

IDHAYA COLLEGE FOR WOMEN, KUMBAKONAM



SEMESTER : IV
SUBJECT : DRAMA
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CLASS : II BA ENGLISH
TITLE OF THE PAPER : WATING FOR GODOT
NAME OF THE FACULTY : MS. T. INDHUMATHI

Samuel Beckett

- ❖ Samuel Beckett was born in Dublin in 1906.
- ❖ He befriended the famous Irish novelist James Joyce, and his first published work was **An Essay on Joyce**.
- ❖ He began his literary career as a short- story writer and a novelist.
- ❖ He was one of the group of dramatists who developed the so called “**Theatre of the Absurd**”.

His works:

- Waiting for Godot(1952)
- Endgame (1958)
- Krapp’s Last Tape (1959)
- Happy days (1961)
- Breath (1970)

In 1969 he was awarded the “Noble Prize for Literature”.

Background

- **Waiting for Godot** qualifies as one of Samuel Beckett's most famous works.
- Originally written in French in 1948, Beckett personally translated the play into English.
- The world premiere was held on January 5, 1953, in the Left Bank Theatre of Babylon in Paris.
- The play's reputation spread slowly through word of mouth and it soon became quite famous. Other productions around the world rapidly followed.

What's up with the Title?

- The title of the play thus brings into our mind about the meaningless waiting and it is the waiting for God, or for a mythical human being, or for the meaning of life, or for death or for something else.
- The title of the play depicts vagueness and anxiety.
- The title shows lack of actions on the stage.

Main Features of Absurd Drama

- Absence of a real story or plot.
- Vagueness about time, place, and the characters.
- The value of language is reduced.
- Large use of pause, silences, miming and facial situations.
- Incoherent babbling makes up the dialogue.
- The “Theatre of the Absurd” is characterized by the belief that man’s life appears to be meaningless and purposeless and human beings cannot communicate and understand each other.
- Samuel Beckett’s “**Waiting for Godot**” is generally considered the starting point of Absurdist drama.

Overview

ACT I

The plot of Samuel Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* is simple to relate. Two tramps are waiting by a sickly looking tree for the arrival Godot. They quarrel, make up ,contemplate suicide, try to sleep, eat a carrot and gnaw on some chicken bones. Two other characters appear, a master and a slave, who perform a grotesque scene in the middle of the play. A young boy arrives to say that Godot will not come today, but that he will come tomorrow. The play is a development of the title, *Waiting for Godot*.

ACT II

He doesn't come and two tramps resume their vigil by the tree, which between the first and second day has sprouted a few leaves, the only symbol of a possible order in a thoroughly alienated world.

Characters

- Vladimir (Didi)
- Estragon (Gogo)
- Pozzo
- Lucky
- Boy
- Godot

Summary- Act I

- Setting: A country road with one tree
- Vladimir and Estragon meet
- Estragon pulls of his boot, Vladimir takes of his hat
- They look in them to see if there's anything inside
- Later, they talk about Jesus Christ and Gospels to pass time.
- Estragon wants to leave, Vladimir says they can't.
- Because they're Waiting for Godot.
- They don't know if Godot will come, or it's the right place to wait

- Bored, Estragon suggests hanging themselves from the tree.
- They can't decide Who should go first, so they decide to wait.
- Pozzo and Lucky arrive.
- Lucky- looks like a horse, rope around his neck, carrying everything.
- Pozzo- looks rich and aristocratic, carries a whip to hit Lucky.
- Estragon talks about Godot, Pozzo get confused.
- Pozzo orders Lucky around, Lucky obeys silently.
- Then he eats some chicken, throwing the bones away.
- Estragon gets the bones since Lucky for almost 60 Years.
- Vladimir is surprised but Pozzo says Lucky is a burden.

- Pozzo talks about the night sky, other appreciate that
- Pozzo likes being appreciated, offers to have Lucky dance and think for them.
- Lucky dances , but when he starts to think, he starts talking about politics and religion. The thoughts are never connected or completed.
- The men force Lucky to stop talking.
- Pozzo and Lucky leave , Vladimir and Estragon wait for Godot.
- A young boy arrives, sent by Godot. He says Godot won't come today.

Summary – Act II

- Setting: Same place, same time
- Vladimir and Estragon admit they are happy alone.
- Then convince each other that they're happy together.
- Still waiting for Godot.....
- They say they hear (voices), so they decide to ask each other questions.
- Estragon doesn't remember yesterday.
- They keep on talking, then see someone coming.
- They try to hide behind the tree, but they're too big to hide.

- Then they decide to abuse each other, start insulting.
- They embrace and continue waiting.
- Pozzo and Lucky arrive again.
- Pozzo is blind and Lucky is mute.
- Pozzo falls, Vladimir doesn't want to help him stand up not to be left alone.
- Then they help Pozzo get up.
- Estragon goes to wake up Lucky.
- He kicks him and starts hurling abuses until he again hurts his foot.
- Estragon sits back down and tries to take off his boot.
- Pozzo and Lucky leave.

- Vladimir says there is no truth and by tomorrow they will know nothing of what happened.
- The boys arrives again.
- The conversation is the same – Godot will not come today.
- Vladimir wants the boy to remember him tomorrow.
- Then they decide to leave but they can't because they need to wait.
- They decide to hang themselves if Godot doesn't come.
- They wavering to leave, but they don't.

Symbols

- Duality
- The Tree
- Nightfall and the Rising Moon
- Vladimir's song that never ends
- The Carrot
- Lucky's Dance
- The Hat
- The Bones

Setting

- **Place :** A desolate country road and a bare tree
- **Time:** Evening

Themes

- Time
- Life and Existence
- Freedom and Confident
- Hope
- Absurdism
- Friendship
- Suffering

Language and Techniques

- The simplest form of dialogue ,essential ,but a certain amount of symmetry, repetition, parallelism so that it's not boring but creates a sort of thrill in recognizing themes and motives in the audience even if the final message is shocking and desperate.

Lack of Plot

- No beginning ,climax and ending.
- Same place and time.
- Unexplained story
- Nothingness and emptiness

Absurd ending

- Absurd play has unexplained, hope , religion, nothingness, forgetfulness, purposelessness of man Ending is not conclusion.....

THANK YOU