



A devious little game for TBB and piano

Elizabeth Alexander

Seafarer Press

Disenfranchised

There's a little game round here,
We play it once or twice a year.
Each and every citizen can play.
We set up all kinds of polling places,
Full of friendly, helpful faces,
beckoning us out to Voting Day.

Come one! Come all!
It's the highlight of the fall!
We're so lucky to be livin' in the USA!
There's just one tiny clause:
Keep one eye on the dealer 'cause
One hand giveth while the other hand taketh away.

We're playing Disenfranchised!
A game that's stood the test of time.
It's not all that complicated,
Just don't get eliminated,
It's a classic paradigm.
Di-di-di-di-di-disenfranchised!
This is the way it's always been.
Ever since the tabulated
Votes were all from educated,
White, landowning men
We've been playing Disenfranchised.

Come one! Come all!
Make sure you don't drop the ball!
It's democracy so everybody gets a say.
Although a rule or two
Could be a stumbling block for you,
Rest assured that everybody who wants to can play.

We're playing Disenfranchised!
A game that's stood the test of time.
It's not all that complicated,
Just don't get eliminated,
It's a classic paradigm.
Di-di-di-di-di-disenfranchised!
This is the way it's always been
Ever since the tabulated
Votes were all from educated,
White, landowning men.

The rules are simple. The rules are fun.
They the same for everyone.
Are you ready? It won't take long.
To help you out we wrote this song:

Don't be homeless, on parole,
Need translation at the poll,
Need time off or need a ride,
Need a helper by your side,
Need to vote a different day,
Find your poll's too far away,
Or skip a Voting Day or two,
Or not have your ID with you.
Don't be purged or relocated,
Formerly incarcerated,
Live upon a reservation,
Not have prior registration –
Plus some other rules we're still debating.
It can be a tad frustrating...

But once you've cast your vote, my friend,
You'll know there's nothing grander.
No longer will you be a mere bystander.
Until you stop and take a little gander,
And find that you are in a gerrymander!

And now you're Disenfranchised!
Just look at how those lines are drawn.
(Leapin' lizards!)
You had thought the game was finished,
But your vote has been diminished
By the upper echelon.
Di-di-di-di-di-disenfranchised!
You're little more than just a pawn.
And you somehow missed the notice
That the status of your vote is
Going, going, going, going, gone –

You're disenfranchised!

Words and Music by Elizabeth Alexander
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Disenfranchised calls out voter disenfranchisement for what it truly is: a power game with winners and losers, ever-changing rules, and an intent to exclude. A serious subject for sure, but you'll find no scolds or lectures here! Instead, this rambunctious romp explores the "game of disenfranchisement" with over-the-top humor, gleefully traipsing through ragtime, nursery songs, and patriotic chestnuts while exposing a less-than-attractive aspect of our democratic system.

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Disenfranchised

TBB, piano

With life, liberties and the pursuit of sappiness

Music and Lyrics by Elizabeth Alexander

(♩ = Somewhere around 112-120)

The musical score is arranged for Tenors (Ten), Baritone (Bar), Bass (Bass), and Piano. The key signature is two sharps (D major) and the time signature is 4/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system shows the vocal staves (Ten, Bar, Bass) with rests, and the piano accompaniment with a melody in the right hand and a bass line in the left hand. The second system includes the vocal staves with lyrics: "There's a lit - tle game 'round here, We play it once or twice a year." The piano accompaniment continues with chords and a bass line. The lyrics are aligned with the vocal staves.

Feel free to take a few “liberties” with the voices if it makes this song work more effectively for your choir. Is it better for the singers to cut off a long note slightly earlier, or sing a few lines in unison? Do you have a singer who is perfect for a solo line or two? If it helps get the message of this song across, try it out!

And what about the accompaniment? There’s a *lot* of cool stuff going on! But if it helps the piece move along, the pianist may omit a few flourishes here and there. On the other hand, they may wish to *add* some embellishments that are in keeping with the style, or maybe invite a friendly bass player or drummer to join in!

7 *mf*

Ten We set up all kinds of pol-ling plac - es

Bar *mf*
We set up all kinds of pol-ling plac - es

Bass Each and ev - 'ry ci - ti - zen_ can play.

D D/F# A D D/F#

10 *with gusto!*

Ten beck-on - ing us out to Vo - ting Day. Come

Bar full of friend-ly, help - ful fac - es beck-on - ing us out to Vo - ting Day. Come

Bass full of friend-ly, help - ful fac - es beck-on - ing us out to Vo - ting Day. Come

G G#07 D/A G/A A D D7

Ped. *Ped.* *Ped.* *

13 **A**

Ten
one! Come all! It's the high-light of the fall._

Bar
one! Come all! It's the high-light of the fall._ We're so luck-y to be liv-in' in the U. S. A._

Bass
one! Come all! It's the high-light of the fall._ We're so luck-y to be liv-in' in the U. S. A._

G⁷ D⁷

Ped. Ped.

16

Ten
There's just one ti - ny clause: keep one eye on the deal - er 'cause

Bar
There's just one ti - ny clause: keep one eye on the deal - er 'cause

Bass
There's just one ti - ny clause: keep one eye on the deal - er 'cause

G⁷

Ped. *

* Dashed slurs are little reminders not to take a breath in the middle of a phrase (even if there's a rest there).

19

Ten *gleefully!*
 one hand giv-eth while the o-ther hand tak-eth a - way _____ We're play-in' Dis-en-

Bar *gleefully!*
 one hand giv-eth while the o-ther hand tak-eth a - way,___ it tak-eth a - way. ___ We're play-in' Dis-en-

Bass *gleefully!*
 one hand giv-eth while the o-ther hand tak-eth a - way,___ it tak-eth a - way. ___ We're play-in' Dis-en-

A G A7

B

23

Ten
 - fran - chised,___ A game that's stood the test of time. ___

Bar
 - fran - chised,___ A game that's stood the test_ of time. ___ It's not all that com-pli-ca-ted;

Bass
 - fran - chised,___ It's not all that com-pli-ca-ted;

G⁷ D⁷ A

mf (l.h. or r.h.) (l.h. or r.h.)

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

28

Ten *mp*
Di - di - di - di - di - di - dis - en -

Bar *mp*
Just don't get e - li - mi - na - ted. It's a clas - sic pa - ra - digm. Di - di - di - di - di - di - dis - en -

Bass *mp*
Just don't get e - li - mi - na - ted. It's a clas - sic pa - ra - digm. Di - di - di - di - di - di - dis - en -

G D D⁷ G⁷

(l.h. or r.h.)

ped. *ped.* *ped.* *ped.* *

* You're probably going to circle some notes that are different in each chorus, so I figured I'd just do it for you. :-)

32

Ten *mf*
- fran - chised. This is the way it's al - ways been

Bar *mf*
- fran - chised. This is the way it's al - ways been Ev - er since the ta - bu - la - ted

Bass *mf*
- fran - chised. This is the way it's al - ways been Ev - er since the ta - bu - la - ted

D⁷ A

(l.h. or r.h.)

ped. *ped.*

36

Ten *p* we've been play-ing Dis-en-

Bar votes were all from e - du - ca - ted white, land - own - ing men, *gliss.* *p* we've been play-ing Dis-en-

Bass votes were all from e - du - ca - ted white, land - own - ing men, *gliss.*

G A7(#9) A7

Red. *Red.* *

40

Ten *mf* - fran - chised. Come

Bar - fran - chised. We've been play-ing Dis - en - fran - chised. Come

Bass *p* We've been play-ing Dis - en - fran - chised. *mf* Come

D7 G7 D Dm7

mp

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**A lot of hard work
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**...and some of it
was even mine.**

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50

Ten *gleefully!*
Rest as - sured that ev - 'ry - bo - dy who wants to can play._____ We're play - ing Dis - en -

Bar *gleefully!*
Rest as - sured that ev - 'ry - bo - dy who wants to can play.____ (So come on and play!)_ We're play - ing Dis - en -

Bass *gleefully!*
Rest as - sured that ev - 'ry - bo - dy who wants to can play.____ (So come on and play!)_ We're play - ing Dis - en -

A G A7

D

54

Ten
- fran - chised._____ A game that's stood the test of time._____

Bar
- fran - chised._____ A game that's stood the test____ of time._____ It's not all that com - pli - ca - ted;

Bass
- fran - chised._____ It's not all that com - pli - ca - ted;

G⁷ D⁷ A

mf (l.h. or r.h.) (l.h. or r.h.)

Red. Red. Red. Red.

59

Solo or Small group:

Ten: *gliss.*
It's a clas-sic pa-ra-digm.

Bar: *mp*
Just don't get e-li-mi-na-ted. It's a clas-sic pa-ra-digm... Di-di-di-di-di-dis-en-

Bass: *mp*
Just don't get e-li-mi-na-ted. It's a clas-sic pa-ra-digm... Di-di-di-di-di-dis-en-

G D D7(#9) G7
(l.h. or r.h.)

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. *

63

Ten: *mf*
Whoa! This is the way it's al-ways been.

Bar: *mf*
-fran-chised. This is the way it's al-ways been... Ev-er since the ta-bu-la-ted

Bass: *mf*
-fran-chised. This is the way it's al-ways been... Ev-er since the ta-bu-la-ted

D7 A
(l.h. or r.h.)

Ped. Ped.

67

a few optional angels:

Tutti: *mp*

Ten Ah _____ The rules are

Bar votes were all from e - du - ca - ted white, land - own - ing men. _____ The rules are

Bass votes were all from e - du - ca - ted white, land - own - ing men, _____

G A7(#9) A7

Ped. Ped. *

* If you add some angels here, the upper Tenor divisi notes in measure 69 may be sung by a soloist or omitted altogether. It's up to you!

72 **E**

Ten sim - ple; the rules are fun! _____

Bar sim - ple; the rules are fun! They are the same for ev - 'ry - one!

Bass They are the same for ev - 'ry - one!

G7 D7 G7 D7

mp

76

Ten
8
Are_ you_ rea- dy? It won't take long. To help you out we wrote this song:_____

Bar
Are you rea- dy? It won't take long. To help you out we wrote this song:_____

Bass
Are you rea- dy? It won't take long. To help you out we wrote this song:_____

G⁷ G^{#07} D⁷ F^{#7(b5)} B⁷ E⁷ A

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

81 **F**

Ten
8
p Need time off or need a ride,

Bar
p subito
Don't* be home-less, on pa- role, Need trans- la - tion at the poll, Need time off or need a ride,

Bass
p subito
Don't* be home-less, on pa- role, Need trans- la - tion at the poll,

D G/D D A⁷/E D A/C[#] D D/A A D/A A

p subito

* Go ahead and put a punctilious "t" at the end of "don't." After all, the rules themselves are punctilious!

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90 *mp* *mf* **poco rall.**

Ten
 for - mer - ly in - car - ce - ra - ted, live up - on a re - ser - va - tion, not have pri - or re - gis - tra - tion.

Bar
 for - mer - ly in - car - ce - ra - ted, live up - on a re - ser - va - tion, not have pri - or re - gis - tra - tion.

Bass
 live up - on a re - ser - va - tion, not have pri - or re - gis - tra - tion.

Bm/A G#o7 G D/F# Bm7(b5) E7 E7/D

mf

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

93 **molto rall.** **Largo, grandly** *mp*

Ten
 Plus some oth - er rules we're still de - bat - ing. It can be a tad frus - tra - ting. But

Bar
 Plus some oth - er rules we're still de - bat - ing. It can be a tad frus - tra - ting. But

Bass
 Plus some oth - er rules we're still de - bat - ing. It can be a tad frus - tra - ting, But

C#7 C7 B7(add9) A7 A7/E E7

ten. ten. ten. *mp*

ten. ten. *mp*

ten. ten. ten. *mp*

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

G *Sincerely...perhaps with your hands on your hearts*

97

Ten
8
once you've cast your vote my friend, you'll know there's noth - ing grand - er.

Bar
once you've cast your vote my friend, you'll know there's noth - ing grand - er.

Bass
once you've cast your vote my friend, you'll know there's noth - ing grand - er.

A E/G# D/F# A/E

Ped. Ped. Ped. Ped.

101

Ten
8
No long - er will you be a mere by - stand - er, Un - til you

Bar
No long - er will you be a mere by - stand - er, Un - til you

Bass
No long - er will you be a mere by - stand - er, Un - til you

D A/C# Bbm7(add9) E(sus4) C#/E# F#m

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

106 *If your hands are on your hearts they will certainly fall away here...*

Ten
8
stop and take a lit - tle gan - der, and find that you are in a

Bar
stop and take a lit - tle gan - der, and find that you are in a

Bass
stop and take a lit - tle gan - der, and find that you are in a

A/E D#m7(b5) Dmaj7 Bm7 Em7(b5)/Bb Em7(b5)

Freely, conducted

Exaggerated, exhausted breath:

111
8
ger - - - - - ry - man - der!

ger - - - - - ry - man - der!

ger - - - - - ry - man - der!

A7
colla voce, with optional third in the right hand

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122

Ten
8
by the up - per e - che - lon... Whoa!__ You're lit - tle

Bar
by the up - per e - che - lon... Di - di - di - di - di - dis - en - fran - chised. You're lit - tle

Bass
by the up - per e - che - lon... Di - di - di - di - di - dis - en - fran - chised. You're lit - tle

D D⁷ G⁷
(l.h. or r.h.)

* (in piano part)

126

Ten
8
more than just__ a pawn! And you some - how missed the no - tice

Bar
more than just__ a pawn... And you some - how missed the no - tice

Bass
more than just__ a pawn!__ And you some - how missed the no - tice

D⁷ A
(l.h. or r.h.)

Ped. Ped.

129

Ten *f*
 that the sta - tus of your vote is go - ing, go - ing, go - ing, go - ing, gone!

Bar *f*
 that the sta - tus of your vote is go - ing, go - ing, go - ing, go - ing, gone!

Bass *f*
 that the sta - tus of your vote is go - ing, go - ing, go - ing, go - ing, gone!

G A B \flat /A B/A C/A C \sharp /A D/A D \sharp /A E/A A \sharp /E \flat

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

133

Ten
 You're dis - en - fran - chised!

Bar
 You're dis - en - fran - chised!

Bass
 You're dis - en - fran - chised!

D 6