-sched-ule, re-sched-ule. Time a - gain, a time a - gain, a

74

S. time, time, date and time, time, date and time, time, date and

A. layed, de-layed, de-layed, de-layed, de-layed, de-

T. re-sched-ule, re-sched-ule, re - sched-ule, re-sched - ule. Re - sub-mit, re-sub-mit,

B. time a - gain, a time a - gain, a time a - gain, a

77

S. time, time, date and time, time, date and
 layed, de-layed, de-layed, de-layed,

A. time, time, date and time, time, date and

T. re - sub - mit, re - sub - mit. Re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule,

B. time a - gain, a time a - gain, a

79

accel.

S. time, time, date and time, time, date and time, time, date and
 de-layed. Please, please,

A. time, time, date and please, please,

T. re - sched - ule, re - sched - ule. Please, please,

B. time a - gain. Please, please,

82 *ff* **Faster** ♩=130

S. *ff*
 please, ___ please. ___ You will nev - er be - long. you will nev - er be - long.

A. *ff*
 please, ___ please. ___ You will nev - er be - long. You will nev - er be - long.

T. *ff*
 please, ___ please. ___ You will nev - er be - long. You will nev - er be - long.

B. *ff*
 please, ___ please. ___ You will nev - er be - long. You will nev - er be - long.

86

S. You will nev - er be - long. you will nev - er be - long.

A. You will nev - er be - long. You will nev - er be - long.

T. You will nev - er be - long. You will nev - er be - long.

B. You will nev - er be - long. You will nev - er be - long.

N-400 Erasure Songs: 3

change [y]our Country
Poetry by Melissa Dunphy

Music by Melissa Dunphy

Largo ♩=72

p molto espressivo

S. You are home. This is where you live now. You are home, you are

A. You are home. This is where you live now. You are home.

T. You are home. You are home. This is where you live.

B. You are home. This is where you live now.

7

S. home. You are home. This is where you live now. You are

A. You are home. This is where you live now. You are

T. You are home. Home. This is where you live now.

B. You are home. Home. This is where you live now.

13

S. home. Your space, your time, your his-tor - y. How man - y have been

A. home. Your space, time, his-tor - y. How man - y have been

T. Home, space, time. You are home. How man - y have been

B. Home, space, time. You are home. How

mp

18

S. per - se - cu - ted, oc - cu - pied? How man - y ar - res - ted, de -

A. per - se - cu - ted, oc - cu - pied? How man - y ar - res - ted, de -

T. per - se - cu - ted, oc - cu - pied? How man - y ar - res - ted,

B. man - y have been per - se - cu - ted, oc - cu - pied? How man - y ar - res - ted,

mp

23

S. tained, charged. failed, lied to, re -

A. tained, charged. Have been failed, lied to, re - moved, re - moved, ex -

T. de - tained, charged, Have been failed, lied to, re - moved, re - moved, ex -

B. de - tained, charged, failed? Have been lied to, re - moved, re -

mf

rit. a tempo

29

S. *p*
 moved, ex - clu - ded, de - por - ted? But_ you, you did not fal-ter.

A. *p*
 clu - ded, de - por - ted, de - por - ted? But you, you did not

T. *p*
 clu - ded, de - por - ted, de - por - ted? But_ you_ did not fal-ter.

B. *p*
 moved, ex - clu - ded, de - por - ted? But you, you did not

36

S. *mp* *mf*
 You are will - ing, you are true. This is

A. *mp* *mf*
 fal - ter. You, you are true. Home.

T. *mp* *mf*
 You are will - ing, you are true. You are home.

B. *mp* *mf*
 fal - ter. You are will - ing, you are true. This is

42

S. *f* *p*
 where you live. You are will - ing, true. Re-

A. *f*
 This is where you live now. You are will - ing, you are true.

T. *f*
 This is where you live now. You are will - ing, you are true.

B. *f*
 where you live now. You are will - ing, you are true. Re -

49

S. lease, re - form, re - lease, re - form, pre - pare, pre - pare, stand

A. *p* Re - lease, re - form, re - lease, re - form, pre - pare, pre - pare,

T. *p* Re - lease, re - form, re - form, pre - pare, pre - pare,

B. *p* lease, re - form, re - lease, re - form, pre - pare pre - pare, stand

55

S. *ff* firm, stand firm. *mf warmly* You are the best of us. You will breathe.

A. *ff* stand firm. *mf warmly* You are the best of us. You will, you will

T. *ff* stand firm. *mf warmly* You are the best of us. You will breathe.

B. *ff* firm, stand firm. *mf warmly* You are the best of us. You will breathe.

62

S. You are the best of us. You will breathe. You are the

A. breathe. You are the best of us. You will breathe

T. You are the best of us. You, you will breathe

B. You are the best of us, you will breathe

67

S. best of us. You will breathe. You are the best of us.

A. free. You are the best of us. You are the best of us.

T. free. You are the best of us, the best of us. You

B. free. You are the best, the best of us.

72

S. You will breathe free, breathe free. *rit.*

A. You will breathe free, breathe free.

T. will breathe free, breathe free.

B. You will breathe free, breathe free.