

JS 004
8 minutes, 10 seconds

love.song

for Double Choir, a cappella

Text by
anonymous

Music by
Joshua Shank

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

Note from the composer

In early 2014 I was reading about a piece another composer wrote in which, like *love.song*, they took an open-ended phrase and crafted the text out of various completions of it they found via internet search results. After listening to that work I thought it might be an interesting exercise to try that process out myself and, at that moment, I heard someone say “He loved me because...” That seemed like it might yield some unique results so I plugged it into a search engine and discovered a beautiful constellation of humanity ranging from whimsical (“he loved me because he made me a mix tape”) to brutally honest confessions of spousal abuse (“he loved me because he took his gold sovereign rings off before he hit me”. *love.song* was the result of that process of gathering those anonymous responses into something of a narrative that runs the gamut of human experience.

love.song was commissioned by The Singers—Minnesota Choral Artists in celebration of their 10th anniversary as well as the end of my 10-year tenure as Composer-In-Residence. It is dedicated with love and gratitude to all Singers past and present and especially to Artistic Director Matthew Culloton.

The text

he loved me because...

...I made him laugh.
...I was so easygoing.
...I brought out the best in him.
...I smelled like pomegranates.
...he made me a mix tape.
...there was a gleam in his eye
 when he straightened my tie.
...he told his mother.

he loved me because...

...my life seemed so manageable.
...I could share in his silence.
...he had a job to do.
...I have feelings for him.
...I never asked any questions.
...I accepted his secrets.
...I told the truth.
...I lied.
...he was sticking up for me.
...he didn't want me to leave.
...my brother lied.
...I liked him when no one else ever did.

he loved me because...

...he saved my life.
...that's the role I decided to play.
...he loved his children.
...he didn't have to.
...I begged him to stay.
...I needed someone to love me.

he loved me because...

...he had been in a bad marriage.
...he was jealous and wanted me all to himself.
...he took his gold sovereign rings off before
 he hit me.
...he was good and not because I am.
...I was so awful.

he loved me because...

...he was patient and kind and sweet.
...he wanted to honor and respect me.
...he believed in me.
...I am intelligent and kind.
...I am worthy of love.

Dedicated to The Singers - Minnesota Choral Artists on their 10th anniversary
Dr. Matthew Culloton, Conductor

love.song

Text by
anonymous

for Double Choir

Music by
Joshua Shank

Quietly (♩ = 54)

Soprano

Alto

Tenor

Bass

mp

Solo: mf

p

he loved me

he loved me be-cause I made him

he loved me

6

laugh

he loved me be-cause I was so ea-sy-go-ing

he loved me

he

* Each iteration of the melody can be sung by a single soloist or different soloists for each (6 total) until measure 30.

11

mp < > ”

he

mf 3 3 *mf*

he loved me be-cause I brought out the best in him _____ he

loved

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

16

mp < > ”

loved

mp 3 *p* ”

po - me - gran - a - tes

mf 3

loved me be-cause I smelled like po - me - gran - a - tes he

me _____ he _____ loved _____

20

mp > ”

me _____

he

mf 3

loved me be-cause he made me a mix tape he

me _____

loved me be-cause there was a gleam in his eye when he straight-ened my tie

loved

B&F Music

Joshua Shank

A bit faster (♩ = 66)

he loved me

me he loved me he

Tenor 1 (tutti): *mf*

he loved me be-cause he told his mo-ther

he loved me

B&F Music

Joshua Shank

man-age-a-ble

loved me he

loved me he

Tenor 2 (tutti): *mf*

he loved me becaus my life seemed so man-age-a-ble he

Tenor 1: *mf*

40

mp

mf *mp*

(same pattern just lined up with tenor line)

loved me because I could share in his si - lence he

loved me

Tenor 2: mf

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

43

mp

mp

job to do

me he loved me

Tenor 1: mf

loved me be-cause he had a job to do he

he

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

47

mf

mf

feel - ing (ng)

simile

he loved me he

Tenor 2: mf

loved me be-cause I have feel-ings for him he loved me be-cause I ne-ver

*questions... _____

ques - tions

loved me he loved

asked a - ny ques tions he loved me be-cause I ac -

mp placidly

love love

*secrets... _____

secrets... _____

p placidly

love love love love

me he loved

cept - ed his se - crets he loved me be-cause

All tenors: *mf*

love love love love

*Repeat the word at various speeds ranging from a moderate pace to as fast as you can. Breathe when necessary but never when the ensemble has a rest. The effect should just be like a fluttering happening behind the foreground. You're just sort of agitating the pitch in order to make the musical frieze shake a little bit. In other words, stay out of the way but make it sound cool. Holla!

mf

truth... love...

mf

truth... love...

mp *p*

love love be-cause I lied

mf

me he loved me he

mf

I told the truth he loved me be-cause I lied

mf

love love love love love he

mp

up for me

simile

loved me he loved me

mf

he loved me be-cause he was stick-ing up for me

mp

loved me he

65

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

he loved me he loved

mf he loved me be-cause he did - n't want me to leave *mf* he

mf loved *mp*

69

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

love... love...

mp lied

me he loved me he

mf loved me be-cause my bro-ther lied he loved me be-cause I

mf *mp* me

73

mf

love...

mf

love...

mp *mf*

no - one else e - ver did

mf

loved me he loved me he

simile

mf

liked him when no - one else e - ver did

he loved me be'cause

mf

he loved me he

78

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

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

mf he saved my life that's the role he de-cid-ed to

loved me he loved

mf he saved my life he loved me be-cause that's the role he de-cid-ed to

loved me he loved

82

play _____ he loved his chil - dren _____

me _____ he _____ loved _____ me _____ he _____

play he loved me be-cause he loved his chil - dren he

me _____ he _____ loved _____ me _____ he _____

mf *mf*

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

87

_____ *f* _____ *f* _____

_____ *mf* _____ *f* _____ *f* _____

_____ he did-n't have to I begged him to

_____ loved _____ me _____ he _____ loved _____ me _____

loved me be-cause he did-n't have to he loved me because I begged him to

_____ loved _____ me _____ he _____ loved _____ me _____

mf *f* *f* *f*

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

91

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

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

Easter (♩ = 80)

96

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

Choir 1
loved me be-cause he had been in a bad mar - riage

Choir 2
loved me be-cause he had been in a bad mar - riage

Choir 2
he loved me be-cause he had been in a bad

*All Bass 2s
he

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

f sempre

f sempre

f sempre

* Equal division of remaining tenors and basses among the 2 choirs.

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

100

he loved me be-cause he was jea-lous and want-ed me all to him-

he loved me be-cause he was jea-lous and want-ed me all to him-

mar-riage he

mar-riage he

loved

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

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

104

self he

self he

loved me be-cause he was jea-lous and want-ed me all to him -

loved me be-cause he was jea-lous and want-ed me all to him -

me

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

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

107

loved me be-cause he took his gold sov'-reign rings off be - fore he

loved me be-cause he took his gold sov'-reign rings off be - fore he

self _____ he

self _____ he

he _____

110

hit me. _____ he loved me be-cause he was

hit me. _____ he loved me be-cause he was

loved me be-cause he took his rings off be-fore he *hit me. _____

loved me be-cause he took his rings off be-fore he *hit me. _____

loved _____

* Equal 3-part divis between all the voices (some tenors on the E-flat and some altos on the C.

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

114

good and not because I am. he loved me be-cause

good and not because I am. he loved me be-cause

he loved me because he was good and not because I am. he

he loved me because he was good and not because I am. he

me. he

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

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

Content (♩ = 76)

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

Tutti Soprano 124 *mp* comfortable 3 3
 he loved me be-cause he was pa-tient and kind and sweet. —

Tutti Alto *p* comfortable
 love —

Tutti Tenor *mp* comfortable 3 3
 he loved me be-cause he was pa-tient and kind and sweet. —

Tutti Bass *p* comfortable
 love —

129 $(2 + 2 + 2 + 3)$ *mp*
 he loved me be-cause he want-ed to

mp
 love —

mp
 he loved me be-cause he want-ed to ho - nor and — re -

mp
 love —

132 *mp*
 ho-nor and re - spect me. he loved me be-cause he be-

mp
 love —

mp
 spect me. — he loved me be-cause he be-lieved in me. —

mp
 love —

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

137

lieved in me. _____

he loved me be-cause I am in - tel-li-gent and

love _____

he loved me be-cause I am in - tel - li - gent and kind. _____

love _____

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

142

kind. _____

loved me be - cause I am

love _____

he loved me be - cause I am worth - y _____

love _____

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

147

worth - y _____ of love. _____

_____ of _____ love. _____

_____ of _____ love. _____

_____ of _____ love. _____

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

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

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

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

B&F Music
Joshua Shank

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