

JS 012  
4 minutes, 40 seconds

# me(n)

*for TTBB and Piano*

*Text by*  
Members of the  
commissioning  
ensemble

*Music by*  
Joshua Shank

**B&F Music**  
Joshua Shank

## Note from the composer

The title for this piece is a reference to the fact that the text is the result of two aspects of its creation. First, it's about how young men navigate the various pressures society throws their way. These are things like interactions with their peers, siblings, parents, and teachers, but also things like society's notions of race, ethnicity, sexuality, gender, etc. How did these young men overcome the bad stuff, maneuver through the tricky stuff, and incorporate the good stuff?

In order to find a text that would express such a specific idea I decided to go straight to the source: the high school students in the choir itself. So I had them respond to a prompt and finish the sentence "I know that I am greater than..." as many times as they wanted in order to find out, and they couldn't have done a more beautiful job. So the text is actually made up of edited versions of *their words*. This is the reason for the parenthetical in the title.

*me(n)* was commissioned by the Flower Mound High School Men's Chamber Choir (Dr. Mark Rohwer, conductor) and received its premiere on March 8, 2017 at the national convention of the American Choral Directors Association in Minneapolis. It is dedicated with gratitude to the men of the ensemble and their conductor.

## The text

*I know that I am greater...*

...than how others may see me  
...than the challenges I may to face  
...than all the ways that people can hate  
...than than the person they say I should be  
...than the numbers that may define me  
...than the expectations of being a man

*I know that I am greater...*

...than how people see the color of my skin  
...than what people think of who I love  
...than the stresses in my life  
...than the pressures coming from my parents  
...than what my teachers may think of me  
...than what I may think of myself  
...than the boy you think you know

*I know that I am greater...*

...than my worst few moments  
...than the things in life I cannot change  
...than the limitations I place on myself

I know that I am greater when I try to understand  
That I'm on my own,  
But I'm not alone  
If I try to lend a hand.

I know that I am greater if I never, ever lie.  
To be upright  
And "Win the good fight,"  
Can always be my battle cry.

And I may not agree about you and me  
But it's never too late  
To be a little kinder,  
A living reminder that  
love will always conquer hate.

I know.

Commissioned by the Flower Mound High School Men's Chamber Choir  
Dr. Mark Rohwer, Conductor

# me(n)

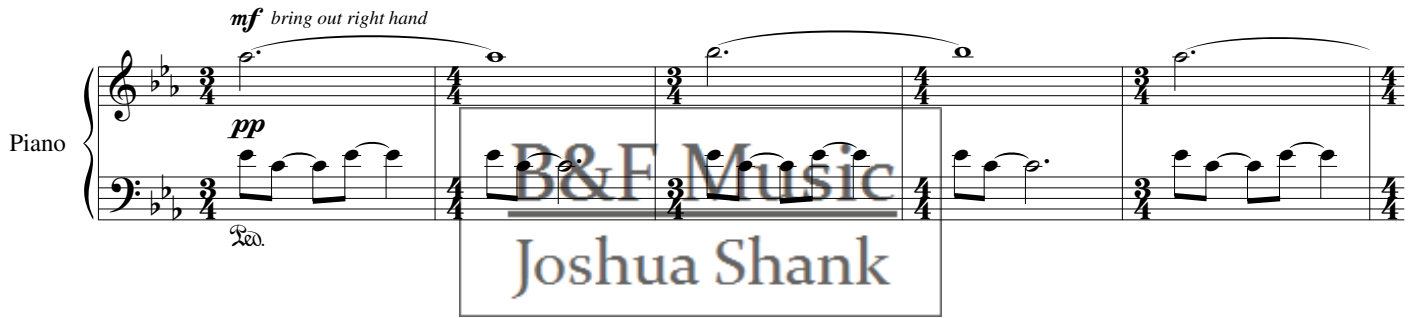
Text by the men of the  
commissioning ensemble, et al.  
(adapted by the composer)

Music by  
Joshua Shank

quarter = 85

*mf* bring out right hand

Piano



*pp*

Rec.

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T

B

*pp*

*pp*

I know that I am great-er than how

I know that I am great-er than how



*pp* bring out right hand

Rec. until m. 21

11

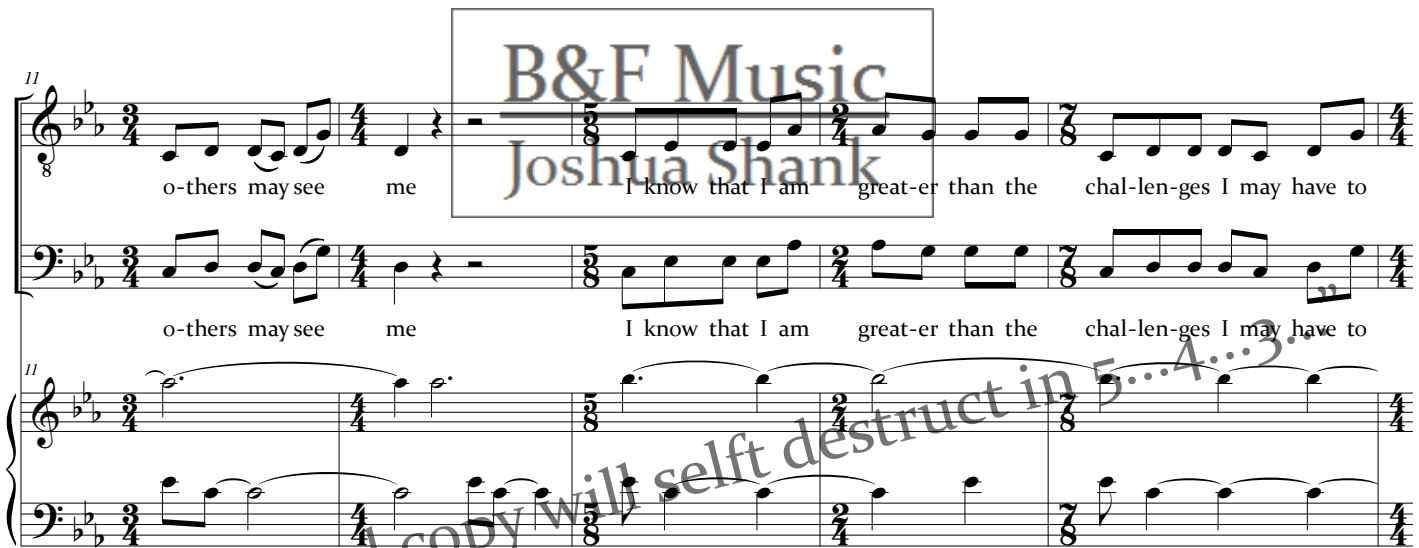
8

o-thers may see me

I know that I am great-er than the chal-len-ges I may have to

o-thers may see me

I know that I am great-er than the chal-len-ges I may have to



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"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."

16  
8  
face I know that I am great-er than all the ways that peo-ple— can hate

face I know that I am great-er than all the ways that peo-ple— can hate

“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”

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16  
8  
I know that I am great-er than the per-son they say I should be I know that I, am

I know that I am great-er than the per-son they say I should be I know that I am

21  
8  
I know that I am great-er than the per-son they say I should be I know that I, am

I know that I am great-er than the per-son they say I should be I know that I am

21  
8  
bring out low bass notes

bring out low bass notes

“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”

*Lead with bass notes*

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25  
8  
great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

25  
8  
great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

25  
8  
great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”

25  
8  
great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

great-er than the num-bers that may de-fine me I know that I am great-er than the

32

30  
 ex - pec - ta - tions of be - ing a man know \_\_\_\_\_  
 ex - pec - ta - tions of be - ing a man I know that I am great - er than how

30  
 p  
 p brittle

B&F Music  
 Rec. with every iteration of the text until m. 89  
 Joshua Shank

34  
 \_\_\_\_\_ that I am great-er I know \_\_\_\_\_  
 peo-ple see the co-lor of my skin I know that I am great-er than what

34

38  
 \_\_\_\_\_ that I am great-er I know \_\_\_\_\_ that I am  
 peo-ple think of who I love I know that I am great-er than the stress-es in \_\_\_\_\_ my

38

"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."

44

pattern change

43  
 8 great-er I know I know that I am great-er  
 life I know that I am great-er than the pres-sures com-ing from my par - ents

43  
 8  
 43

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48  
 8 I know I know that I am great-er I know

48  
 8 I know that I am great-er than what my teach-ers may think of me I know that I am

48  
 8

56

pattern change

53  
 8 I know that I am great-er I know the

53  
 8 great-er than what I may think of my - self I know that I am great-er than the

53  
 8

"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."

60 quarter = 92

58 *poco mp* *mp warmly*

boy you think you know know that I am great - er - than my

boy you think you know I know that I am great - er - than my

58 *poco mp*

boy you think you know I know that I am great - er - than my

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64

worst few mo - ments I know that I am great - er than the things in life that I can-not change

worst few mo - ments I know that I am great - er than the things in life that I can-not change

64

ped. ped. ped. ped.

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69

I know that I am great - er than the li - mi - ta - tions I place on my - self

I know that I am great - er than the li - mi - ta - tions I place on my - self

69

ped. ped. ped. ped.

"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."

mf I know that I am great - er when I

I know that I am great - er when I

mf warmly mf

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try to un - der - stand that I'm on my own but I'm not a - lone if I

try to un - der - stand that I'm on my own but I'm not a - lone if I

try to lend a hand I know that I am great - er if I

try to lend a hand I know that I am great - er if I

\* Keep those bass notes held down for the second pedal as you go on with this pattern.

"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."



86  
 ne - ver e - ver lie \_\_\_\_\_ To be up - right and win the good fight can al - ways be my  
 ne - ver e - ver lie \_\_\_\_\_ To be up - right and win the good fight can al - ways be my

86  
 ne - ver e - ver lie \_\_\_\_\_ To be up - right and win the good fight can al - ways be my  
 ne - ver e - ver lie \_\_\_\_\_ To be up - right and win the good fight can al - ways be my

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91  
 bat - tle cry \_\_\_\_\_ And I may not a - gree a - bout you and me but it's  
 bat - tle cry \_\_\_\_\_ And I may not a - gree a - bout you and me but it's

91  
 bat - tle cry \_\_\_\_\_ And I may not a - gree a - bout you and me but it's  
 bat - tle cry \_\_\_\_\_ And I may not a - gree a - bout you and me but it's

96  
 ne - ver too late \_\_\_\_\_ to be a lit - tle kind - er a liv - ing re - mind - er that  
 ne - ver too late \_\_\_\_\_ to be a lit - tle kind - er a liv - ing re - mind - er that

96  
 ne - ver too late \_\_\_\_\_ to be a lit - tle kind - er a liv - ing re - mind - er that  
 ne - ver too late \_\_\_\_\_ to be a lit - tle kind - er a liv - ing re - mind - er that

"This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3..."

suddenly faster  
(quarter = 102)

104 quarter = 85

love will al-ways con-quer hate

love will al-ways con-quer hate

lunga

lunga

*p* gently *sub. ff*

106 quarter = 73

I know.

I know.

*mp* *rit.*

B&F Music  
Joshua Shank

Austin, December 2016

“This illegal copy will self destruct in 5...4...3...”