

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

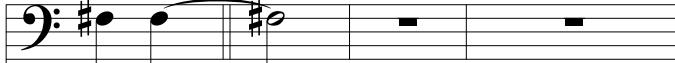
Effimero e lontano ($\text{♩}=\text{ca. } 42$)

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



16

Trb. 1



16

W

Rock and voice together.

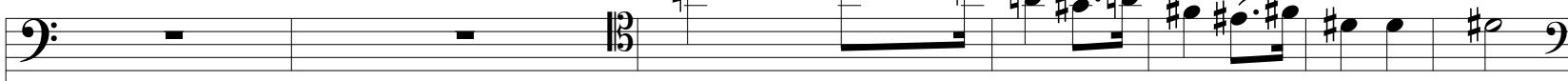
(Note that voices sound one octave lower than written.)

Semplice e non troppo cantabile

Musical score for Trombone 1, Voice, and Piano from measures 16 to 27. The score includes three staves: Trombone 1 (top), Voice (middle), and Piano (bottom). The Trombone 1 staff has a dynamic *mp*. The Voice staff has lyrics: "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 stopped". The Piano staff has dynamics *l.v.* and *mp*. Measure 27 ends with a fermata over the vocal line.

28

Trb. 1



28

V

pp

Musical score for Trombone 1, Voice, and Piano from measures 28 to 30. The score includes three staves: Trombone 1 (top), Voice (middle), and Piano (bottom). The Voice staff has lyrics: "time she stopped going to and fro". The Piano staff has a dynamic *mp*. Measure 30 ends with a fermata over the vocal line.

28

Pno.

Musical score for Trombone 1, Voice, and Piano from measures 28 to 30. The score includes three staves: Trombone 1 (top), Voice (middle), and Piano (bottom). The Voice staff has lyrics: "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 ____". The Piano staff has a dynamic *8va*.

39

V 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

Trb. 1

48

V 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-othe-er an-

Pno.

48

V 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

66

V 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 Lontano

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

Pno.

74 Lontano

Trb. 1

84

Pno.

84

121

Trb. 1

V

Pno.

121

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

121

5 5 5 3

8va-

V

131

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

8va-

Pno.

131

6 6 5 3 5

8vb

V

137

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

8va-

Pno.

137

6 6 5 3 5 6 6

p

165

Trb. 1

165

Trb. 2

Pno.

165

165

8va--

173

Trb. 1

3

173

Trb. 2

3

173

W

Rock and voice together.

More.

mp

Come sopra

V

173

173

Pno.

173

p

3

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

8va--

V 204
nev - er mind a face be - hind the pane fam - ished eyes like hers to see be seen no _____ a blind up _____ like hers a lit - tle like

Pno. 204
3 8va - 6 6
rallentando

V 213
one blind up _____ no more an - oth - er crea - ture somewhere there be - hind the pane an oth - er liv - ing soul one oth - er liv - ing soul.

Pno. 213
3 6 6 5 3 3 3
rallentando
lontano

Trb. 1 219

V 219
p
till the day came in the end came close _____ of a long day when she said to her - self whom else _____

Pno. 219
3 5 8va - 5 5
3 3

235

Trb. 1

235

Trb. 2

235

V

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

Lontano

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

235

Pno.

8va- 6 6 5 3

Lontano

Musical score for brass and piano, measures 244-253.

Instrumentation: Trb. 1, Trb. 2, Trb. 3, Trb. 4, Pno.

Measure 244:

- Trb. 1: Crescendo poco a poco, dynamic *mf*.
- Trb. 2: Crescendo poco a poco.
- Trb. 3: Rest.
- Trb. 4: Rest.
- Pno.: Rest.

Measure 253:

- Trb. 1: Dynamic *mf*.
- Trb. 2: Dynamic *mf*.
- Trb. 3: Rest.
- Trb. 4: Rest.
- Pno.: Rest.

8va

262 Trb. 1

262 Trb. 2

262 Trb. 3

262 Trb. 4

262 W

262 V

262 Pno.

262

f

f

f

Rock and voice together.

262

More.

mp

so in the end

262

262

262

262

262

262

273 Trb. 1

lontano

pp

subito piano

273 V

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

mp

subito piano

273 Pno.

273

subito piano

8va

281

Trb. 1

V

Pno.

281

rocked _____ till her end came in the end came off her head they said gone off her head but harm-less no harm in her dead one day____ no might dead one night____

281

Trb. 1

290

V

290

in the rock-er in her best black head fal-len and the rock-er rock-ing rock-ing a - way____ so in the end close of a long day went down in the end went down down the steep stair let down the blind and down

Pno.

290

290

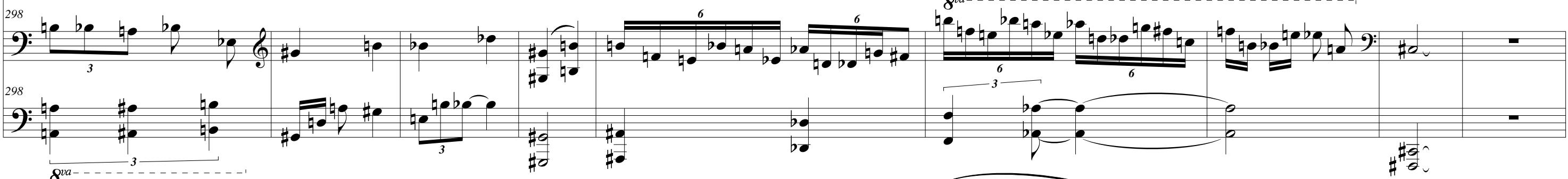
Trb. 1



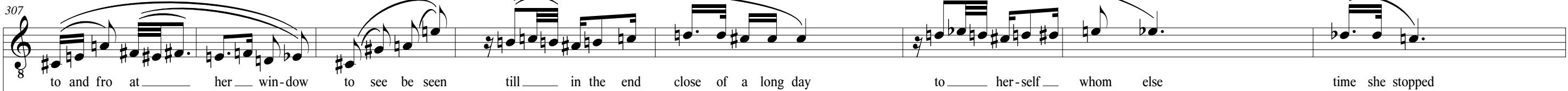
V



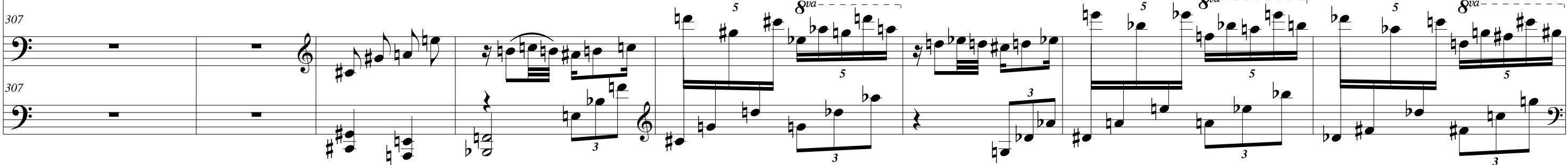
Pno.



V



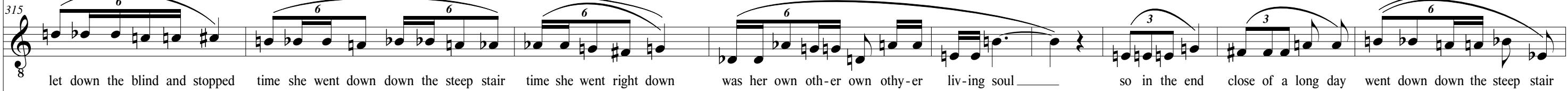
Pno.



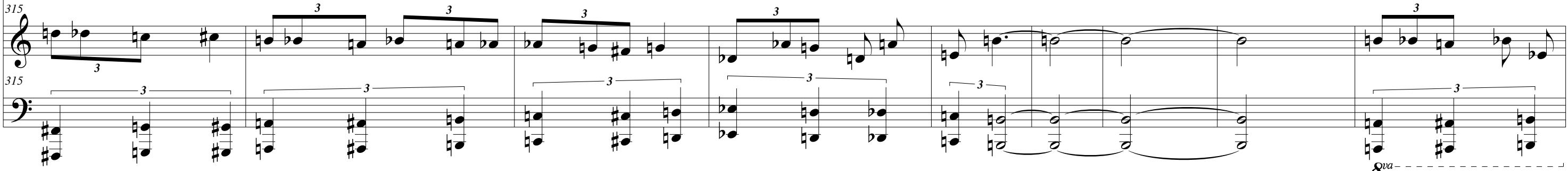
Trb. 1



V



Pno.



324

Trb. 1

V

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

Pno.

324

V

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

Trb. 1

349

Pno.

349