

THE RIVER, Sable
SBMP1880

SATB
piano

The **RIVER**

Words and Music by
Bryan Sable



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About the composer

Bryan Sable is a professional musician, composer, and educator based in the greater Pittsburgh area. He holds a B.A. in Music Education (cum laude) from West Liberty State College, where he studied piano with David Zapka and composition with Dr. Kenneth Mahy. Bryan also holds a M.Ed. in Administration, from California University of Pennsylvania.

An experienced performer and conductor, Bryan was a member of the Professional Core of The Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh for four years and served as Assistant Conductor of the Junior Mendelssohn Choir of Pittsburgh for five. He is an active recitalist, guest conductor, and collaborative artist throughout southwestern Pennsylvania, northern West Virginia, and eastern Ohio.

Bryan is currently the Choral Director at North Allegheny Intermediate High School, where he leads a dynamic choral program. His previous teaching experience includes music instruction at City Charter High School and across Ohio County Schools (WV), working with students at the elementary and middle school levels in vocal, instrumental, and general music.

In addition to his work in education, Bryan is the Music Director at Coraopolis United Methodist Church, where he conducts the Chancel Choir, Mary K. Kennedy Women's Chorale, Robert E. Harper Men's Chorus, and handbell ensemble.

A passionate and versatile musician, Bryan serves as accompanist for the Pittsburgh Concert Chorale, performing a wide range of repertoire from jazz and pops to classical and contemporary works.

Composer notes

Approach "The River" with a contemporary choral tone shaped by folk and Broadway influences—clear text, forward resonance, and emotion that feels raw yet controlled. Sing boldly and without hesitation, allowing the narrative to rise in intensity from the opening lines through each chorus. Even when vocal lines contrast and overlap, shape vowels, releases, and dynamic pacing so the texture feels unified and interwoven rather than competing with each other. Treat the repeated questions ("Who will speak for me/you?") as direct appeals, delivered with firm clarity and intention.

The work should build steadily toward the climax at "So go ahead and build your walls," using resonance, articulation, and ensemble energy to heighten dramatic impact without oversinging. Save enough power for the final chorus so it lands with confidence, purpose, and collective strength. The closing line—"Will you speak for me?"—should carry both vulnerability and resolve, leaving the audience with a sense of shared responsibility and unshakable solidarity.

Ranges

S A T B



recording and rehearsal tracks
available at sbmp.com

The River

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Introspective ♩ = 78

Piano *p*

The piano introduction consists of two staves in 4/4 time. The right hand features a melody of quarter notes and eighth notes, while the left hand provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and moving lines. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat).

5 Solo *mp*

It's been com - in' for a long time now, ___

The vocal solo begins at measure 5. The melody is a simple, moving line of quarter notes. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. The lyrics are: "It's been com - in' for a long time now, ___".

7 End Solo

I can't hold back an - - more. ___

The vocal solo continues at measure 7. The melody is a simple, moving line of quarter notes. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. The lyrics are: "I can't hold back an - - more. ___".

9 *mp*

S When the riv - er ris - es ___ and the lev - ee breaks, ___ you'll find me stand - ing at ___ your

A *mp* When the riv - er ris - es ___ and the lev - ee breaks, ___ you'll find me stand - ing at ___ your

T *mp* you'll find me stand - ing at ___ your

B *mp* you'll find me stand - ing at ___ your

The vocal parts for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), and Bass (B) begin at measure 9. Each part has a melody of quarter notes. The piano accompaniment continues with chords and moving lines. The lyrics are: "When the riv - er ris - es ___ and the lev - ee breaks, ___ you'll find me stand - ing at ___ your".

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12

door. Who ___ will speak for me? ___

mf

15

Who ___ will speak for me? ___ Who ___ will speak for me? ___

Who ___ will speak for me? ___ Who ___ will speak for me? ___

Who ___ will speak for me? ___ Who will

Who ___ will speak for me? ___ Who will

18

Who will speak for me?_

Who will speak for me?_

speak for me?_ Who will speak for me?_

speak for me?_ Who will speak for me?_

cresc.

21

mp

sub. f oo ah

If you can't see the riv - er's ris - in? How can you com - pre - hend?_

mf

24

f
With eyes and ears and spo - ken word, -

f
With eyes and ears and spo - ken word, -

27

mf
Tell them now be - fore the end!

mf
Tell them now be - fore the end!

mf
Tell them now be - fore the end!

mf
Tell them now be - fore the end!

29 *f*
Who _____ will speak for you? _____
f
Who _____ will speak for you, _____ who will speak for
f
8 Who _____ Who will speak for
f
Who _____ Who will speak for

31
Who _____ will speak for you? _____
you? _____ Who will speak for
you? _____ Who will speak for
you? _____

33

you?

you?

f

Who _____ will speak for you? _____

35

mf

Who will speak for you? _____

With resolve

37 *f*

So go a - head and build your walls

f

So go a - head and build your walls

f

8 So go a - head and build your walls

f

So go a - head and build your walls

39

You'll see how much they can hold

You'll see how much they can hold

8 You'll see how much they can hold

You'll see how much they can hold

41 *mf*

But you won't know un - til the flood comes__

mf

But you won't know un - til the flood comes__

mf

8 But you won't know un - til the flood comes__

mf

But you won't know un - til the flood comes__

43

and our _____ have been told__

and our sto - ries have been told__

8 and our sto - ries have been told__

and our sto - ries have been told__

1880-10

PREVIEW

45 *f*
I will speak for us

f
I will speak for us, I will speak for

f
8 I will speak for us

f
I will speak for us

47

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49

I will speak for us

I will speak for us

I will speak for us!

I will speak for us!

piano accompaniment for measures 49-50

poco rit.

51 *mf* Will you speak for me? *mp* Will you speak for me?

mf Will you speak for me? *mp* Will you speak for me?

mf Will you speak for me? *mp* Will you speak for me?

mf Will you speak for me? *mp* Will you speak for me?

piano accompaniment for measures 51-54, ending with *p*