

# Rockaby

(A setting of Samuel Beckett's play for woman's voice, four trombones, and piano.)

William Osborne



# Notes

## Light

Subdued on chair. Rest of stage dark. Subdued spot on face constant throughout, unaffected by successive fades. Either wide enough to include narrow limits of rock or concentrated on face when s till or at mid-rock. Then throughout speech face slightly swaying in and out of light.

Opening fade-up: first spot on face alone. Long pause. Then light on chair. Final fade-out: first chair. Long pause with spot on face alone. Head slowly sinks, comes to rest. Fade out spot.

## W

Prematurely old. Unkempt gray hair. Huge eyes in white expressionless face. White hands hold ends of armrests.

## Eyes

Now closed, now open in unblinking gaze. About equal proportions section 1, increasingly closed 2 and 3, close good halfway through 4.

## Costume

Black lacy high-necked evening gown. Long sleeves. Jet sequins to glitter when rocking. Incongruous frivolous headdress set askew with extravagant trimmings to catch light when rocking.

## Attitude

Completely still till fade-out of chair. Then in light of spot head slowly inclined.

## Chair

Pale wood highly polished to gleam when rocking. Footrest. Vertical back. Rounded inward curving arms to suggest embrace.

## Rock

Slight. Slow. Controlled mechanically without assistance from W.

## Voice

Lines in italics spoken by W with V a little softer each time.

W's "More" a little softer each time. Towards end of section 4, say from "saying to herself" on, voice gradually softer.

## Composer's notes

1. Follow the author's notes explicitly.
2. Every note is preceded by an accidental except repeated notes or patterns.
3. The music and V should be recorded multi-channel and remixed stereo with the piano subdued and the trombones very soft, reverberated, distant, and ephemeral.
4. The voice sounds one octave lower than written. It should sound authentic and untrained, sometimes more spoken than sung.



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(A setting of Samuel Beckett's play for woman's voice, four trombones, and piano.)

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W=Woman in chair.  
V=Her recorded voice.

Fade up on W in rocking chair facing front downstage slightly off center audience left.

**Effimero e lontano** (♩=ca. 42)

Trb. 1 *p* (gliss.)

Piano *pp*

Trb. 1

W *Rock and voice together.* (Note that voices sound one octave lower than written.)

V *Semplice e non troppo cantabile*

Pno. *More. mp*

till in the end the day came in the end came close of a long day when she said to her self whom else time she stpped

Trb. 1 *pp* *lontano*

V *mp*

Pno. *8va*

time she stpped go-ing to and fro all eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er ano - oth-er like her-self an-oth-er crea-ture like her-self

2  
39

V  
8

a lit-tle like go - ing to and fro all eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er \_\_\_\_\_ till \_\_\_\_\_ in the end close of a long

Pno.  
39

8<sup>va</sup> 3 8<sup>vb</sup> 3 8<sup>va</sup> 3 8<sup>vb</sup> 3 8<sup>va</sup> 3 8<sup>vb</sup> 3 5

48

Trb. 1

*pp*

V  
8

day to \_\_\_\_\_ her-self \_\_\_\_\_ whom \_\_\_\_\_ else time she stopped time she stoppd go-ing to and fro all eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er an-

Pno.  
48

8<sup>va</sup> 5 8<sup>va</sup> 5 8<sup>va</sup> 3 8<sup>va</sup>

58

V  
8

oth-er liv-ing soul one oth-er liv-ing soul go-ing to and fro all eyes like her - self all sides high and low for an-oth-er an - oth-er like her-self \_\_\_\_\_

Pno.  
58

*calando* 3 5 3 3 6 3 3

V 66 a lit-tle like go- ing to and fro till in the end close of a long day to her-self whom else

Pno. 66

Trb. 1 74

V 74 time she stopped go- ing to and fro time she stopped time she stopped

Pno. 74

Trb. 1 84

Pno. 84

Trb. 1

Trumpet 1 staff with notes and rests.

Rock and voice together.

W

Woodwind staff with notes and rests.

*più mosso*

V

Vocal staff with lyrics: so in the end close of a long day went back in in the end went back in say - ing to her self whom else time she stopped

*pp*

Pno.

Piano accompaniment staff with notes, rests, and triplets.

*8va*

V

Vocal staff with lyrics: time she stopped go - ing to and fro time she went and sat at her win - dows qui - et at her win - dows fac - ing oth - er win - dows so in the end

*8va*

Pno.

Piano accompaniment staff with notes, rests, and triplets.

*8va*

*8vb*

V

Vocal staff with lyrics: close of a long day in the end went and sat went back in and sat at her win - dow let up the blind and sat qui - et at her win - dow on - ly win - dow fac - ing oth - er win - dows oth - er on - ly wind - dows all

Pno.

Piano accompaniment staff with notes, rests, and triplets.

*8vb*

*8va*



121

Trb. 1

V

Pno.

8

eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er at her win-dow an - oth-er like her-self a lit-tle like an-oth-er liv-ing

pp

8va

5

3

131

V

Pno.

8

soul one oth - er liv - ing soul at her win-dow gone in like her-self gone back in in the end

8va

6

5

3

5

8vb

137

V

Pno.

8

close of a long say-ing to her-self whom else time she stopped

8va

6

5

3

5

6

6

p

Detailed description: This is a page of a musical score for three parts: Trb. 1, V (Violin), and Pno. (Piano). The score is divided into three systems, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The first system (measures 121-130) features a vocal line with lyrics: "eyes all sides high and low for an-oth-er at her win-dow an - oth-er like her-self a lit-tle like an-oth-er liv-ing". The piano accompaniment includes a right-hand part with triplets and a left-hand part with chords and triplets. A dynamic marking of *pp* is present. The second system (measures 131-140) has lyrics: "soul one oth - er liv - ing soul at her win-dow gone in like her-self gone back in in the end". The piano accompaniment features sixteenth-note runs in the right hand and chords in the left hand. The third system (measures 137-146) has lyrics: "close of a long say-ing to her-self whom else time she stopped". The piano accompaniment continues with similar textures. Performance markings include *8va*, *8vb*, and *p*. Measure numbers 121, 131, and 137 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

V *141*  
 8 time she stopped go-ing to and fro time she went and sat at her win - dow qui-et at her din-dow on - ly win-dow fac-ing oth-er win-dows oth-er on - ly win-dows

Pno. *141*  
 6 6 6 5 6 6 6 3 3

Trb. 1 *147*

Trb. 2 *147*  
 Non meno mosso Together: echo of "living soul", coming to rest of rock, faint fade of light. *p*

V *147*  
 8 all eyes all sides high and lows\_\_ for an-oth-er an oth-er like her-self a lit - tle like\_\_ an - oth-er liv-ing soul one oth-er liv-ing soul

Pno. *147*  
 3 3 3 3 3 3 *p*

Trb. 1 *156*  
 3 3 3 3

Trb. 2 *156*  
 3 3 3 3

Pno. *156*  
 3 3 3 3 3 3

165

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

Pno.

8<sup>va</sup>

7

173

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

W

V

Pno.

8

8

8

8<sup>va</sup>

Rock and voice together.

More. *mp*

Come sopra

till in the end the day came in the end came close of a

*mp*

*p*

V 185 *8* long day sit-ting at her win-dow qui-et at her win-dow on-ly win-dow fac-ing oth-er win-dows oth-er on-ly win-dows all blinds down \_\_\_\_\_

Pno. 185 *7* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>vb</sup>*

V 190 *8* ne-ver one up hers a-lone up \_\_\_\_\_ till \_\_\_\_\_ the day came in the end came close of a long day

Pno. 190 *8<sup>va</sup>* *molto rallantando* *8<sup>va</sup>* *8<sup>va</sup>*

V 196 *8* sit-ting at her win-dow qui-et at her win-dow \_\_\_\_\_ all eyes all sides high and low for a blind up one blind up \_\_\_\_\_ no more \_\_\_\_\_

Pno. 196 *8<sup>va</sup>* *molto rallantando* *8<sup>va</sup>*



V  
 229  
 8  
 time she stopped                    time she stopped                    sit-ting at her win-dow    qui-et at her win-dow on - ly    win - dow                    fac-ing oth-er win-dows    oth-er on - ly win-dows all

Pno.  
 229  
 5                    5  
 5                    5  
 6                    6                    6                    6  
 3                    3

*8va*

Trb. 1  
 235  
*Lontano*

Trb. 2  
 235  
*p*

Together: echo of "time she stopped", coming to rest of rock, faint fade of light.

V  
 235  
 8  
 sides    all    eyes high    and    low                    time she stopped    time she    stopped

Pno.  
 235  
 6                    6                    5                    3  
 3                    3

*8va*

*Lontano*

*p*

244

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

Trb. 3

Trb. 4

Pno.

*crescendo poco a poco*

*mf*

253

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

Trb. 3

Trb. 4

Pno.

*mf*

8va

12  
262

Trb. 1

Trb. 2

Trb. 3

Trb. 4

W

V

Pno.

Rock and voice together.

More.  
*mp*

so in the end

273

Trb. 1

V

Pno.

*pp*

*lontano*

*mp*

close of a long day went down in the end went down down the steep stair let down the blind and down right down in - to the old rock-er moth-er rock-er where moth-er sat all the years all in black — best black — sat and rocked

*subito piano*

*subito piano*

*subito piano*

8va





Trb. 1

298

V

298

right down in - to the old rock - er those arms at last and rocked rocked with closed eyes clos - ing eyes she so long all eyes fam - ished eyes all sides high and low

Pno.

298

V

307

to and fro at her win - dow to see be seen till in the end close of a long day to her - self whom else time she stopped

Pno.

307

Trb. 1

315

*pp*

V

315

let down the blind and stopped time she went down down the steep stair time she went right down was her own oth - er own othy - er liv - ing soul so in the end close of a long day went down down the steep stair

Pno.

315

324

Trb. 1

V

8

let down the blind and down right down in - to the old roc - er and rocked rocked say - ing to her - self no done with that the rock - er

Pno.

324

8va

335

V

8

those arms at last say - ing to the rock - er rock her off stop her eyes fuck life stop her eyes rock her off rock her off

Pno.

335

349

Trb. 1

Pno.

349