



Waiting for Godot

Samuel Beckett

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The story revolves around two seemingly homeless men waiting for someone—or something—named Godot. Vladimir and Estragon wait near a tree, inhabiting a drama spun of their own consciousness. The result is a comical wordplay of poetry, dreamscapes, and nonsense, which has been interpreted as mankind's inexhaustible search for meaning. Beckett's language pioneered an expressionistic minimalism that captured the existential post-World War II Europe. His play remains one of the most magical and beautiful allegories of our time.

Waiting for Godot Details

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Foad says

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Ahmed Ibrahim says

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Florencia says

A nice homage would be to write nothing.

✻

That is what I wrote this afternoon. Before that, a friend told me to write something. He was so sure that I could. I am never sure about what I can or cannot do. But he thought so. That was nice.

Nothing much happened after that, until another kind friend paid this review a visit and said "to wait". And "if *he* does not show up tomorrow..." Well, what is to be done then? There are messengers that assured me he would come. I will keep waiting. Contemplating the same places, the same scenarios, over and over, until I can predict the entire world. *Never neglect the little things of life.*

And then I think. And then, some more. Do I really want to keep waiting?

I wonder if I even have that choice.

Then, a beautiful woman with a quick mind that could leave you staring at your shoes, utterly perplexed, came along. She told me that I comprehended an author with finesse. I thanked her, of course. But... did I? In the middle of this constant—and often tiresome—analysis that I cannot escape from, can I even begin to grasp the concept of anything at all?

There is meaning, somewhere. But I fear it will keep evading our presence until... Ah. Choose the metaphor you like. ***This is getting alarming.***

A couple of minutes later, another lovely woman said that this was clever. I am not sure of that since I

believe Goodreads would delete this in a heartbeat. But, oh well. *Nothing to be done.*

The second I finished writing this, a third woman, equally stunning and of enviable wits, appeared. This good friend that I so admire, asked me something like "Can we keep waiting even when he makes an appearance?" And that made me ponder. Are we prepared for such a visit? Us, simple mortals, are we ready to face that kind of revelation? We are still waiting by that tree. Still complaining about so much waiting. But I wouldn't know what to do if... *I may be mistaken*, though. I have the feeling I thought about this yesterday. Not sure what day is today but I definitely thought about this... yesterday. God. *Either I forget immediately or I never forget.*

I was about to leave when another kind man approached and left a lovely comment about the quality of this review. I often disagree but that is how my head functions. And it is always nice to read that, so I thanked him. *It's the normal thing.*

After some time—do not know how much time since I can never measure it—another friend stopped by. He was asking when to read a certain book. He was not waiting for Godot, he was waiting for the right time. Oh. That might just be him...

No. Ah, yes. Time. That unforgiving time that refuses to stop. Time flows, always. Always the minutes. Always the decades. Even if we remain in the same place, with the same glance, the same companionship: ourselves. I would like that friend to read this book as soon as possible. But I do not own the proper words to convince him. Hell, I do not own any word. They own me; a powerless captive. So, I think, I believe, I cannot say much.

We wait... A diversion comes along and what do we do? We let it go to waste. Come, let's go to work! In an instant all will vanish and we'll be alone once more, in the midst of nothingness!

Or worse, we won't be here at all.

...you have to decide, my friend.

Later, another friend came along and said that this review was his favorite of the year so far. And I thought that was a lovely compliment. The problem is that I kept thinking. And analyzing. And in further reflection I said to myself, "okay, I know I cannot measure time, I know that I am not sure if I am still living a yesterday or I am already living my tomorrow because this permanent sense of ennui that fills each day makes me forget everything, but I am aware that the year has just started." And here we are, standing on this immense world with a myriad of possibilities and its inexorable absurdity haunting us everyday—an absurdity that allows anything to happen—so the fact that this review full of nonsense is someone's favorite of the year that has just begun, made me think. A better one might be written tomorrow. Or in a minute. And then, that's it. Ah. Stop thinking. *All I know is that the hours are long, under these conditions. ... Let us not waste our time in idle discourse!* I will make sure to say this as soon as I see this friend. Because days will pass and time will pass and things must be said.

...the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more. But that endless process does not apply to our ephemeral nature.

"Lovely musings", another friend wrote a couple of minutes ago. But when you think about it, there's nothing much to do, really. We are always looking for something new. Something else. Nothing much for me to find. *It'd pass the time*, they say. I haven't met anyone yet with the ability of breaking that vicious circle. We are here to spend time... And watch the sky as it changes its colors. A constant feeling of *another day done with*. We want to move, we say we'll go, we stay right here, like a not so lucky man with a rope around his neck. Honestly. *One is not master of one's mood.*

As I was about to conclude with this illogical ode to the absurd, this dull melody that echoes the

unpredictable nature of things and the tiresome search for what we are not meant to know, two more friends came along. The first one claimed to have seen *him*, the reason of it all. Apparently, he was trying to remember something. And at a cafe, no less! Whereas some of us are part of this useless but inevitable seek of meaning in life, trying to fill the gaps with something that might embody some source of comfort rather than simply embrace such absurdity of existence, hope for nothing and achieve a sense of freedom—if not freedom itself—Godot is passing the time at a cafe, completely unaware of our existence and our strong desire to meet him, as we see our days go by. Days that no longer perceive a different color. ...*habit is a great deadener.*

The last friend recommended me to watch the play that introduced me to these people that were waiting for Godot. And then mentioned another one. I cannot think of a better ending to this preposterous review. To postpone for a while this awfully exhausting search for meaning and enjoy another play that will probably make me think of that search almost immediately.

Human nature, my friend.

~~To be continued.~~

~~If you write.~~

Jan 12, 16

* Also on my blog.

Ahmad Sharabiani says

En attendant godot = Waiting for godot, Samuel Beckett

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At first I found Beckett's dramatic universe too glib, even watery, like a Burmese jungle cat. I found the dialogue too reliant upon the use of words. I thought the use of characters instead of sandwiches or tuxedos was trite and derivative. I also found the verdant pastures of Liechtenstein simply enchanting from an aerial point of view. Several times, I found myself questioning my decision to question my decision to use McDonald's wrappers from the Basque Region for the material of my hang-glider's wings, but then I realized, that's the point: having no discernible narrative thru-line is *STILL* a narrative thru-line all the same. Beckett's brilliance touched me at last. (But without permission, so I'm suing him in the Hague.)

So, I'm giving this a 5. Not a strong five. But not a weak five either. The sort of 5 that actively worked out for the high school rugby team, but then spent college taking it easy, drinking Irish Car Bombs, and now, years later plays Ultimate Frisbee on the weekends and sometimes runs in Central Park in the evenings, if not doing Bikram Yoga in Soho.

Paul Bryant says

Review revived again to mark the three month anniversary of the Top Lists being frozen....

As you know, the votes we strive for and crawl across barbed wire for and win oh so slowly and painfully are the only way we reviewers can tell we're still alive. We need the hit that only weekly Top Lists can give us. And yes, you could describe **the inexplicable absence of up to date Top Reviewer and Best Review Lists** as a "first world problem" if you were being really mean, but still, reviewers are people too... Let Samuel Beckett explain further.

ESTRAGON : Stuff this for a game of soldiers. Let's go.

VLADIMIR : We can't go.

ESTRAGON : Why not?

VLADIMIR : We're waiting for the Top Lists to be displayed correctly, remember?

ESTRAGON : Oh those.

VLADIMIR : Yes, those. Without the Top Lists we don't know who's top and who's - well, bottom. The world is chaos. Which review is best? Which made it in the mad-salmon-dash up the goodreads river of reviews to spawn in the sun?

ESTRAGON : You're very poetical tonight. Did you eat something that disagreed with you?

VLADIMIR : We must have the votes correctly tallied. It says so in the Bible.

ESTRAGON : But the vote counter is broken.

VLADIMIR : (sighs. Gives up trying to unlace his boot.) Yes, the vote counter is broken.

ESTRAGON : It's a sign.

VLADIMIR : It is a sign. But we have to wait.

ESTRAGON : What for?

VLADIMIR : For the vote counter to be fixed. We must.

ESTRAGON : I could go, you could wait. I think I left something in the oven.

VLADIMIR : You'll be back. Us sort, we have to wait.

ESTRAGON : For the vote counter to be fixed.

VLADIMIR : Yes. But we know it never will be fixed.

ESTRAGON : Yes. But we have to wait even so.

VLADIMIR : We should ask Rivka.

RIVKA (appearing from a cloud) : There is a bug. We have identified it. It will be fixed. But not yet.

ESTRAGON : See? I told you. It's hopeless.

VLADIMIR : No, not hopeless. But there is no hope.

Samra Yusuf says

All we've to do is to sit for a while with ourselves, leaving all what we've invented ourselves to be busy with apart, the people thronging us around, the works on due, the dates to meet, the places to reach, the days to come. Just make the life silent outside you, sit and think about all that which has gone by the wind, sit and look at ourselves real deep, at our past actions, the struggles of us that transformed into strengths, the loves we weren't brave enough to embrace or the ones who left us considering unworthy, the moments we cherished most and kept re-playing in the mind until memory lifted them down in subconscious, the triumphs we savored , the people we wanted to be ,the words we had to say, the lies we desired to speak or the truths we spoke and bemoaned for, it's been all for nothing!

What it is to be in the world? To be born and follow a long-been scripted routine, with a little alterations from others? This is what we've been doing, this is what we'll keep doing, and we the routine robots, actors on the stage waiting for our roles from the director, and in wait, musing the audience! With our gibberish talks, plot less story, helpless hope, and too tired to move to some next stage, waiting for the director to assign roles. This is where the actors need to sit and realize. There's not going to come any director, there's never been any, alone are they and alone is the stage to be performed, all they've to do is to invent roles for themselves, to accept the stage without director, and to honor themselves as the ultimate authority.

Waiting for Godot can easily secure its place from a sublime absurdist play to a ridiculous continuity of nonsense, no matter how meticulous you've been to decipher the meaning between lines, how deep you dug and how many times, it offers nothing save the performed words, as there isn't been any cryptic meaning, and this is the beauty of the play, it leads you to no definite end, as there is never been a methodical beginning. What strike me unaware is it's being the play version of Camus's suggested ways to confront absurdity of life in his "**Myth of Sisyphus**", *Suicide* being the foremost, characters suggest to hang themselves as they wait for godot to pass time, they tend to indulge in a religious narrative, the *Denial* of absurdity as proposed by Camus, consequently one's philosophical death, the characters at length also

ponder to accomplish erections, another petty way to confront the absurdity of life by sheer oblivion of its presence, but they never reach up to *acceptance*, as did Sisyphus, so shall they always be waiting for godot and grieved at his not coming.

And as of godot, “*the great success of Waiting For Godot Has arisen from a misunderstanding: critics and public alike were busy in allegorical or symbolic terms a play which strove at all costs to avoid definition*” (Ben-Zvi 142). puts Beckett himself.

As there's never been any Godot to wait for!

Mohamed Al says

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Huda Yahya says

We are no longer alone, waiting for ?the night, waiting for Godot, waiting ?for... waiting.

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KamRun says

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Manny says

VLADIMIR: They've called us back.

VLADIMIR: No, we're supposed to say what it means.

VLADIMIR: This play! We have to explain it.

VLADIMIR: *[discouraged]* I don't know. Maybe Godot will arrive. But again, maybe he won't. He's not

very reliable. *[Another pause]* Still, we can try.

[They both think deeply]

VLADIMIR: Any ideas yet?

ESTRAGON: My boots don't fit. My feet hurt.

VLADIMIR: *[furious]* Idiot! This isn't about your boots. We're talking meaning here! Philosophy!

ESTRAGON: Sorry.

[They continue to think. Enter POZZO and LUCKY]

VLADIMIR: Ah! How fortunate. Maybe you can explain the meaning of this play?

POZZO: My sight has been miraculously restored.

VLADIMIR: Oh! Good. But...

POZZO: Lucky!

[LUCKY moves center stage, and begins mumbling in a flat monotone voice]

LUCKY: Man's search for himself in an inhospitable cosmos... absurdity of all human action... black humour... marked by his wartime experiences...

[POZZO punches him, knocking LUCKY down]

LUCKY: *[writhing on the ground]* ...shifting relationship between the signifier and the signified...

[POZZO continues to kick him savagely]

LUCKY: *[gasping]* ...différance... impossibility of interpretation... semiotics... encoding... oh fuck!... fuck!... please stop kicking me! I don't know! I don't know!

POZZO: *[finally smiling]* That's better.

Soheil says

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Nothing happens, but that is the beauty of it.

A famous theatre reviewer once said “this is a play in which nothing happens, twice.” He was right, of course, but at the same time recognised the brilliance of the play. The fact that nothing happens is the reason why this play is so clever and tragic. The characters are stuck in this cycle of nothingness; they are destined to spend each day waiting for the mysterious entity known as Godot. He never comes. If nothingness didn’t happen twice then we, as the audience, would be unaware of this fact and, consequently, be ignorant to the tragic brilliance of the play.

“ESTRAGON: I can't go on like this.

VLADIMIR: That's what you think.”

Indeed, the plot is bizarrely simple: two men Vladimir and Estragon are simply waiting for Godot. They don’t remember why they are waiting or even who this Godot character is. They just know that they must wait. Whilst they wait they encounter two equally as strange characters, Pozzo and Lucky. Lucky is Pozzo’s slave for no apparent reason and the two seem completely dependent on each other like Vladimir and Estragon are themselves. The four engage in a weird and perplexing conversation, and then go about their business. The next act is very similar to the first.

Beckett breaks the rules

The play belongs to the absurdist theatre branch, which challenges the conventions of the realism theatre of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; it does the exact opposite to what was considered a well-made play. The characters carry out a chain of repetitive and mundane dialogue, which is completely devoid of any concrete meaning. There are no geographical or historical specifications as the dialogue is reduced down to a series of pointless statements. We have no idea where these characters are or where they’ve come from. The play appears illogical and rich in purposelessness, but it is utterly brilliant; it was something completely “out there” at the time, and still is really.

“Estragon: We always find something, eh Didi, to give us the impression we exist?”

Vladimir: Yes, yes, we're magicians.”

In all honestly this play is excruciating to read; it is completely awful in parts and frustrating, but the idea Samuel Beckett conveys at the same time is grand; it makes up for the torture he has put you through as you look back and realise what he has achieved: you look back and understand why he has broken all the conventions and wrote a play that is as absurd as it is genius. By doing so he has recognised the strange absurdity that is human existence, and questioned the purposelessness of this thing we call life. He has created a Tragedy, as great as any that came before it, by using the most unconventional of methods.

I could never give this a five star rating because it is just too painful to read regardless of what it achieves. However, to ignore the artistic merit of the play would be an act of pure self-conceiting ignorance. As Estragon says:

“Estragon: People are bloody ignorant apes.”

I will never read this again, or ever go to watch it at a theatre, but it is something I look back on and say “what a brilliant idea” even if I found the reading process quite painful and dull.

Nayra.Hassan says

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Godot

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Jason Koivu says

You spin me right round, baby
Right round like a record, baby
Right round round round

Still absurd. Quite ridiculous. Occasionally philosophical. However, since its completion, the comedy of *Waiting for Godot* has become commonplace. Because the humor could be said to be Three Stooges-esque at times, one could say this play was even behind the times. I say it *could* be said, not that I say it is.

Does *Waiting for Godot* deserve all the attention it has received? After all, it seems to state the meaning of life while asserting life is meaningless, and that's quite a significant statement. From the mouths of the characters Vladimir and Estragon, Beckett says that nothing in life matters. However, the characters contempt suicide, and that is the ultimate matter of life. That they then neglect to do so would indicate that they believe there to be value in life. Or is it that they are just too lazy to do even this deed, which would release them from having to do anything afterwards forever and always?

Ah, but look at me, foolishly trying to make sense of it all when, if anything is clear, that is surely not what Beckett intended.

Instead, let me explain why this received no better than a middling rating from me. It has too many Falstaffs. When everybody's a comedian real conversation turns into a comedian's lingua franca and much of the humor's basis of being funny in the first place is lost. In other words, we laugh at the absurdity of life, but if life is absurd the humor dissipates. In *Waiting for Godot* the humor dissipated too much for me. There, I said it.

Lisa says

Waiting for Godot still waits for a review. I wonder if it will ever come. While pondering on the possibility of a review, I think about whether I liked it or not. I can't even say that, so technically, ...

... I am still waiting ... for the rating ... as well ...

It is in the stars. I added some for decoration. They are quite meaningless, but yellow dots please my Scandinavian eyes.

It is about nothing, really. But Nothing was already taken by Henry Green - and also filled with so much of everything - that Samuel Beckett probably thought he'd wait and see if he could find a better title than nothing. While waiting, he gave it a working title, and that's what the play turned into. The process became the end product, and the waiting for something became something of its own.

As for the characters. They talk, therefore they are.

One of them asks me:

"Are you ready to write?"

And I say: "Yes, let's write!"

But I don't move.

Glenn Russell says

Waiting for Godot in Antarctica

An audience gathers to preview a screening of a new version of this Samuel Beckett play. The directed striped his rendition down to bare existential black and white by filming in Antarctica and using penguins as actors. The problem of dialogue is solved by the technique of voice-over.

In the first act, two penguins stand on bleak, snow-covered ice. There's a close up of one penguin. The voice-over says, "Nothing to be done."

The camera slowly scans to the other penguin who waddles next to the first. His voice-over begins, "I'm beginning to come round to that opinion."

The play continues in this manner. Occasionally, the two penguins rock back and forth in their stark, empty white world. When in the middle of the second act, a third penguin approaches, the two penguins waddle awkwardly to an icy hill and then toboggan on their stomachs down the hill and into the water.

After a soul-searching monologue, the third penguin also toboggans down the hill into the water. At the end of the play the two original penguins rock back and forth. One penguin says, “Well, shall we go swimming again?”

The other penguin replies, “Yes, let’s go.”

But the penguins do not move.

Issa Deerbany says

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Jibran says

“What happened?”

“Nothing happened.”

“Why did nothing happen?”

“How would I know?”

“You would know.”

“I would?”

“Yes.”

“How I would know?”

“Because you read it.”

“Did I?”

“Yes.”

“How do you know?”

“It is on your shelf.”

“So?”

“You rated it.”

“What does it mean?”

“It means you have read it.”

“Oh I have.”

“So what happened?”

“Nothing happened.”

“Why did nothing happen?”

“Because they were waiting for Godot.”

Waiting and *nothing* – I could take these two words and use them in as many combinations as the rules of probability allow to create a ‘review’ that would be as much meaningful as it would be meaningless. I could draw upon the elusive symbolism of the text in the manner of a perspicacious hermeneut whose convoluted

exegesis would only serve to frustrate him even more. Or like a blurb-writer I could summarise the four-and-a-half characters, the austere landscape, the leafless tree, the role of the taut rope and jangling bucket, and the heap of nonsense, but what would that achieve?

Suffice it to say that the sheer speed of the bare dialogue makes you want to slow down and look for something queer happening between the lines, but nothing happens. Or perhaps everything happens? You can look at from any number of angles and it adapts itself to your point of view. You can attach any meaning to the memorable symbolism and it helps you comprehend that meaning. You may hypothesize at will and the text will lend you a hand to prove it.

Beckett in his frugal minimalist brilliance paints a powerful imagery of an agitated self, a helpless being, a lonely traveller, in eternal yet meaningless wait, which life ultimately is, till we take the final leap into oblivion. The act of wait, which is an act of life, is given a comic dimension in the play. By the end the reader becomes one with the characters, waiting for things to happen, for *something* to happen, but nothing ever happens. Yet life happens.

I think it's impossible to review *Waiting for Godot* adequately, not even after a long and thorough analysis, because in that case one would be seeking directions where none exist.

The best review of the play is the one that is not written.

February '15

James says

Book Review

4 out of 5 stars to *Waiting for Godot*, written in 1952 by Samuel Beckett. Mankind in general is made up of both passive and active people. In Samuel Beckett's absurdist play *Waiting for Godot*, there are four characters who can be directly compared to universal mankind. Estragon and Vladimir are considered passive people because they sit back and let life pass them by, unlike Pozzo and Lucky, who are active people because they live new adventures from day to day. Samuel Beckett's play is a direct commentary on universal mankind and shows that the world is made up of "couch potatoes" and "Energizer bunnies" who have distinct differences.

Estragon and Vladimir are the passive people and could be considered the "couch potatoes" of today's world. They sit around and do the same things day-in and day-out. "Couch potatoes" get up, watch TV, sleep, watch TV, eat, and rarely expend any energy. Estragon and Vladimir have daily rituals of removing boots, eating carrots, waiting for Godot, talking of beatings, and forgetting what they did the day before. Both "couch potatoes" and Beckett's characters do absolutely nothing and as a result, the days run into each other with no boundaries. There is confusion and chaos everywhere. Throughout his play, Samuel Beckett's characters portray elements of mankind who do nothing and live in a world of inaction and laziness. They are passive like Estragon and Vladimir.

However, Pozzo and Lucky show the active elements of universal mankind. They could be considered the "Energizer bunnies" of today's world. Lucky runs around, foams at the mouth, recites incomprehensible speeches, and carries his master around subserviently like a true slave. From day to day they visit new places and meet with Estragon and Vladimir in different atmospheres. Pozzo also is very active like an "Energizer

bunny." He, as well as Lucky, "keep on licking and never take a licking." Together they are constantly on the move from new place to new place. Similar to the real people of the world, Pozzo and Lucky are active. The active people will hop a plane to Paris one day and the next be swimming in Sydney, Australia. They live new adventures daily like Pozzo and Lucky. The characters in Samuel Beckett's play are directly related to universal mankind who at times can be an active people.

About Me

For those new to me or my reviews... here's the scoop: I read A LOT. I write A LOT. And now I blog A LOT. First the book review goes on Goodreads, and then I send it on over to my WordPress blog at <https://thisismytruthnow.com>, where you'll also find TV & Film reviews, the revealing and introspective 365 Daily Challenge and lots of blogging about places I've visited all over the world. And you can find all my social media profiles to get the details on the who/what/when/where and my pictures. Leave a comment and let me know what you think. Vote in the poll and ratings. Thanks for stopping by.
