

Time She Stopped

a: Worker.

w: Woman in chair

*Fade up on foot of rocking-chair facing front downstage slightly
off centre audience left.*

Long pause.

w: More.

*[Pause. Rock and a voice together. a makes attempt to walk
under leg of chair. Repeat until action of play is complete.]*

*a: till in the end / the first thing done / a shadow made / the bird soars
overhead / she makes it play / and down in line / the leg came down
/ over her head / at once she makes / a play across / she will across /
and make it / shadow down / the leg came down / as she were only /
here to only / make it play / and down the line / to follow through /
to quick pass through / to follow only change / no stop / no change /
she makes a play / as if she only / if here only / as alone she / follow
through / no stop no change / she never moved an inch / the rock
here only / never moved / and she is going / to and fro / and to and /
time she stopped / was never / time she stopped / was moved was /
time she stopped / no stop to change / she stopped / when we
weren't looking / no stopped looking / never moved an inch / no
xrock / in line / the leg comes down / she has come down / and first
thing down / a shadow acting / still now still / and sees a line / a
front / a shadow stop / to stop no change / she stops / no change
involved / in the process / no process involved / in the change /
mechanics fail / a rock to stop / she stops / a way to play / to stop /
till in the end / to find a centre / mark a stop / on wood / she shadow
/ marks the stop / on wood / the rocking off / the stops / no change
as ever / will / and so she will she / to and fro / she will to / fall
asleep / drop off / her head / she will / to stop / she will across / as if
she never moved / an inch / no rock / and still / the end / the first
thing done / the other creature / up close found / is moving over /
she up close / moves down / the wood / the folds / and up she /
makes a stop / to stop to change / she makes it play / and down / in
line / walks under leg / to wing / no stop will change / as legs will
swing / hers will keep ground / to fro / and from / a rock / she
shadow / swinging / not in isolation / makes a play at / being moved
/ as small she feels / as an ant.*

*[Options for end of action: a walks under leg of chair then right
of stage to wings. a walks over leg of chair then left of stage to
wings. a walks up the leg of chair and rests in folds of dress.
a walks onto foot of chair and rocks herself to sleep.]*

NOTES¹

Light:

Subdued. Narrow line of light on foot of chair across width of stage, constant throughout. Deep enough to include narrow limits of rock. Throughout speech rock slightly swaying in and out of light, a always visible Rest of stage dark. Opening fade-up: long pause, then light on chair. Final fade-out.

A:

Female worker ant. Small-bodied, around 2.5mm, dull light to dark brown. Ordinary looking, uniform size. Moves in well-defined trail.

W:

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

None of this (eyes, costume, attitude) now visible: only w's feet can be seen.

Chair:

Pale oak 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:

Towards end, say from 'drop off' on, gradually softer. A little softer each time. w 's 'more' a little softer each time.

¹ Action takes place under that of *Rockaby*. Notes taken from and adapted as necessary.