



منشورات جامعة دمشق

كلية الآداب والعلوم الإنسانية الثالثة بدرعا

قسم اللغة الإنكليزية

السنة الرابعة

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المسرح الحديث

لطلاب السنة الرابعة في قسم اللغة الإنكليزية

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العام الدراسي ٢٠٢٢ _ ٢٠٢٣

Damascus University
Third Faculty of Letters
English Department
Forth Year

Modern Drama

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Second Term
2022-2023

Absurd Theatre

Samuel Beckett

Waiting for Godot

Good day ladies and gentlemen. Last term ,we focused on modern English poetry ,but in this term. we are going to handle something important you are familiar with ,though it might not be related to; it is

modern English drama. In the second semester, we intend to attempt **three plays**; WAITING FOR GODOT ,THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD and TOP GIRLS. Before commencing the first play which was composed by Samuel Beckett, we are going to point out to the following topics being included in our study :

- 1- Beckett's life and literary background.
- 2 -A general and detailed summary of WAITING FOR GODOT.
- 3- The characters.

1- Beckett's life and literary background

Samuel Beckett was born in Dublin into well-educated prosperous middle-class family. He joined a famous school, Portora Royal, and on to Trinity College studying modern languages. Due to being the first of his year in his study degree, Beckett, in 1928, gained the coveted post of exchange at the Ecole Normale Supérieure in Paris. In 1930 Beckett had to return to

Ireland to take up his post as assistant lecturer in the French department at Trinity College. Then suddenly, he resigned from his job, with the intention of becoming a writer. In 1939, during the outbreak of World war II, Beckett returned to Paris at once preferring Paris at war to Dublin at peace. He joined the resistance against the Nazis in 1940, and in 1942, being forewarned by a friend, left his flat only a few hours before broken into by the Nazis. Beckett was impressed by the later plays of Yeats and Synge . Beckett died on December 22nd, 1989 .Beckett's death marks the end of modernist literature, as he is often considered to be the last great modernist of the English language.

The term "Theatre of the Absurd" is applied to plays written by primarily European playwrights, that express the belief that human existence has no meaning or purpose and therefore all communication breaks down. Logical construction and argument gives way to irrational and illogical speech and to its ultimate conclusion, silence. While there are significant precursors, including Alfred Jarry (1873–1907), the Theatre of the Absurd is generally seen as beginning in the 1950s with the plays of Samuel Beckett. Though the term is applied to a wide range of plays, some characteristics coincide in many of the plays: broad comedy, often similar to Vaudeville, mixed with horrific or tragic images; characters caught in hopeless situations forced to do repetitive or meaningless actions; dialogue full of clichés, wordplay, and

nonsense; plots that are cyclical or absurdly expansive; either a parody or dismissal of realism and the concept of the "well-made play". Playwrights commonly associated with the Theatre of the Absurd include Samuel Beckett (1906–1989).

Now let's have a general summary of WAITING FOR GODOT

Act I

The scene is a country road, a tree and a low mound. Estragon is sitting on the mound, trying to take off his boot. Vladimir enters and they talk. Vladimir removes his hat several times during their dialogue, peering inside it, as if he suspected something was there. Estragon, having finally removed his boot, searches inside it in a similar fashion. When Estragon suggests leaving, Vladimir replies, 'We can't ... We're waiting for Godot.' It soon becomes evident that two men have no precise information about Godot's arrival. They discuss how to pass the time while waiting and consider hanging themselves from the tree. The idea is abandoned after they reflect that only one of them might succeed in dying, leaving the other alone. Vladimir gives Estragon a turnip, followed by a carrot. While he is eating the latter, Pozzo and Lucky enter. Lucky, crying a lot of luggage, is haltered by a long rope. The rope is held by Pozzo, who also carries a whip. Lucky crosses the stage and goes out, but Pozzo, having seen Vladimir and Estragon, stops suddenly, causing Lucky to fall over. Vladimir and Estragon inquire whether Pozzo is Godot. Pozzo informs them that they are waiting for Godot on his (Pozzo's) land. He then sits down to a picnic, while Lucky remains carrying the luggage. Once Pozzo has finished eating, Vladimir comments that his treatment of Lucky is scandalous, while Estragon asks why he does not put down burdens. Pozzo says that Lucky maybe trying to empress him, so that he will not sell him at the fair. Creatures such as Lucky should be killed, he says. Lucky weeps, but, when Estragon goes to wipe his eyes, he kicks him violently, so that his leg bleed. Vladimir goes on reproaching Pozzo for thinking of discarding such a 'faithful servant'; but when Pozzo says that he can no longer put up with Lucky's behaviour, Vladimir soon reproaches Lucky for ill-treating his 'good master'! Pozzo, having asked Estragon to persuade him to sit down, makes a speech about the sky, for which he demands praise. When Vladimir and Estragon congratulate him, he decides that Lucky should provide them with some entertainment. Lucky dances briefly, twice, and is imitated by Estragon. Then, after Vladimir has provided him with his hat, he 'thinks' aloud, in a long tirade. This continues until Vladimir removes the offending hat and Lucky falls over. Vladimir and Estragon hoist him to

his feet, but since he falls again as soon as he is unsupported, they are forced to hold him between them.

Pozzo brings over Lucky's burdens, which at first he drops. As soon as Lucky has grasped them, Vladimir and Estragon release Lucky and Pozzo tries out his paces with the whip. As he is about to leave, Pozzo discovers he has lost his watch. Pozzo and Lucky then depart, Lucky falling over again when Pozzo stops suddenly to collect the stool.

While Vladimir is wondering whether he has met Pozzo and Lucky before, since Estragon does not remember the, a Boy enters with the message the Mr Godot 'won't come this evening but surely tomorrow'. He says he is Mr Godot's goatherd and that his master is kind to him, but beats his brother, the shepherd. Vladimir asks the Boy to tell Mr Godot that he has seen them. As soon as the Boy has gone, the light fails and the moon rises. Estragon removes his boots and places them at the edge of the stage. Vladimir tries to lead him away, but Estragon first contemplates the potential of the tree for committing suicide. He then goes to sit on the mound, reflecting whether they might be better off if they separated. Vladimir joins him, offering to part if Estragon wishes it. Estragon decides it is 'not worth while now' and suggests leaving. Vladimir agrees, but neither of them moves.

Act II

It is the next day, the same time and place as before. The tree has sprouted four or five leaves. Vladimir enters and walks about agitatedly, pausing to sing a song. Estragon enters barefoot. He has been beaten. The two men embrace. They pass the time in speech 'since we are incapable of keeping silent', and discuss whether to develop the dialogue by contradicting or questioning each other. When silence overtakes them, they take off their hats in order to think of a further topic.

Vladimir discusses the previous day, of which Estragon remembers nothing until prompted. In order to prove the truth of his remarks, Vladimir pulls up Estragon's trousers and shows him the wound from Lucky's kick. He also points out Estragon's boots, but Estragon denies that they are his. Eventually he allows Vladimir to help him try them on. Estragon then sits on the mound, while Vladimir sings him a lullaby. He goes to sleep and Vladimir covers him with his own coat. He soon awakens after a nightmare, however. Vladimir will not listen to the nightmare, but helps Estragon to 'walk it off'.

When Estragon starts complaining, Vladimir speaks roughly to him and Estragon decides to leave. Vladimir finds Lucky's hat and puts it on in place of his own, which he gives to Estragon. A comic routine of

exchanging hats ensues, ending with Vladimir in Lucky's hat, Estragon in his own hat and Vladimir's hat discarded. Vladimir tries to entertain Estragon by imitating Lucky, asking him to play Pozzo. When Vladimir begins to dance, Estragon goes out, but returns at once, saying 'They're coming!' He exits at the other side of the stage, but returns because 'They're coming there too!'

Vladimir suggests that Estragon should leave through the auditorium. Estragon recoils from this and attempts, unsuccessfully, to hide behind the tree. Both men then take up watching positions at the extreme left and right of the stage. Observing nothing, they begin to abuse each other. After Vladimir has been vanquished by the word 'Critic!', the two men embrace. They decide to occupy themselves in physical exercise, first hopping and then standing on one leg, imitating the tree. Estragon staggers, brandishes his fists and yells, 'God have pity on me!'

Pozzo and Lucky enter, Lucky laden as before, but on a shorter rein, since Pozzo is blind. He stops short on seeing Vladimir and Estragon, so that Pozzo bumps into him. They both fall over and lie helpless. Estragon mistakes Pozzo for Godot. Vladimir and Estragon pursue their own thoughts, ignoring Pozzo's cries for help, until he offers money. Vladimir decides at last that to help would be a welcome diversion from routine. In attempting to raise Pozzo, however, Vladimir himself falls over. Finding he cannot get up, he calls for help, but Estragon makes no effort to assist him, until he appears contented to remain on the ground. Then, in trying to raise Vladimir, Estragon falls over in his turn. Pozzo, struck by Vladimir, crawls away. Estragon calls to him and, finding that he answers to the names of Abel and Cain, concludes, 'He's all humanity'

Vladimir and Estragon get up without difficulty after this. They decide at last to assist Pozzo, who falls over as soon as they release him, so that they are forced to support him between them. Stuck with him thus, they question him about his blindness. Pozzo in turn wishes to know where he is and the time of day. He asks Estragon to discover whether Lucky is hurt, suggesting that he should first try him with the rope, and kick him if he gets no response. Estragon ascertains that Lucky is breathing and then kicks him until his foot hurts. He goes to the mound to try to remove his boot, but soon falls asleep.

Vladimir tries to discuss their previous encounter, but Pozzo has forgotten it and calls to Lucky to prepare for their departure. Vladimir asks for a song from Lucky before they leave, but Pozzo replies that he is dumb. Questioned by an incredulous Vladimir, Pozzo loses his temper

and, in a diatribe against time, contrasts the brief gleam of human life with the long night of eternity. Pozzo and Lucky leave the stage, and are at once heard to fall again.

Vladimir awakens Estragon, who finds his boots still hurting him. After attempting to remove them, he dozes off again. Vladimir tries to assess the nature of reality, reflecting that most people pass through life as though asleep, never really getting to grips with the truth of things. The Boy enters and states that it is the first visit. Vladimir anticipates his message: Mr Godot will come tomorrow, 'without fail'. Mr Godot has no occupation: the Boy states when asked, 'He does nothing sir.' Vladimir can think of no better message to send him than that of the previous evening: 'Tell him you saw me.' Afraid that the boy will not recognize him the following day, he springs towards him, but the Boy evades him and runs out.

The sun sets immediately, as before, and the moon rises. Vladimir stands bowed and motionless. Estragon awakens, removes his boots and places them centre front of the stage. Both men decide to leave, but Vladimir points out that they are obliged to return on the morrow, 'to wait for Godot'. They look at the tree, but again have no rope. Estragon remembers the cord supporting his trousers. He unties it and his trousers fall down. The two men test the strength of the cord, which breaks, so that they almost fall. They resolve to bring 'a good bit of rope' the following day. Estragon again considers parting from Vladimir, but Vladimir points out that if Godot does not come to save them, they can indeed hang themselves. He tells Estragon to pull on his trousers and suggests they leave. Estragon agrees, but, as at the end of Act I, neither moves.

The characters:

Waiting for Godot Character Analysis

There are seven characters in “Waiting for Godot”. One of them is just a messenger, who is not as important as other characters. Remaining every character of the play is very necessary to understand purpose of playwright behind “Waiting for Godot”, which are:

- Vladimir
- Estragon
- Pozzo
- Lucky
- Godot
- Boy (Messenger)

- The Boy's brother

Vladimir:

We already know that Samuel Becket has presented two types of relationships in the play. One in the form of Vladimir and Estragon whereas the second is of Pozzo and Lucky. No one can understand the character of Vladimir without comparing it with Estragon. Hence, Estragon is necessary to be discussed along with this major character of the play.

Vladimir thinks logically and takes the decision on the basis of reasoning, hence, we may say that he is the strongest of all. Despite his odd nature, he is loved by the audience as he thinks more than any other character of the play. He has more knowledge than Estragon that makes him a sober and intellectual personality. He time and again tells Estragon that they should wait until Godot arrives. Vladimir also reveals that he once met Godot still he does not remember how exactly Godot lookalike. He also gives hope to Estragon and boosts his moral due to which Estragon agrees to wait for Godot.

Vladimir is not selfish at all. He does not want that Pozzo should sell Lucky. When he realizes that Pozzo is going to sell Lucky, he expresses his deep condolence with him and advises Pozzo not to do so. Not only he expresses his sympathy with Lucky but also expresses sharp disapproval and suggests that Lucky should not leave his good master.

No matter what may be the situation, Vladimir does not leave hope. He is an optimist still he is in anguish because of his habit of deep analysis of every other character of "Waiting for Godot". He thinks about life, about people, about their situation and also consistently tries to find meaning in his life. Vladimir is among those psychological characters of Waiting for Godot, who make an opinion of other characters in mind. He does not only think about himself but also about other people, who are residing around him. While forgetting his own pains, he gives more time to the pains of other people.

Vladimir reads the Bible and gets instructions from it. He has thirst for knowledge. He does not physically suffer but mentally. There is no cavil in the proposition that each and every problem of Vladimir is psychological in nature. His sufferings are inner and emotional.

What does Vladimir's represent?

He has problems with his hat as Estragon has with his boots. It symbolizes that his overthinking is the main problem of his life. He has a God gifted habit of thinking and opining about the matter. He time and again peers into his hat as he looks for something in it. It means that whenever this major character (Vladimir) of "Waiting for Godot" starts a discussion he does an analysis of it and then explains it to Estragon. His mind never remains free nor does it stop thinking. Overthinking is one of the most discussed psychological problems of the modern era and so as of

Vladimir. He creates problems with the help of his mind, hence, his head has been named “Charnel House”.

It cannot be disputed that Vladimir is a better friend than any other character in “Waiting for Godot” no matter how much analysis we do. He helps Estragon on every occasion and also considers it his duty. As compared to Estragon, he is calm like a child which is a symbol that knowledge always forces a person to think calmly.

Estragon

The playwright has put Estragon in juxtaposition to Vladimir. Only one thing is common between them; they are “Waiting for Godot”, whom about they do not know anything. As Vladimir cannot be judged without Estragon similarly, analysis of Estragon is not possible without judging the character of Vladimir in “Waiting for Godot”.

We hardly find any logic in Estragon’s actions and dialogues. However, whenever he talks, the audience finds a chance of laughing. He is the most stupid character in this play. He can’t think and lacks the skill of making decisions. Estragon is alive only because he is living with Vladimir otherwise, he would have died. He repeatedly asks a question that what are they doing here and Vladimir tells him that they have to wait until the arrival of Godot.

Estragon insists that they should go but he does not know where the symbolic analysis of which is that he does not know his destination like everyone in the world is unknown about his objective. He can’t control himself and leaves hope again and again. His moral decreases every single second pass. He has no concern whatsoever with the life of any other person because he is selfish. When Vladimir takes time to advise Pozzo and Lucky, he tries his best to find food for himself. It is also a symbol that selfishness prevails kindness when hunger knocks the stomach.

Like Vladimir, he also reads the bible but not for obtaining instructions from it but to see maps of the Holy Land. He suffers physically but not mentally. He is beaten by unknown persons every night about whom he knows nothing. Hence, it can’t be denied that his struggle is real and his problems are physical as he is tortured physically every time.

Why are Estragon’s Boots his Problem?

Estragon struggles with his boots, analysis of which is that “Waiting for Godot” is not the only problem of this second important character of the play. The dramatist shows that everyone like Estragon struggles with his life every day but in the end, it makes no difference at all. It is useless.

Comparison of Estragon and Vladimir in Waiting for Godot:

It has already been made clear that these two main characters of *Waiting for Godot* are opposite to each other. One is calm; the other is restless. One's problems are mental; other's are physical. One is kind; other is selfish. One is optimistic other pessimistic. One is a best friend; other just needs him. One tries to give his life meaning; other just don't know what is he doing.

In spite of all these differences, both of them are good friends. Vladimir tries his best to give hope to Estragon even at that time when Estragon completely forgets for whom they are waiting. He even sings a song for Estragon so that he may fall asleep. Vladimir does not like funny stories whereas Estragon forcibly tells him but despite so much contrast, they are best friends of all time.

Pozzo

The dramatist has shown characters of Pozzo and Lucky as master and his slave respectively in "*Waiting for Godot*". Pozzo is totally dependent on his slave. He is physically blind but not mentally, however, his nature is somewhat arrogant. He is the one who controls Lucky. It is not wrong to say that the playwright in *Waiting for Godot* has illustrated that both these characters cannot live independent though Pozzo repeatedly says that he wants to sell Lucky. Vladimir and Estragon are living together with the freewill but Pozzo and Lucky have no other choice.

Pozzo and lucky appear twice in the "*Waiting for Godot*"; firstly in Act-I and in Act-II for the second time, however, they do not remember that they ever met with Vladimir and Estragon. They react as they are meeting for the first time in their lives perhaps due to the lacking of the unity of time and place in the play.

From the analysis of the character of Pozzo in "*Waiting for Godot*", it is noticeable that the playwright has used him as a symbol in this play. First thing first, he is symbolized as a God because of his attitude towards Lucky and the remaining characters of *Waiting for Godot*. Samuel Becket has also shown him the cruellest human being. In spite of such good behaviour of Lucky, he does not like him. He also symbolizes feudalism. It is often said that Pozzo is a colonizer whereas Lucky is colonized. In addition, Pozzo and Lucky are in fact two common human races. There are two types of human races in every country. We may call it establishment or demolition; feudalism and serfdom; rich and poor; bad and good, whatever we call it, we are obvious that Pozzo and Lucky are two distinct characters of *Waiting for Godot*.

Lucky

Lucky is just like a human being living in the Greek's era. It is believed that gods in that era were much cruel. They controlled humans and punished them without giving them any freewill. Lucky is just a puppet in the hands of Pozzo despite the fact that Pozzo cannot go anywhere without him. It is also astonishing that Pozzo is entirely dependent on Lucky yet he hates him and calls him a "pig". The dramatist has shown Lucky's condition much miserable. The most important symbol in "*Waiting for Godot*", which is evident from the analysis of Lucky's character is "Colonization". We are well aware of the fact that colonizer countries expanded their territory through

colonization, which was apparently for the welfare of humanity yet it was the result of greed and gaining more and more wealth from poor countries.

Besides, Lucky symbolizes a race of human being which has no fault of his own still it is living a life worse than animals. Lucky carries Pozzo's luggage even the whim, with whom Pozzo beats him. It means that how feudalism is controlling the labour, enjoying fruits of their hard work but hates them due to the reason unknown to us.

It is also argued that Lucky and Pozzo are like body and minds. Pozzo is the mind that controls the body and no matter how good or bad is the body, it has to follow the brain. It is a universal truth, which should be acknowledged by everyone that without mind, the body is useless. A disease of paralysis is an example of it. If a sound body loses contact with the mind, it becomes useless.

Lucky is intellectual as compared to Pozzo. His speeches are very much important and often interpreted on various occasions in English literature, however, like every other character of "Waiting for Godot", Lucky does an analysis of life and tries to find meanings of it. Nevertheless, In form of Lucky's character, the dramatist has shown a human race that no one can dare to show.

Character Analysis of Godot in "Waiting for Godot":

Godot remains a discussion for years between critics. Once, Samuel Beckett was asked, "Who is Godot". He answered, "If I knew, I would have told it in the play". No matter how much time we watch this play, we can't find who Godot is because he never appears on stage not even for a single second. Only a message comes through a boy (messenger) that Godot is unable to come today, however, his visit is expected tomorrow. Both the acts end in the same manner. Nonetheless, there are some interpretation which can be easily perceived to know about the character of Godot in "Waiting for Godot" if we do a deep analysis of the play.

Many eminent critics have defined Godot as hope. Estragon and Vladimir come every day with an optimistic approach and think that someone would come and give meaning to their lives. The second act is a copy of the first act with minute changes. We do not remember the time between the first act and the second act. It may be true that Estragon and Vladimir are waiting for Godot since long. Every day they come at that place and wait for him but he does not appear. Perhaps there is a difference of many months between the first act and the second act. It is, therefore, Pozzo does not remember meeting them. They continue their exercise every day, however, it is shown to us only two times. Hence, it seems definite that both these persons are hoping for something better in their lives.

It has often been discussed that Godot symbolizes death. Both the tramps Vladimir and Estragon are waiting for death, which does not approach them as their time has not come yet, therefore, they wait for it every day. They may do efforts of committing suicide but they have to wait for death in order to escape from the hardships of life. We know that the play is all about life and life is the second name of nothingness. Characters in Waiting for Godot do nothing still they are doing something and that is "wait".

Every day, they come and wait for something but their wait is useless. Life is all about the wait. It is true that not every single time everyone waits for death, however, at least once in a day our mind reminds us about death. It is totally wrong if someone says that he has never thought about death in his life. No doubt, like Estragon and Vladimir we forget it for the time being but after a few seconds, we ask ourselves “what we are doing here”? and an answer comes: Waiting for Godot.

Another symbol of Godot is Christ or God. It would be easier for us if Godot has been shown on stage to the audience but the dramatist has willfully not shown it. It is on our minds how we perceive Godot. Critics have given Godot two other names “Christ” and “God”. Analysis of critics’ views about Godot is that every character is waiting for God and Christ’s help.

Suffice is to say that even deeper analysis of Godot’s character remained failed to point out the exact purpose of the dramatist portraying this invisible character in “Waiting for Godot”.

Waiting for Godot contains six or seven characters: Godot, Vladimir, Estragon, Pozzo, Lucky, a boy and his brother, the shepherd. With the exception of Godot and the brother of the boy who keeps the goats, each character appears in both acts of the play, at the same place, at the same time, on two successive days.

The difference between these two days is extremely significant. The characters in Waiting for Godot are not simply dramatically interesting as characters who react to one another. They are also of interest because of the ways in which they react to the influence of time, be this a question of their ability to distinguish one day from another, a question of their habitual means of passing time, or a question of the way in which they may be transformed from one day to the next by 'chance' but kept waiting.

And so, the Theater of the Absurd, of which ***Waiting for Godot*** is the most representative work. The Theater of The Absurd contains the noun “absurd”. “-Surd” comes from the Latin “surdus”, and “surdus” means deaf or mute i.e. incapable of hearing or incapable of speaking. Indeed, **deafness and muteness** are what the Theater of the Absurd is all about. The Theater of the Absurd is basically about human beings incapable of understanding life because the famous binary opposition, signifiers do not match the signified realities.

And so, the Theater of the Absurd places itself at the center of a breakdown in communication, whereby nothing is understood, nothing is said, nothing is comprehended.

The words of two absurdist playwrights:

**I am separated. What am I separated from? I cannot name it.
Formally, it was called "God". Today, it no longer has any name.**

It is when all the ultimate truths that God, and only God, can set for his universe, are no longer believed in. Consequently, man begins to play a losing game against the unknown.

In the words of another absurdist:

"We can no longer avoid asking ourselves what we are doing here on earth and how, having no deep sense of our destiny, we can endure the crushing wait of the world."

It so happened that in Europe, basically, and after World War II, a number of individual voices began to question: why are we here?

What these playwrights do share is the fact that 1) they depart from similar philosophical premises, and 2) they mediate their philosophical visions in forms that are avant-garde, i.e. experimental and innovative.

The Philosophical Premises

The philosophical roots of the Theater of the Absurd lie in **existentialist** philosophy. The existentialist philosophy is said to originate in two forerunners in the nineteenth century, namely: the Danish **Søren Kierkegaard** and the German **Frederick Nietzsche**.

Søren Kierkegaard held indeed that life is meaningless and that the life of modern man is lived in an eternal state of anxiety and despair. But Kierkegaard held that anxiety and despair do not inhere in¹ the very fabric of life; they do not objectively lie in the very fabric of life; rather, they are subjectively experienced by man in the shape of the dread (=an extreme fear) of the nothingness of human existence.

What Nietzsche means is that God does not exist because, subjectively, man cannot seem to feel the presence of God, and so the fault lies in a **dwindling faith**, whereby man has become blind and deaf and mute.

Nietzsche will write:

"We have killed him"

The loss of God has introduced man to what became known as the **nihilist syndrome**. 'nihilism': nothingness; zero existence. 'Syndrome': a word that is used in connection with diseases.

And so the "nihilist syndrome" experienced by modern man.

1

Let us start discussing the conversation between Vladimir and Estragon and we are going to be introduced with a new character , Pozzo , and his servant Lucky.

ESTRAGON:

You gave me a fright.

VLADIMIR:

I thought it was he.

Instructor : What is meant by referring to He ?

Student : Godot .

ESTRAGON:

Who?

VLADIMIR:

Godot.

ESTRAGON:

Pah! The wind in the reeds.

● **Reeds** : kinds of tall plants like pipes when they are dried.

VLADIMIR:

I could have sworn I heard shouts.

ESTRAGON:

And why would he shout?

VLADIMIR:

At his horse.

Notice here , we have a kind of absurd talk and imagination . They imagine something which is not possible . So the wind in the reeds is a kind of noise , so one of them says I think(Estragon thinks) that this noise is caused by Godot .

Student : Is Godot imaginary or real ?

Instructor : We know nothing about that .

Thinking of Godot is a kind of illusion . They are looking for anything or anybody to save them from this terrible situation . It's a kind of symbolism . We will see that Godot has two boys , and they are brothers and both of them are the sheep and goat boys and one of them is hit by Godot himself , whereas the other boy who comes to Vladimir and Estragon says that Godot is a good man and he never beats him severely. He only hits his brother. So, here, we have a lot of contradiction and paradox .

Instructor : How can Godot be kind in one situation and how can he be too cruel to the other boy in another situation . It's a kind of imagination , illusion and mirage .

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ESTRAGON:

(*violently*). I'm hungry!

VLADIMIR:

Do you want a carrot?

ESTRAGON:

Is that all there is?

VLADIMIR:

I might have some turnips.

Notice how funny is Estragon .

ESTRAGON:

(*his mouth full, vacuously*). We're not tied?

VLADIMIR:

I don't hear a word you're saying.

ESTRAGON:

(*chews, swallows*). I'm asking you if we're tied.

VLADIMIR:

Tied?

ESTRAGON:

Ti-ed.

VLADIMIR:

How do you mean tied?

ESTRAGON:

Down.

VLADIMIR:

But to whom? By whom?

ESTRAGON:

T VLADIMIR:

To Godot? Tied to Godot! What an idea! No question of it. (*Pause.*)

For the moment.

ESTRAGON:

His name is Godot?

VLADIMIR:

I think so.

The whole play is about uncertainty , and absurdism or absurdity implies uncertainty because they are busy in trivial things , things that would not be accepted by the mind.

ESTRAGON:

Fancy that. Funny, the more you eat the worse it gets.

VLADIMIR:

With me it's just the opposite.

ESTRAGON:

In other words?

VLADIMIR:

I get used to the muck as I go along.

ESTRAGON:

Is that the opposite?

VLADIMIR:

Question of temperament.

ESTRAGON:

Of character.

VLADIMIR:

Nothing you can do about it.

(Nothing you can do about it) This statement becomes a refrain. It is repeated time after time in the play . This is because absurdity means nothingness .

Student : It is an empty light .

Now let's move to the next page .

Here we have , of course , Pozzo the typical landlord accompanied by his slave Lucky who is tied by a rope round his neck and he is carrying luggage on his back and by his two hands.

So these are the first words said by Pozzo .

POZZO:

Back!

VLADIMIR:

Let me go!

ESTRAGON:

Stay where you are!

POZZO:

Be careful! He's wicked..

Notice , here , Pozzo is telling Vladimir and Estragon to be careful of Lucky , the miserable slave , the poor man because he is dangerous and he may kick them .

Instructor : How can he be dangerous to them ? He is wicked.

Wicked = evil , bad .

Instructor : Who is wicked ? Lucky .

POZZO:

Be careful! He's wicked. With strangers.

ESTRAGON:

Is that him?

VLADIMIR:

Who?

So he considers Lucky as an animal . He would hurt other people.

ESTRAGON:

Is that him?

VLADIMIR:

Who?

ESTRAGON:

Er . . .

VLADIMIR:

Godot?

ESTRAGON:

Yes.

POZZO:

I present myself: Pozzo.

VLADIMIR:

Not at all!

ESTRAGON:

He said Godot.

VLADIMIR:

Not at all!

ESTRAGON:

You're not Mr. Godot, Sir?

Here , we have Estragon addressing Lucky as Godot .

POZZO:

I present myself: Pozzo.

VLADIMIR:

Not at all!

ESTRAGON:

He said Godot.

VLADIMIR:

Not at all!

ESTRAGON:

You're not Mr. Godot, Sir?

POZZO:

I say does that name mean nothing to you?

ESTRAGON:

. Bozzo . . . Bozzo . . .

VLADIMIR:

Pozzo . . . Pozzo . . .

POZZO:

PPPOZZZO!

ESTRAGON:

Ah! Pozzo . . . let me see . . . Pozzo . . .

VLADIMIR:

Is it Pozzo or Bozzo?

ESTRAGON:

Pozzo . . . no . . . I'm afraid I . . . no . . . I don't seem to . . .

At the top of page 19 :

VLADIMIR:

I once knew a family called Gozzo. The mother had the clap.

ESTRAGON:

We're not from these parts, Sir.

POZZO:

You are human beings none the less.

- Clap = a loud sound or voice .

Notice , here , Pozzo is full of pride .He is proud of himself , and he is a landlord . He believes in God's other kingdom and he is the typical bourgeoisie or mid- class man .He is someone with merchandise and he's a man believing in the past , the present and the future .

POZZO:

(You are human beings none the less. As far as one can see. Of the same species as myself Of the same species as Pozzo! Made in God's image!

So , he believes in God. He represents the middle-class and he is a believer .

POZZO:

You took me for Godot.

Then you thought that I am Godot. You miss me .

VLADIMIR:

Oh no, Sir, not for an instant, Sir.

POZZO:

Who is he?

VLADIMIR:

Oh he's a . . . he's a kind of acquaintance.

ESTRAGON:

Nothing of the kind, we hardly know him.

Notice , here ,they are giving further information about Godot , but

Instructor :what are their utmost information about him ?

Instructor : Only his name, acquaintance . He is just like a pen-friend.
He is just writing to you. You cannot describe him.

ESTRAGON:

Personally, I wouldn't even know him if I saw him.

POZZO:

You took me for him.

ESTRAGON:

That's to say . . . you understand . . . the dusk . . . the strain . . . waiting .
. . I confess . . . I imagined . . for a second .

We have an imaginative elusion and confession . They both admit that they don't know anything about him . It's a kind of illusion , there is no reality .

So they are waiting for nothing . There is nothing certain to happen .

POZZO:

Waiting? So you were waiting for him?

VLADIMIR:

Well you see—

POZZO:

Here? On my land?

We know the mound or hill where they are waiting for Godot near the tree . The land belongs to Pozzo . He is the landlord and he is the owner .

Page 20

Pozzo continues giving orders to his slave Lucky and he is asking him to turn round .

Page 21

What ails him?

VLADIMIR:

He looks tired.

ESTRAGON:

Why doesn't he put down his bags?

VLADIMIR:

How do I know? (*They close in on him.*) Careful!

ESTRAGON:

Say something to him.

VLADIMIR:

Look!

ESTRAGON:

What?

They are talking about this poor man Lucky . He is suffering .

Page 22

VLADIMIR:

A trifle effeminate.

ESTRAGON:

Look at the slobber.

VLADIMIR:

It's inevitable.

ESTRAGON:

Look at the slaver.

VLADIMIR:

Perhaps he's a halfwit.

VLADIMIR:

He's panting.

- **effeminate** : is someone who is neither male nor female.
- **slobber** : it is a kind of liquid coming from mouth.
- **cretain** : no longer growing .

So he is panting . They are describing Lucky and they are making fun of him .

ESTRAGON:

Mister . . .

VLADIMIR:

Louder.

ESTRAGON:

Mister . . .

POZZO:

Leave him in peace! Basket! Ah! That's better.

They are trying to talk to Pozzo . He is asking him to lie down the basket or the luggage .

Page23

VLADIMIR:

You couldn't have waited?

POZZO:

No no, he does well to ask. Do I need the bones?

As I said before , Pozzo is greedy and he is proud of himself . He is holding the rope which is around Lucky's neck and he is eating with his hands and there are bones . He is eating chicken .

ESTRAGON:

Mister . . . excuse me, Mister . . .

POZZO:

You're being spoken to, pig! Reply! Try him again.

ESTRAGON:

Excuse me, Mister, the bones, you won't be wanting the bones?

We know that Vladimir and Estragon are tramps , they are homeless ,they are very poor , and they find nothing to eat and Estragon would like to take the bones .

POZZO:

Mister! Reply! Do you want them or don't you? I don't like it. I've never known him to refuse a bone before. Nice business it'd be if he fell sick on me!

VLADIMIR:

It's a scandal!

Some people eat bones !!!!

Some people are eating very delicious kinds of food and the other are looking for their waste .

POZZO:

Are you alluding to anything in particular?

VLADIMIR:

To treat a man like that . . . I think that . . . no . . . a human being . . . no . . . it's a scandal!

Here , the treatment of Pozzo to Lucky is a kind of a scandal . It is something disgusting . It's a shame or shameful . It is a disgrace .

ESTRAGON:

A disgrace!

POZZO:

You are severe.

He is telling them that you are severe in your judgment about me , you'll find me that I'm right in my bad treatment to this man .

At the bottom of **page 24**

ESTRAGON:

(We're in no hurry.

POZZO:

(The second is never so sweet. . . as the first I mean. But it's sweet just the same.

VLADIMIR:

I'm going.

POZZO:

He can no longer endure my presence. I am perhaps not particularly human, but who cares?

Notice how witty the characters created by Samuel Beckett.

You think we are non-human or not human and who cares .

This is something natural in our modern society. The ill-treatment of Pozzo or even bosses with their servants .

They are talking , of course , about the bad treatment or the ill-treatment of Pozzo to Lucky .

At the bottom of **page 27 :**

VLADIMIR:

You want to get rid of him?

POZZO:

Remark that I might just as well have been in his shoes and he in mine. If chance had not willed otherwise. To each one his due.

Instructor : What does that mean ? It's a foreshadowing statement that the situation will be **reversed** / **repaired** , that something would happen , but not good , it would be worse . We'll find that Pozzo himself will be poor himself and you will have pity on him .

Now page 29 .

POZZO:

That was nearly sixty years ago yes, nearly sixty. You wouldn't think it to look at me, would you?

Pozzo is a very rich man . He has a watch and he can look at it . So, he represents middle-class people at that time.

He owns the land and what is on the land .If I own a land , you should belong to me and you shouldn't disobey me . So man is nothing , he is like a piece of estate عقار .

Student : Cheaper that estate.

VLADIMIR:

And now you turn him away? Such an old and faithful servant!

ESTRAGON:

Swine!

- **Swine** = A pig
- Swine flu انفلونزا الخنازير

Page 31

POZZO:

He's not pleased.

ESTRAGON:

You missed a treat. Pity.

Page 32 before the end .

VLADIMIR:

Time has stopped.

Again , we are **supplied** with the idea of time. They aren't conscious of time . Here , the characters aren't conscious of their time and busy themselves in talking and speaking and maybe wasting their time , and ,here , Samuel Beckett is making fun of people because they are doing nothing . They are wasting their time . They are waiting for illusion . If you are not conscious of your time , you are not part of the society you are living in .

Again , page 34 at the top .

ESTRAGON:

So long as one knows.

VLADIMIR:

One can bide one's time.

Again, here, we have an emphasis on time and they're mentioning that time is very important , but they are not thinking so . They say something and they are doing something else .

Page 35

POZZO:

Gentlemen, you have been . . . civil to me.

ESTRAGON:

Not at all! لا شكر على واجب – عفواً

VLADIMIR:

What an idea!

POZZO:

Yes yes, you have been correct. So that I ask myself is there anything I can do in my turn for these honest fellows who are having such a dull, dull time.

Even here , Pozzo is reminding them of time but they'd like to waste their time , they'd like to do anything regardless of being useful or harmful to them . But , of course , they aren't doing the right thing .

Now the next

ESTRAGON:

Even ten francs would be a help.

- **Francs** = the currency of France .

So , here ,we are reminded of some hints that refer to Samuel's Beckett background which is France .

VLADIMIR:

We are not beggars!

So don't think of giving us money , we aren't beggars but they are beggars .

POZZO:

Is there anything I can do, that's what I ask myself, to cheer them up? I have given them bones, I have talked to them about this and that, I have explained the twilight, admittedly. But is it enough, that's what tortures me, is it enough?

ESTRAGON:

Even five.

VLADIMIR:

That's enough!

ESTRAGON:

I couldn't accept less.

POZZO:

Is it enough? No doubt. But I am liberal. It's my nature. This evening. So much the worse for me.

Down the page :

ESTRAGON:

Perhaps he could dance first and think afterwards, if it isn't too much to ask him.

Who is going to dance? Notice Pozzo tries to satisfy Estragon and Vladimir . He has given them the bones and he has been chatting with them and he was very kind to them and now he would make some fun and entertainment for them by Lucky the slave or the servant who is going to dance although he is carrying the luggage . It's very funny .

Page 36

VLADIMIR:

Would that be possible?

POZZO:

By all means, nothing simpler. It's the natural order.

VLADIMIR:

Then let him dance.

POZZO:

Do you hear, hog?

ESTRAGON:

He never refuses?

POZZO:

He refused once. Dance, misery!

ESTRAGON:

Is that all?

So he is dancing now .

Now the same page .

ESTRAGON:

Tell us about the time he refused.

POZZO:

With pleasure, with pleasure. Wait. What have I done with my spray?

Notice he has spray رئوي بخاخ because something wrong with his lungs .

At the bottom of the page :

POZZO:

The second is never so sweet as the first I mean. But it's sweet just the same.

So , here , Lucky is being asked by his master Pozzo to have some dances to entertain Estragon and Vladimir .

=====

We are going stop here **at page 36 .**

PAGE 36 at the bottom .

ESTRAGON:

My left lung is very weak! But my right lung is as sound as a bell!

Estragon , here , confesses that he suffers from a certain disease. There is something wrong with his left lung , but his right lung is OK.

Page 37

POZZO:

No matter! What was I saying. Wait. Well now isn't that . . Help me!

ESTRAGON:

Wait!

VLADIMIR:

Wait!

POZZO:

Wait!

ESTRAGON:

Ah!

VLADIMIR:

He has it.

POZZO:

Well?

ESTRAGON:

Why doesn't he put down his bags?

VLADIMIR:

Rubbish!

POZZO:

Are you sure?

VLADIMIR:

Damn it haven't you already told us?

POZZO:

I've already told you?

ESTRAGON:

He's already told us?

Here , we have a conversation between Pozzo, Estragon and Vladimir on one hand and Estragon and Vladimir on the other hand . They are talking about Lucky carrying the luggage . He is carrying the luggage and dancing at the same time and this is something strange ,and they are asking Pozzo to let him lay down his bags .

Now Pozzo is very proud of himself and he is a landlord and a landlord cannot accept any kind of mercy for his slaves.

Before the end of page 37

ESTRAGON:

Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it's awful!

Again , we are confronted with the bright truth which is nothing happens .As I said , this sentence becomes a refrain in the whole play . He can't think without his hat . What is the relation between the hat and thinking . This is absurd . Again , we have , here the theatre of the Absurd .

=====

In the middle of page 38

POZZO:

Stop! Back! Stop! Turn! Think!

Pozzo , in this situation , practices his job as a master . He is like a military officer giving orders to his slave Lucky . He is asking Lucky to stop dancing and to turn back at him .

At the bottom of the page 38 :

LUCKY:

Given the existence as uttered forth in the public works of Puncher and Wattmann of a personal God quaquaquagua

This is something foolish. Here, Lucky is reciting a poem about existence and he mentions different certain religious names , and he mixes sometimes something serious with something absurd .So it's a long poem . We can get nothing except some vocabulary we know , but there is no moral lesson behind this poem.

Lecturer : Now , what are characters doing ?

Lecturer : They are killing time .Having some chatting . Sometimes , they have to recite some poems like Lucky. Lucky ,of course, tries to entertain them by dancing .

Now page 41 . The end of the poem .

POZZO:

Give me that! There's an end to his thinking!

VLADIMIR:

But will he be able to walk?

Now what happens when the three people were watching him dance and recite the poem Lucky kicks Estragon and he hurts him .

Lecturer : Now what is Pozzo's reaction ? He kicks him back .

VLADIMIR:

You'll kill him.

POZZO:

Up scum! Help me!

VLADIMIR:

How?

POZZO:

Raise him up!

The three characters , here , Estragon , Vladimir and Pozzo are plotting against Lucky . They are trying to punish him and Pozzo says , " Don't let him go . Don't move ".

At the top of page 43 .

ESTRAGON:

Then adieu.

POZZO:

Adieu.

VLADIMIR:

Adieu.

POZZO:

Adieu.

VLADIMIR:

Adieu.

POZZO:

Adieu.

ESTRAGON:

Adieu.

● **Adieu= goodbye .**

So , here , Pozzo is leaving , and he says goodbye to both Vladimir and Estragon .

Now page 44

VLADIMIR:

That passed the time.

ESTRAGON:

It would have passed in any case.

VLADIMIR:

Yes, but not so rapidly.

Pause.

ESTRAGON:

What do we do now?

VLADIMIR:

I don't know.

ESTRAGON:

Let's go.

VLADIMIR:

We can't.

ESTRAGON:

Why not?

VLADIMIR:

We're waiting for Godot.

Again , here , they are talking about how they pass their time and they come to a conclusion that dancing , reciting poems , and exchanging abuses or having dirty words against each other would pass the time. But Estragon , here , who is considered not a man of mind , comes to a conclusion that it would have passed in any case. We would pass the time regardless of any situation or condition . But they are still captivated by the illusion of Godot . They are still waiting for Godot .

Now page 45

Here , we are introduced with the boy . This is the first time we meet the boy . The boy , here , is Godot's messenger to tell them that he was sent by Godot and he has got a message from Mr. Godot .

VLADIMIR:

You have a message from Mr. Godot?

BOY:

Yes, Sir.

So , the boy , here , is the only one who tells us about Godot . We know nothing about Godot . The only thing we know about Godot is through the boy himself and he tells us some information about Godot that he treats him well but he beats his brother severely .

And what is the message that he has is that Mr. Godot won't come this evening but surely tomorrow.page 46 .

BOY:

Mr. Godot told me to tell you he won't come this evening but surely tomorrow.

This sentence is foreshadowing . Godot won't come at all . There is nothing sure . Here , we have the question of uncertainty . But surely tomorrow . We find that he won't come tomorrow .

Page 48 at the top .

BOY:

What am I to tell Mr. Godot, Sir?

VLADIMIR:

Tell him tell him you saw us. (*Pause.*) You did see us, didn't you?

BOY:

Yes Sir.

Again , here , Vladimir are captured by false hopes that they are going to be saved by Godot , but nothing would happen .

Page 49 / at the top .

VLADIMIR:

He said that Godot was sure to come tomorrow. What do you say to that?

ESTRAGON:

Then all we have to do is to wait on here.

Here , **VLADIMIR and ESTRAGON** are discussing the coming of Godot. **VLADIMIR and ESTRAGON** are killing the time by waiting for a person who is not certain to come . Even the boy who conveys or carries the message from Godot telling them that he would come believes that he surely wouldn't come.

=====

Good morning everybody .

☞Instructor : I'm sorry for being late . Before commencing this lecture , I'd like to remind you of what we have discussed last lecture till the end of act 1 . Can you remind me ?

Of course , we have already quoted some important texts or passages and we commented on them , and most of them tell us about the themes of waiting for Godot . What are the themes we have faced in the play ? Of course , we have discussed :

1- **Friendship** between Estragon and Vladimir and we can say that Waiting for Godot mainly describes two men completely unable to act or move or do anything in any useful way . They are only interested in killing time and they are following a false hope or a mirage. They are doing nothing . And , of course , they're waiting for a mysterious man whose name is **Godot** . We know nothing about him except his name and he has two boys working for him . One is a goat shepherd and the other is a sheep shepherd . And he always beats the boy's brother . You remember the boy when he comes and tells them that Godot isn't coming today but he is surely coming tomorrow , so these characters fail to realize this result . And we have , of course , philosophical viewpoints at that time which is the existentialism **الوجودية** that they only believe in what they touch only . They never believe in spiritual things , they never believe in God like Marx , Darwin and others . So , here , we have a kind of **contradiction** , you sometimes see the characters believe in God and Jesus Christ , and sometimes they never believe in them.

2- Again , we have the question of **truth** . Here , the play completely lacks truth . It lacks certainty . It is full of **uncertainty** , so everything is **uncertain** . The coming of **Godot** is not certain . Just we only have words that never carry any **confidential** truth . So this play lacks the presence of the objective truth , everything in it , the names , the characters , they all become arbitrary and subjective ; they aren't fixed or uncertain .

3- And we have the question of **freedom** and **confinement** : Here , we have two types of confinement . The first one is represented by the slave Lucky . So **Lucky** is confined by his master , the Irish Landlord whose name is **Pozzo** , whereas the main characters **Estragon** and **Vladimir** are confined by **Godot**. They are obsessed by a false conception or false character .It's not existing .

Instructor : Where is Godot ? We know nothing about him .

Instructor : And what will he do ? They are just raising false hopes , so there is no concrete truth that Godot is a savior . Just they are entertaining themselves by killing the time and raising false hopes as I have already said .

Instructor : Does Lucky choose to be a slave ?

Instructor : No . He's doomed or fated to be slave because he's very poor and he needs something to earn his living . So he's obliged to obey his master's orders and when he is asked to dance , he would dance even when he carries the luggage , whereas Vladimir and Estragon are free but they choose to be confined , to be imprisoned , to be not free . So you should think and **you should choose your own self resolutions , not to depend on false hopes** . This is **the moral lesson** that we can get if it is existing . **Never depend on others** ,and you know that even in reality

, in Christianity , in Judaism ,and in Islam you should never depend on others اعقلها و توكل . You should do whatever you think is right according to reasonالعقل , to logic , there should be logic whereas in the case of these characters, there is no logic . How can you wait for someone you never know , and you never agree with about the appointment , can you ? Can you have a meeting with someone you never know ? You can't . You should at least know him even indirectly by others . But , here , he's known only by the boy and we have just a few items of information about him .

And if we look at all characters , they believe that death is not resistible , it's inevitable , it cannot be avoided . You cannot escape death , so they first tried to commit suicide , and you remember the story of Estragon and Vladimir when they tried to commit suicide by dropping themselves from the Eiffel Tower , and this is something not logical . Here , we have the scene if you remember, it's in a village .

Instructor : What is the relation between that distant village and Paris . There is no connection . Here , we have the author or the playwright intrude or interrupt or intervene . And , of course , you know we have some ideas according to this kind of plays which is the Theatre of the Absurd because the world is absurd according to Becket's .And he'd like to tell us that every human being has his own religious freedom . Every human being is free , but what's the problem of these characters ?

Student : They confine themselves to false conceptions and false hopes which is waiting for a man who is supposed to save them from this terrible situation .

Anyway , let's continue **Act II** .

Page 53

Here ,we start with **Act II** and there is nothing different .

Student : Nothing is changing .

Instructor : The scene is the scene , the characters are the characters except we have a little bit of change including the physical appearance of the characters we will find if this would affect their psychology or not . So , here , we have first some dances performed by Lucky and now it is Vladimir's turn to have a kind of **poem** .

VLADIMIR:

A dog came in the kitchen And stole a crust of bread. Then cook up with a ladle And beat him till he was dead.

Then all the dogs came running And dug the dog a tomb—

This reminds us of T.S.Eliot's masterpiece the waste Land when he mentions the dog . Here , we have the same thing.

Samuel Becket, through his characters ,mentions the dogs and death. Death is inevitable . He refers to the dogs that people are less than dogs

sometimes . When a dog is dead , it is thrown ,so a dog is served and you are interested in a dog as long as a dog lives and as long as a dog serves you . When a dog is dead , you are careless about him. The same thing for people . So he draws the comparison between a dog and man in general . That is , man is nothing . Man is like a dog , or maybe less than a dog sometimes . Now let's move to the top of **page 55** .

ESTRAGON:

What a day!

VLADIMIR:

Who beat you? Tell me.

ESTRAGON:

Another day done with.

VLADIMIR:

Not yet.

ESTRAGON:

For me it's over and done with, no matter what happens. I heard you singing.

VLADIMIR:

That's right, I remember.

ESTRAGON:

That finished me. I said to myself, He's all alone,

Here , Estragon is asking about the date and , as I said , in scene II he is the in the same place and the same time and there is nothing changing at all .But ,here, we have a problem . What is the problem ?

Here , Estragon forgets what happened the day before . He is trying to remind him that yesterday when Lucky was dancing and you touched him , he kicked you and has bitten you and look at your leg or thigh , you will find the hurt or the damage , so that Estragon can remember that . So he's reminded with the story of Lucky . When Lucky hits Estragon . So , here , again, we have a lack of memory . Many people forget everything and they are unable to remember .

The next page 56

ESTRAGON:

I don't know.

VLADIMIR:

Ah no, Gogo, the truth is there are things that escape you that don't escape me, you must feel it yourself.

As we have already mentioned before , we have two people here . They are completely the opposite . One is interested in physical activity like Estragon who is always busy with his boots or with his feet , whereas

Vladimir is always stressing mind and truth . He's looking for truth .
He's trying to think and to get to the truth .

ESTRAGON:

I tell you I wasn't doing anything.

He is still remembering . He is still lacking memory .

Now in the middle of **page 59** .

VLADIMIR:

Say something!

ESTRAGON:

I'm trying.

VLADIMIR:

Say anything at all!

ESTRAGON:

What do we do now?

Notice here , this is absurd question .

Instructor : What is the answer ? Can you give me the answer ?

Wait for Godot.

ESTRAGON:

Ah!

Silence.

VLADIMIR:

This is awful!

ESTRAGON:

Sing something.

VLADIMIR:

No no! (*He reflects.*) We could start all over again perhaps.

ESTRAGON:

That should be easy.

VLADIMIR:

It's the start that's difficult.

ESTRAGON:

You can start from anything.

So , here , they are always busy thinking of **waiting** for **Godot** .

The only thing that they can do is **waiting** . And waiting , here , means killing time. They are killing the time by doing trivial things like singing and dancing .

Page 60 at the top

ESTRAGON:

I'm trying. .

VLADIMIR:

When you seek you hear.

ESTRAGON:

You do.

VLADIMIR:

That prevents you from finding.

ESTRAGON:

It does.

VLADIMIR:

That prevents you from thinking.

ESTRAGON:

You think all the same.

VLADIMIR:

No no, it's impossible.

ESTRAGON:

That's the idea, let's contradict each another.

Notice , here , they are trying to act , Vladimir would like to take the character of Estragon s and Estragon would play Vladimir .

VLADIMIR:

We're in no danger of ever thinking any more.

ESTRAGON:

Then what are we complaining about?

VLADIMIR:

Thinking is not the worst.

Notice , here , we have a good conclusion by Vladimir .Thinking isn't the worst . This means that thinking can be helpful . It can do for you , it can work for you .

ESTRAGON:

That much less misery.

VLADIMIR:

True.

ESTRAGON:

Well? If we gave thanks for our mercies?

VLADIMIR:

What is terrible is to *have* thought.

ESTRAGON:

But did that ever happen to us?

VLADIMIR:

Where are all these corpses from?

ESTRAGON:

These skeletons.

Again , they talk about dead people . So , here , they are trying to find the causes of those people's death. , and they'd like to say that death is inevitable and people are dead the moment they are born .

Page 54

VLADIMIR:

Ah! I see what it is. Yes, I see what's happened.

ESTRAGON:

All that's a lot of bloody—

VLADIMIR:

It's elementary. Someone came and took yours and left you his.

ESTRAGON:

Why?

VLADIMIR:

His were too tight for him, so he took yours.

ESTRAGON:

But mine were too tight.

VLADIMIR:

For you. Not for him.

ESTRAGON:

(having tried in vain to work it out). I'm tired! *(Pause.)* Let's go.

VLADIMIR:

We can't.

ESTRAGON:

Why not?

VLADIMIR:

We're waiting for Godot.

They are talking about trivial things . So ,here , these two people are attached firmly to the idea of waiting for Godot. . They can decide nothing except waiting for Godot . So everything is put off till Godot comes.

Instructor : Suppose that you have a problem now such as the problem that we are living in . Shall we put off everything like our study until everything is over or we should decide and we should think and we should do and we should try ?

So you should be a master , not a servant . You should be a master of time , and there is a famous proverb regarding money.

Money is a bad master but a good servant . The same thing is for time.

You should be your time master , not your time servant .

Instructor : How can you be master ? You can do useful things , whereas if you are a servant , you are killing the time.

Student: لا تؤجل عمل اليوم الى الغد

Instructor : Yes, because if you waste your time , you will regret later.
سبق السيف العذل .
فات الأوان

Page 67

VLADIMIR:

You'd rather be stuck there doing nothing?

Of course , Vladimir can be distinguished from Estragon . He tries to think and he starts feeling of the time and he starts feeling of the importance of thinking .

ESTRAGON:

Let's go.

VLADIMIR:

We can't.

ESTRAGON:

Why not?

VLADIMIR:

We're waiting for Godot.

The same thing here .

ESTRAGON:

Then it'll be day again. What'll we do, what'll we do!

ESTRAGON:

I'm going.

VLADIMIR:

Well!

ESTRAGON:

Farewell.

VLADIMIR:

Lucky's hat.

Page 72 at the bottom.

VLADIMIR:

(Your turn.

Estragon does the tree, staggers.

ESTRAGON:

Do you think God sees me?

VLADIMIR:

You must close your eyes.

Estragon closes his eyes, staggers worse.

ESTRAGON:

God have pity on me!

VLADIMIR:

(vexed) And me?

Vexed = angry .

They're trying to hang themselves to the tree , they are try ing to commit suicide again or something like that .

VLADIMIR:

(vexed). And me?

ESTRAGON:

On me! On me! Pity! On me!

Enter Pozzo and Lucky. Pozzo is blind. Lucky burdened as before. Rope as before, but much shorter, so that Pozzo may follow more easily.

In the first act , the rope is long and in the second act it is short .

because Pozzo lost his sight or vision and he needs someone to help him and who helps him ? Lucky .

VLADIMIR:

Gogo!

POZZO:

What is it? Who is it?

ESTRAGON:

Is it Godot?

VLADIMIR:

At last! Reinforcements at last!

POZZO:

Help!

POZZO:

Help!

ESTRAGON:

Is it Godot?

VLADIMIR:

We were beginning to weaken. Now we're sure to see the evening out.

POZZO:

Help!

ESTRAGON:

Do you hear him?

VLADIMIR:

We are no longer alone, waiting for the night, waiting for Godot, waiting for . . . waiting. All evening we have struggled, unassisted. Now it's over. It's already tomorrow.

POZZO:

Help!

Now the characters realize that Godot won't come and they are left unassisted and without any help . And who is asking for help ? Pozzo .

Notice here ,we have a kind of irony of fate . Pozzo was proud of himself and he was a strong man . He gives orders . In the second act now , he is begging for help .

=====

☞**Instructor** : We have stopped at **page 70** . Let's go back to **page 70** , the sixth line .

ESTRAGON:

I'm in hell!

VLADIMIR:

Where were you?

ESTRAGON:

They're coming there too!

VLADIMIR:

We're surrounded! Imbecile! There's no way out there.

So , we are trapped , we are confined , we are imprisoned.

VLADIMIR:

There! Not a soul in sight! Off you go! Quick! Well I can understand that. Wait till I see. Your only hope left is to disappear.

So ,here , they are totally losing hope and they're isolated. They feel that they're trapped in a terrible situation .

Now let's move to **page 73** , in the middle.

When Pozzo and Lucky come to them .

ESTRAGON:

Is it Godot?

VLADIMIR:

At last! Reinforcements at last!

POZZO:

Help!

ESTRAGON:

Is it Godot?

VLADIMIR:

We were beginning to weaken. Now we're sure to see the evening out.

POZZO:

Notice here , Pozzo is asking for help . He is requesting them for help , and they aren't paying any attention to him. They blind themselves to him and they're busy waiting for Godot , but here we have something critical . They became much more pessimistic and their hope starts to weaken .

Page 75 , ten lines before the bottom of the page .

VLADIMIR:

Let us not waste our time in idle discourse!

Notice here , Vladimir is coming round as if he were giddy or being unconscious . Now he is about to feel what is happening around him .Ideed, now he starts to feel the value of time . Let's not waste our time in trivial speech . Let's do something .

VLADIMIR: :Let us do something, while we have the chance! It is not every day that we are needed. Not indeed that we personally are needed. Others would meet the case equally well, if not better. To all mankind they were addressed,

These words are addressed to all people all over the world. That is , we should stop wasting our time , talking nonsense , and doing nothing . We should start a new era. We should work hard , and we should think. He'd like to say that actions speak louder than words. Words cannot work , only useful actions can work .

VLADIMIR:
those cries for help still ringing in our ears! But at this place, at this moment of time, all mankind is us.

Instructor : What can you extract from this text ? Who reports it ? This text tells us that Vladimir starts to be conscious and active , not passive like before.

Student : because he is a man of mind

Instructor : Yes , he is a man of mind and he is addressing humanity so his words are eternal . They are addressed to humanity and to all people all over the world , not only to people in France or Ireland.

Vladimir
whether we like it or not.

Again , here , we have a call done by Vladimir for people all over the world to help each other , and not wait for false hopes . We should do something for people . We should help each other to end suffering and catastrophes instead of talking and waiting for false hopes and killing the time.

VLADIMIR:
Let us make the most of it, before it is too late! Let us represent worthily for once the foul brood to which a cruel fate consigned us!

- **foul** = mistake , wrong .
- **brood** : the act of birth .

Vladimir is telling people that we should deal with our bad situation bravely , in a positive way or positively , not in a passive way and we still have time to act .

VLADIMIR:
What do you say? It is true that when with folded arms we weigh the pros and cons we are no less a credit to our species.

- **pros and cons** = advantages and disadvantages

- **pros** = profits .
- **cons** = consequences .
- **species** = human beings , beings in general .
- **credit** = pride.

We should be proud of ourselves and our humanity because we are able to act and we are equipped with something that makes us proud of ourselves which is mind . Notice , here , he is comparing people to some animals .

VLADIMIR:

The tiger bounds to the help of his congeners without the least reflection, or else he slinks away into the depths of the thickets.

- **Congers** = to its types , kinds .
- **Slinks away** ينسل
- **Thickets** = deep forests , jungles.

Here, even a tiger would find it obligatory to help other tigers. If it cannot help , it will leave. So , again , here is an important call by Vladimir to humanity to be merciful, to be co-operative, to be active , to be positive , to act not to wait and kill time.

VLADIMIR:

But that is not the question. What are we doing here, *that* is the question.

Instructor : So what is important ?

Here , he is thinking deeply of his entire situation , so never look too much at the future neither to the other parts of your current situation .

VLADIMIR:

And we are blessed in this, that we happen to know the answer. Yes, in this immense confusion one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come—

Here , Samuel Becket secretly and indirectly makes fun of people who are waiting for false hopes . So Vladimir is the main representative of Samuel's Becket ideas . **Page 77 .**

VLADIMIR:

We wait. We are bored. (*He throws up his hand.*) No, don't protest, we are bored to death, there's no denying it. Good. A diversion comes along and what do we do? We let it go to waste.

Surely, death is inevitable . Here , Vladimir drives us to a critical moment or a vital conclusion through his human experience which is : (It's time to work , and stop wasting time ;stop being absurd).

VLADIMIR:

In an instant all will vanish and we'll be alone once more, in the midst of nothingness!

Notice , here , that Vladimir uses a lot of expressions of time and he'd like to contrast between life of nothingness and fertile life ; Life of nonsense and absurdity and life of work . So he gets to the conclusion that the best way to escape this situation is work and act .

Page 80 In the middle .

They are discussing something . Pozzo is asking for help.

POZZO:

Help!

ESTRAGON:

Let's go.

VLADIMIR:

We can't.

ESTRAGON:

Why not?

VLADIMIR:

We're waiting for Godot.

Now , here , Vladimir is very keen . He knows that Godot won't come, but he'd like to prove that to his friends and humanity and he'd like to make fun of people who are still waiting for false hopes.

Now page 80

Pozzo

Have you not done tormenting me with your accursed time! It's abominable! When! When! One day, is that not enough for you, one day he went **dumb**, one day I went blind, one day we'll go deaf, one day we were born, one day we shall die, the same day, the same second, is that not enough for you? **They give birth astride of a grave, the light gleams an instant, then it's night once more.**

- **Abominable** = very bad
- **Dumb** = cannot speak .

Again , the play ends where it begins , and this is very important text . They" wait for Godot and life repeats itself meaninglessly . Here , Pozzo is a man who strongly believes in the past glory and the glorious future . He gets blind in act 1 . He speaks of things to be done . He believes in

things , and in language and in acting . Notice , he uses words connected with time , the moment of your birth is the birth of a grave .

Instructor : Why does Pozzo suffer more than the others ?

Because he hasn't discovered the reality of human's condition . He still has some illusions of truth and salvation . He even suffers more than the others because they don't have such illusions .

Vladimir and Estragon are superior to Pozzo because they don't have his illusion .They've realized the human condition for what it is , and they only have one illusion .

Instructor : What is it ?

Instructor : Godot . The only illusion they have is Godot and there is a function for having this illusion. This illusion which is Godot keeps them alive, without it life is totally impossible. So all indications that we have are that he won't come . Godot wouldn't come , but they still wait .

Page 86 / at the bottom .

VLADIMIR:

Was I sleeping, while the others suffered? Am I sleeping now? Tomorrow, when I wake, or think I do, what shall I say of today? That with Estragon my friend, at this place, until the fall of night, I waited for Godot? That Pozzo **passed** , with his **carrier**, and that he spoke to us? Probably. But in all that what truth will there be? He'll know nothing. He'll tell me about the blows he received and I'll give him a carrot.

- **passed** = went away
- **carrier** = slave .

Again this text shows that Vladimir is a man of thinking whereas Estragon is an man of physical thinking . He's only interested in eating and playing whereas Vladimir thinks and plans for his future ,and he'd like to respond in a positive way before he dies.

VLADIMIR:

Astride of a grave and a difficult birth. Down in the hole, lingeringly, grave digger puts on the forceps. We have time to grow old.

- **Forceps** = clips used by doctors . كلابات

Vladimir always reminds us of time , of death , of thinking of acting , and communication .

The air is full of our cries. But habit is a great deadener.

At me too someone is looking, of me too someone is saying, He is sleeping, he knows nothing, let him sleep on. (*Pause.*) I can't go on! (*Pause.*) What have I said?

Here, we have a lot of rhetorical questions given by Vladimir . He'd like to root thinking and human feelings in ourselves . That is , man is nothing if he never thinks .

Page 89 / the top

VLADIMIR:

We have to come back tomorrow.

ESTRAGON:

What for?

VLADIMIR:

To wait for Godot.

As if he were making fun of Estragon .Here , Estragon is casting some questions , and they are answered by witty responses by Vladimir . As if Estragon were a little child . He is now grown-up .

ESTRAGON:

Ah! He didn't come?

VLADIMIR:

No.

ESTRAGON:

And now it's too late.

VLADIMIR:

Yes, now it's night.

ESTRAGON:

And if we dropped him? If we dropped him?

VLADIMIR:

He'd punish us. Everything's dead but the tree.

He is making fun of Estragon and he considers him as someone who is dead , not only a child . He'd like to say Estragon and majority of people at that time were dead alive , because they are passive .They think of nothing . They only eat , sleep and talk . They are killing time . There are some people who live for more than 100 years and they do nothing . They're like these people and he uses the word

" idle" which means people who only eat and sleep . Those people are couch potatoes. يعني تنابل

This is one of the characteristics of Modernism . You should act , you should think . .So , here , everything is dead , but the tree.

Even the tree has a few leaves . It's not completely lively .

Now the last one , **page 90**

VLADIMIR:

Not worth a curse.

Silence.

ESTRAGON:

You say we have to come back tomorrow?

VLADIMIR:

Yes.

ESTRAGON:

Then we can bring a good bit of rope.

VLADIMIR:

Yes.

ESTRAGON:

Didi→ (Vladimir) ?

VLADIMIR:

Yes.

ESTRAGON:

I can't go on like this.

VLADIMIR:

That's what you think.

ESTRAGON:

If we parted? That might be better for us.

VLADIMIR:

We'll hang ourselves tomorrow. Unless Godot comes.

ESTRAGON:

And if he comes?

Notice , here , we have witty answers by Vladimir to Estragon.

So , here , we have a kind of condition . It's not true . There is nothing concrete . nothing is confidential.

ESTRAGON:

And if he comes?

VLADIMIR:

We'll be saved.

Vladimir takes off his hat (Lucky's), peers inside it, feels about inside it, shakes it, knocks on the crown, puts it on again.

ESTRAGON:

Well? Shall we go?

VLADIMIR:

Pull on your trousers.

ESTRAGON:

What?

VLADIMIR:

Pull on your trousers.

ESTRAGON:

You want me to pull off my trousers?

VLADIMIR:

Pull ON your trousers.

ESTRAGON:

(realizing his trousers are down). True.

He pulls up his trousers.

VLADIMIR:

Well? Shall we go?

ESTRAGON:

Yes, let's go.

They do not move.

Again , the play ends as if nothing were happening . We have a kind of monotony .Nothing is done . The only thing is that we have Vladimir starts to wake up by his call to people to think or try to find a better solution for our terrible disasters in this world. .

=====

Waiting for Godot starts in the endless beginning and the endless end. On a country road which is indefinable, it could be anywhere or nowhere, two tramps, Vladimir and Estragon, supposed to be waiting for someone called Godot. Pozzo and Lucky appear on the scene, and they engage in some activity with the two tramps. In the end result, they leave. Pozzo is going to sell Lucky in a market. Pozzo and Lucky are bound to each other by a rope. Pozzo carries a whip while Lucky carries all Pozzo's stuff.

Towards the end of the first act, a boy arrives to tell Vladimir and Estragon:

Mr. Godot will not come today but surely tomorrow.

And so, we are told that Act II takes place:

Next day. Same time. Same place.

And again, the tramps are waiting.

Pozzo and Lucky will pass, but this time Pozzo is blind, and Lucky is dumb, and the rope that is binding them together is much shorter.

The boy will arrive to say:

Mr. Godot will not come today but surely tomorrow.

In both acts, the tramps will think of **committing suicide**, but they will decide **to postpone** the act of killing themselves unless Godot comes. They will kill themselves unless Godot comes.

And so, at the end of each act, the famous stage direction:

They do not move

They are rooted to the spot, waiting for Godot, despite the endless arrival of the boy endlessly saying:

Mr. Godot will not come today but surely tomorrow.

Waiting for Godot is a play which ends where it begins. “*They do not move*” is one of the most significant stage directions of all time signifying **stasis**, and stasis pertains to the act of waiting. Waiting, very obviously, is **an inactive verb**.

Now, the weight of time, the burden of time becomes more perceptible.

And so, the plot of ***Waiting for Godot*** is plotless in the sense that it does not show a progression of events, nor does it show events linked to each other through cause and effect; rather, it shows events that are disjointed.

In ***Waiting for Godot***, we do not know anything definite about what has happened in the past pertaining to Vladimir and Estragon, and even when the past is mentioned, it is mentioned in a very **hazy and foggy manner**.

We are not given anything to call or describe as a stage of exposition.

Now, we do not have any interpersonal conflict. Vladimir and Estragon act together as one unit. Pozzo and Lucky act together as another unit. The characters are not in conflict with each other.

And so, we do not have the stage of rising action. All we can have, instead of the traditional linear plot, is a **circular plot** i.e. a plot which ends where it begins. It stands to reason—then obviously the whole

notion of **cause and effect** is **deconstructed** and with it the traditional notion of plot. And so, instead of the **linear** plot, we have a **circular** plot.

One famous critic has described ***Waiting for Godot*** as a play in which nothing happens twice. Nothing happens in the first act; nothing happens in the second act. The fact that nothing happens makes the time inasmuch a problem for the characters on the stage as it is about **the boredom of living.**

An evaluation of thematic concerns in *Waiting for Godot*

It is to absorb the general sense of anguish that the play presents and then will project onto the play the sense of anguish that she/he have at a given moment in time.

Waiting for Godot, obviously, deconstructed the audience's expectations:

:
“**“Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it is awful!”** This line, spoken by one of the characters in the play, provides its best summary. ***Waiting for Godot* is a masterpiece that will cause despair for men in general and for playwrights in particular.”**

The despair could have two origins: first, having to do with the fact that it is **largely**, thematically, about **despair**. But also, stylistically and formally it is very hard to understand; it is **avant-garde**; it is like **a poem**.

Waiting for Godot, another name for which might be “Waiting for Meaning”.

***Waiting for* problematizes man's being in time.**

And so, man is divided into a mind—mental faculties—and physical faculties.

***Waiting for Godot* problematizes the dilemma of man being a creature of time;** that is, a creature born into this world, without having asked for it; a creature who one day will die without knowing when; a creature who will have to, between the moment of birth and that of death, suffer endlessly the torment of being limited and of experiencing time as a double-edged weapon which brings with it joy, but suffering.

On the stage, we see two tramps waiting for someone, called Godot; to wait, obviously, is to wait in time. The stage is almost empty.

The Setting

The beginning of Act One and the beginning of Act Two.

And so, in Act One, the setting reads:

A country road. A tree. Evening.

Act Two reads: ***Next day. Same time. Same place.***

Back to Act One: ***A country road.***

“A” is an indefinite article. This country road could be anywhere in this world—. **A tree.** The tree is not specified. **Evening.**

It is the act of underlining **the absence** of any definite landmarks that would ground **the spatial setting** or the temporal setting in any exact frame of reference.

And so, this is a play almost floating in space. Consequently, at the beginning of Act Two, “Next day” is the next day of that “evening”.

Same time.

Same place.

And so, the second act again emphasizes the spatial and temporal setting as totally **unparticularized**, featureless, and lacking any link to a chronological framework.

The end behind this is to make the stage representative of a metaphor of the world as a **waste land**; a waste land is barren; a waste land has no features.

The Characters:

The Tramps:

Vladimir and Estragon are tramps. A tramp is not only poor, but he is also homeless and above all he is divorced from any socioeconomic context that would give him a frame of reference. He does not belong to society. And so, he is divorced from the traditional context that defined human beings. Travelling is for the sake of travelling.

As such, the tramps become representative of the metaphor of the human being as an eternal homeless traveler, **existentialist** man.

And so, the tramps very functionally represent human beings at large.

Godot:

Godot is indeed the object of their waiting. His name is the name that most occurs in these two acts. Yet, the tramps do not know who Godot is. They do not know why they are waiting for him.

ESTRAGON: His name is Godot?

VLADIMIR: I think so.

He is deconstructing the whole logic behind waiting. And when Vladimir will respond:

I think so.

He is obviously sounding very **uncertain**.

Now it is Pozzo who will ask them:

POZZO: (peremptory). Who is Godot?

ESTRAGON: Godot?

POZZO: You took me for Godot.

ESTRAGON: Oh no, Sir, not for an instant, Sir.

POZZO: Who is he?

VLADIMIR: Oh he's a . . . he's a kind of acquaintance.

ESTRAGON: Nothing of the kind, we hardly know him.

VLADIMIR: True . . . we don't know him very well . . . but all the same . . .

POZZO: You took me for Godot.

Because when Pozzo arrives, for a minute they think it is Godot has arrived.

Oh no, Sir, not for an instant, Sir.

Estragon is **lying** because it was he who made a mistake and thought that Pozzo was indeed Godot.

Now, when Pozzo insists and asks:

VLADIMIR: You work for Mr. Godot?

BOY: Yes Sir.

VLADIMIR: What do you do?

BOY: I mind the goats, Sir.

VLADIMIR: Is he good to you?

BOY: Yes Sir.

VLADIMIR: He doesn't beat you?

BOY: No Sir, not me.

VLADIMIR: Whom does he beat?

BOY: He beats my brother, Sir.

VLADIMIR: Ah, you have a brother?

BOY: Yes Sir.

VLADIMIR: What does he do?

BOY: He minds the sheep, Sir.

VLADIMIR: And why doesn't he beat you?

BOY: I don't know, Sir.

VLADIMIR: He must be fond of you.

BOY: I don't know, Sir.

Silence.

Mr. Godot, at least, beats the boy who minds the sheep, but not the boy who minds the goats. When Vladimir seeks a logical explanation behind **Godot's arbitrariness**—why does he beat one brother but not the other—he receives only the words “I do not know” from the boy.

The sheep and the goats, and the act of beating or not beating, punishing or not punishing is indeed to be understood against the reference of **the Bible**. Beckett is using the Bible in an inverted manner.

In the Bible, we are told that Jesus Christ one day will separate men into two groups as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.

Beckett has inverted this story by 1) making Godot arbitrary, and offering no logical explanation why he prefers one brother to the other.

And he inverts this story by 2) making Godot beat the boy who minds the sheep and not the boy who minds the goats.

And so, the nature of Godot, the function, the task that he is supposed to do in this world is definitely uncertain. Estragon is eating a carrot and his mouth is full. He says:

ESTRAGON: (his mouth full, vacuously). We're not tied?

VLADIMIR: I don't hear a word you're saying.

ESTRAGON: (chews, swallows). I'm asking you if we're tied.

VLADIMIR: Tied?

ESTRAGON: Ti-ed.

VLADIMIR: How do you mean tied?

ESTRAGON: Down.

VLADIMIR: But to whom? By whom?

ESTRAGON: To your man.

VLADIMIR: To Godot? Tied to Godot! What an idea! No question of it. (Pause.) For the moment.

This comic action goes side by side with an extremely serious issue.

And so, there are always two seemingly **parallel lines**.

And so, when his mouth is full to the extent that Vladimir cannot understand what Estragon is saying, Estragon will then ask whether or not they are tied.

Up to this moment, Vladimir is totally **denying** the fact that they are totally denying the fact that they are tied to Godot.

Then after a pause, with **doubt**, he will say:

For the moment.

What is more is that when Estragon emphasizes the word "tied", Vladimir will ask: "**How** do you mean tied?" He doesn't ask: "**What** do you mean tied?" And so, when he asks "How do you mean...", he is asking about the manner of being tied, which is to say that **he seems to be accepting the premise of tied**.

To be tied to a Godot who doesn't come is to be more abandoned than ever. But not to be tied is to be condemned to be free in the Sartrean sense.

And so, they have the choice of seeing themselves as either abandoned or condemned to be free. And so, they are waiting to deny their nothingness.

Godot is indefinable, but Godot is the only **hypothesis** upon which they have built their lives.

. “Godenot” is a reference to a puppet; a puppet is a doll that is moved by strings through the fingers of a puppeteer. I

The Tree

The tree carries a paradoxical or **contradictory** function. On the one hand, it is **static**; it stands there suggesting **stability**. On the other hand, in the second act, it has developed or sprouted four or five leaves, and the four or five leaves suggest **change**. And so, it suggests the thing and its opposite. Stability is there in the two acts, and change.

Literary speaking, 1) it could represent just what it is: **a tree**, most probably a willow tree. But 2) it might represent **the miracle of spring**

3) It could represent **the tree of life** insofar as it represents **the tree of non-death** because every time Vladimir and Estragon think of committing suicide.

4) The tree can be considered **the tree of knowledge**, of good and evil, in paradise, which carries extremely **sardonic** and **ironic** overtones in view of the fact that these tramps are very far from being in paradise.

Finally,

5) the tree, represents **hope and despair** for them.

VLADIMIR: He said by the tree. (They look at the tree.) Do you see any others?

ESTRAGON: What is it?

VLADIMIR: I don't know. A willow.

ESTRAGON: Where are the leaves?

VLADIMIR: It must be dead.

ESTRAGON: No more weeping.

VLADIMIR: Or perhaps it's not the season.

ESTRAGON: Looks to me more like a bush.

VLADIMIR: A shrub.

ESTRAGON: A bush.

Why is the tree not dead? Because it is stable; it has been there; it is overlooking the action; it is waiting.

And so, they **project** the hope of avoiding punishment by Godot onto the tree, and this **projection** is seen through the word “but”:

Everything's dead **but** the tree.

And so, if we go on waiting, and we are rooted to the spot like the tree, maybe we will avoid punishment. And so, they are like drowning men, clinging to a straw.

Now, the very opposite of this :

ESTRAGON: Everything oozes.

The verb “to ooze”, is letting out pus or ugly liquid as a result of bleeding.

ESTRAGON: Everything oozes.

VLADIMIR: Look at the tree.

ESTRAGON: It's never the same pus from one second to the next.

VLADIMIR: The tree, look at the tree.

So, they project their despair onto the tree and they see the tree as a wound, as being cut, as wounded, and as releasing ugly liquid, and this obviously a sign of their despair.

So, all they know is that they are swinging between hope and despair, which leads to see them as living in the paradox, a paradox that is, at one and the same time, a source of positive hope and a source of negative despair.

Vladimir will exclaim:

What are we doing here, *that* is the question.

A parallelism "being and Non being".

"What are we doing here" boils down to² our **being** or **nonbeing**.

He responds to the question:

And we are blessed in this, that we happen to know the answer. Yes, in this immense confusion one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come—

Vladimir will say: we are blessed in this, and the source of blessing is that they happen to know the answer. So, the answer to their question is here.

In this immense confusion one thing alone is clear. We are waiting for Godot to come—

If Godot himself is a puzzle, a mystery, an enigma, an unidentifiable creature or idea or thing, then what is clear in the midst of this confusion?

Vladimir's response "We are waiting for Godot to come" is not an answer to his question. It is a new question, triggered off by his **failure** to answer because he cannot answer and could not answer who Godot is.

"You are damned, in the sense that you are a non-knower and a non-canner experiencing the existentialist's space at the center of which lies a very dreadful **nothingness**. You are experiencing **fragmentation**. You are decentralized."

But because he is incapable of communicating with Godot, because Godot is totally unknown, then everything depending on Godot is likely to crumble.

² **boil down to:** result in

*man demanding reasonable explanations as to the meanings of his life and *the absurd condition, the universe, as refusing to give him an ultimate answer.

But the uncomprehending human being in this play, like **Sisyphus**, will insist on finding meaning by insisting on waiting for Godot.

The Issue of Time

In ***Waiting for Godot***, time is indeed **a paradox**, from the point of view of man, in the sense that, on the one hand, it is represented as **not passing**, but, on the other hand, it passes in a very real sense bringing with it **destruction and suffering**. And so, on the one hand, Vladimir and Estragon seem to be experiencing the heavy-handedness of time as an eternal present in which nothing happens because nobody Estragon will ask:

ESTRAGON: You're sure it was this evening?

VLADIMIR: What?

ESTRAGON: That we were to wait.

VLADIMIR: He said Saturday. (*Pause.*) I think.

ESTRAGON: You think.

"this evening", the end of a long day of waiting, is supposed to stand in **the tramps' memory** as the most significant moment in their human calendar, namely the moment of meeting Godot. And yet, Estragon's question "You're sure it was this evening?" casts **doubt**.

The pause marks a brief second, in which Vladimir becomes **suspicious** of the fact that the appointment was to be yesterday. Now, Estragon will **foreground** "I think" by **repeating**:

You **think**.

So, Vladimir says: "It is very simple. I wrote a note of it." And he looks in his pockets, which suddenly burst with all sorts of rubbish, for maybe a piece of paper on which he might have written the time of the appointment with Godot.

For Estragon, a Saturday could be a Sunday or a Monday or a Friday because any day is like any other stinking day.

And so, they experience their moments as stretching in an endless void, an endless vacuum, to infinity.

Vladimir can only conclude this:

It's not possible!

He is referring to his sense of loss, referring to his sense of dislocation, referring to his decontextualization from the main fabric of our lives, namely time.

ESTRAGON: Or Thursday?

VLADIMIR: What'll we do?

In other words, time derives its meaning from action. In the absence of action, in the frozen static state of waiting, time cannot gain meaning.

The trouble is that the play seems to distinguish between mechanical time, and cosmic time, the time that only God can see or foresee.

In other words—time is **a dense concept**.

Pozzo and Lucky arrive in the first Act with Pozzo healthy, wealthy and wise—. In Act Two, which—is the next day, Pozzo returns blind and Lucky returns dumb.

Vladimir asks Pozzo to make Lucky think or dance or sing, Pozzo says:

POZZO: But he is dumb.

VLADIMIR: Dumb!

POZZO: Dumb. He can't even groan.

VLADIMIR: Dumb! Since when?

So, time is to be damned, and time is a source of torment for Pozzo.: Suffering

And so, what is the human being to do vis-à-vis the antagonist time, which passes by virtue of the fact that past becomes present and present becomes future, which passes in a very destructively dynamic way.

Pozzo says:

They give birth astride of a grave,

'they' obviously is a reference to women, but it is an **impersonal** way of referring to women.

This means that life is brief, life is transitory.

the light gleams an instant,

It shines for one minute only, one second. The light is the light of life.

And so, in this speech, Pozzo brings together the many of **binary oppositions**:

Birth	Death
Light	Night
Midwife	Gravedigger
Womb	Tomb

Existentialist man cannot claim to know anything else but the time hangs very heavily on his hands³ because he is waiting for someone who does not turn up; consequently, time **freezes**.

³ **time hangs/lies heavy on your hands:** if time hangs or lies heavy on your hands, it seems to pass slowly because you are bored or have nothing to do

And so, habit becomes a zone of security, but this habit has been improvised by man so as to worn off what Beckett calls “**the suffering of being**”.

So, this habit, says Vladimir, may at first seem reasonable, but he asks: But has it not long been straying in the night without end of the abysmal depths?

This is a seemingly rhetorical question, but the answer to it is implied by **VLADIMIR**: *Yes, it has been long straying in the night.*

Vladimir is evoking a metaphor of existentialist man as eternally lost in the darkness of life, lost because the one sense of direction that he could have arrived at is to be derived from a spiritual compass and that spiritual compass is called God.

So, he is lost, totally lost, **without end**, without a foreseeable end of **the abysmal depths**.

The abysmal depths is a reference to the bottomless pit⁴ of nothingness, a bottomless pit that is descriptive of the **nihilist syndrome**. The nihilist syndrome holds that in the absence of God, life has no meaning; by the same token, death has no meaning, and man is left an alien floating in space incapable of feeling that he is “**tied**” to a deity or a power that will lend meaning to his life.

This passage is spoken while Estragon is sleeping and Vladimir is alone with his thoughts on the stage:

Vladimir and Estragon as two tramps divorced from any context stand for man. Vladimir represents the mind, thinking now, his consciousness engaged with itself, while Estragon represents the body, sleeping now, being in the here and now.

And so, the man delivering this monologue here, which is akin to an Elizabethan soliloquy at least insofar as 1) it takes place while he is alone on the stage, 2) his thoughts are obviously addressed to us, and 3) it represents a very acute agony.

Reality is eternally inaccessible to man; consequently, man can only experience himself as a sleep walker or as he can only experience the dreamscape as the only reality of life. And this becomes evident through:

Was I sleeping, while the others suffered? Am I sleeping now?

That Pozzo passed, with his carrier, and that he spoke to us? Vladimir expresses that he is casting doubt on the passage of Pozzo and Lucky, to

⁴ **bottomless pit**: supply with no limits

imply that nothing is real and the meaning of life is inaccessible, and existentialist man is eternally divorced from the center of his life.

When the boy arrives towards the end of Act Two, the boy asks:

What am I to tell Mr. Godot, Sir?

He **politely** asks **VLADIMIR**.

VLADIMIR: Tell him . . . (*he hesitates*) . . . tell him you saw me and that . . . (*he hesitates*) . . . that you saw me.

In other words, tell him I have been playing the game of life even though he seems to have thrust me on that stage of life and forgotten to give me the rules. I would like to point out that this idea might have been derived from the philosophy of Bishop Berkeley, an 18th century philosopher whom Beckett was very interested in. Bishop Berkeley has written:

To be is to be perceived.

And so, this seems to make a mockery of Nietzsche's "God is dead"

because man will only exist by virtue of God's recognition of him.

The Issue of Suicide

The issue of suicide is approached in this play in a very comic manner.

Estragon will say:

ESTRAGON: Let's hang ourselves immediately!

VLADIMIR: From a bough? (*They go towards the tree.*) I wouldn't trust it.

ESTRAGON: We can always try.

VLADIMIR: Go ahead.

ESTRAGON: After you.

VLADIMIR: No no, you first.

ESTRAGON: Why me?

This is polite social etiquette.

VLADIMIR: You're my only hope.

ESTRAGON: (*with effort*). Gogo light–bough not break–Gogo dead.

Gogo, the nickname of Estragon, is thin. So, if he hangs himself on the bough, the tree will not break, but he will die.

Didi heavy–bough break–Didi alone.

And so, the point is that either they live together or they die together.

He speaks to him like you speak to a little child.

*The second attempt of suicide comes at the end of the play:

ESTRAGON: Why don't we hang ourselves?

VLADIMIR: With what?

ESTRAGON: You haven't got a bit of rope?

VLADIMIR: No.

ESTRAGON: If we parted? That might be better for us.

VLADIMIR: We'll hang ourselves tomorrow. (*Pause.*) Unless Godot comes.

But on a textual level, the thought of suicide is simply presented as a comic entertaining thought.

It is a form of **metaphysical revolt**, whereas dying is a form of surrender, and for the absurd to maintain its grip and supremacy, man and the universe from which he is divorced should stay together.

So, there is a wide reference between resignation and renunciation.

“Suicide is a repudiation⁵. The absurd man can only drain everything to the bitter end and deplete⁶ himself.”

The balance between hope and despair is characteristic of the fate of existentialist man who can neither give up hope, nor, on the other hand, find legitimating for expectation.

In this play, the trip between hope and despair is marked by the first line of the play:

Nothing to be done

And the last line of the play, which is a stage direction:

They do not move.

“Nothing to be done” suggests surrender, despair, giving up, and the word “nothing” represents the **nihilist syndrome**, zero, absence; whereas, *“They do not move”*, represents the decision to carry on and the cancelation of the idea of despair is a statement representing hope translated into the body language.

One is philosophical and profound.

The other is comic and trivial.

****The profound treatment of the tension between hope and despair is discussed against a Biblical context, primarily by Vladimir, while *the comic and trivial representation of the tension between hope and despair is represented through Estragon’s treatment, of his boots.***

And so, as Act One begins, the stage direction reads:

Estragon, sitting on a low mound, is trying to take off his boot. He pulls at it with both hands, panting. He gives up, exhausted, rests, tries again.

As before.

Enter Vladimir.

ESTRAGON: (*giving up again.*) Nothing to be done.

This is the first spoken line in the play.

⁵ rejection

⁶ to reduce the amount of something that is present or available

ESTRAGON: Nothing.

VLADIMIR: Show me.

ESTRAGON: There's nothing to show.

VLADIMIR: Try and put it on again.

ESTRAGON: (*examining his foot*). I'll air it for a bit.

VLADIMIR: There's man all over for you, blaming on his boots the faults of his feet.

The “last moment” from the point of view of Estragon has to do with the moment separating Vladimir’s urgent need to rush to the bathroom and his actual relieving of himself. And so, the “last moment”, is extremely **funny**.

The “last moment”, as understood by Vladimir, is a reference to the Day of Judgment, when God will punish or reward.

To be appalled is to be terribly frightened. And the word “appalled” and the emotion of being appalled would be given rise to by the dread that if life has meant nothing in the absence of God, then indeed death will mean nothing.

(*He searches for the word*) . . . appalled.

And so, the seriousness of the fear at the thought of the last moment is deconstructed at the same time by a comic approach.

Hope deferred maketh the something sick, who said that?

Vladimir is quoting only **a fragment from the Bible**. The whole reads as follows:

“Hope deferred maketh the heart sick, but when the desire cometh, it is a tree of life.”

So, Vladimir has replaced the word “heart” with the word “something”.

“hope deferred” represents the postponement of attainment, the postponement of hope by the eternal postponement of the appointment with Godot.

He is focusing on the **despairing element**.

Vladimir does not seem to be capable of transcending his present despair and visualizing a moment when his *desire* will come i.e. his *Godot* will come, and when it will be a tree of life.

And so, Vladimir remembers this statement but deletes the hopeful part of it suggests that the “last moment” arouses in him a sense of being “appalled” more than “relieved”.

These philosophical musings on the part of Vladimir will be accompanied by **pantomime**.

The hat is the seat of reason. And so, if the boots represent the lower part, the feet, obviously, the hat has to do with the head.

The act of searching inside the hat for something represents the search for some lost idea.

Consequently, it is the **circus** element.

As Vladimir states “nothing to be done”, the tramp, who was stating “Nothing to be done” succeeds in pulling off his boot.

Estragon with a supreme effort succeeds in pulling off his boot.

And so, hope breeds despair, and despair breeds hope, and an intermingling of the serious and the comic.

Now, Estragon’s turn to:

looks on the ground to see if anything has fallen out, finds nothing.

This is a manifestation of loss.

ESTRAGON: What?

VLADIMIR: Suppose we repented.

ESTRAGON: Repented what?

VLADIMIR: Oh . . . (*He reflects.*) We wouldn't have to go into the details.

ESTRAGON: Our being born?

Vladimir breaks into a hearty laugh which he immediately stifles, his hand pressed to his pubis, his face contorted.

VLADIMIR: One daren't even laugh any more.

ESTRAGON: Dreadful privation.

VLADIMIR: Merely smile. (*He smiles suddenly from ear to ear, keeps smiling, ceases as suddenly.*) It's not the same thing. Nothing to be done.

Estragon is referring to the idea of original sin: the fact that man was born sinful, and that he has to be punished, consequently, not for his sins, but for the fact that he was born.

Vladimir laughs because the concept of original sin is obviously a concept that is devoid of justice and truth. Man guilt in this case is considered to be **pre-moral**. It is also **pre-legal**.

And so, the concept of original sin is associated with arbitrariness.

The four characters in the play are representative of Cain and Abel, the sons of Adam and Eve.

Seriousness is never far from triviality, and tragedy is never far from comedy.

VLADIMIR: (*Pause*) Gogo.

ESTRAGON: (*irritably*). What is it?

VLADIMIR: Did you ever read the Bible?

ESTRAGON: The Bible . . . (*He reflects.*) I must have taken a look at it.

VLADIMIR: Do you remember the Gospels?

ESTRAGON: I remember the maps of the Holy Land. Colored they were. Very pretty. The Dead Sea was pale blue. The very look of it made me thirsty. That's where we'll go, I used to say, that's where we'll go for our honeymoon. We'll swim. We'll be happy.

As Vladimir is discussing the seriousness of the Bible, he breaks off his train of thoughts by asking:

How's your foot?

This is an anticlimax in the sense that you think that the intellectual argument is going to rise to an extreme, instead of which, it is deconstructed in seriousness.

The Story of the Two Thieves:

Vladimir would say:

Two thieves, crucified at the same time as our Savior. One—

ESTRAGON: Our what?

VLADIMIR: Our Savior.

The word “savior” is **foregrounded**.

Two thieves. One is supposed to have been saved and the other . . . (*he searches for the contrary of saved*) . . . damned.

And so, salvation and damnation do not only seem to be 1) two-diametrically-opposed religious positions, whereby man will go to heaven or to hell regardless of how he visualizes the last moment, but, again, salvation and damnation are 2) two words that, linguistically speaking, oppose each other in meaning.

ESTRAGON: Saved from what?

VLADIMIR: Hell.

ESTRAGON: I'm going.

He does not move.

VLADIMIR: But one of the four says that one of the two was saved.

ESTRAGON: Well? They don't agree and that's all there is to it.

VLADIMIR: But all four were there. And only one speaks of a thief being saved. **Why believe him** rather than the others?

one of the four

Vladimir is obsessed with the fact that the Bible is an unreliable source of truth. Consequently, it is untruthful.

One Evangelist says that both thieves abused Jesus Christ.

The other Evangelist says that one of the two thieves once saved; meaning that the other was damned.

Religion cannot be turned to a system of justice, and that salvation and damnation are dished out arbitrarily.

And so, the story, as stated by Vladimir represents an obsession with **crime and punishment**.

Vladimir has confused his Biblical learning. Indeed, 1) when he says that two of the Evangelists did not mention any thieves at all, that is not true; the four Evangelists mentioned the thieves. 2) When he speaks about the fact that both abused the Savior, Jesus Christ, he is referring basically to Gospel of Saint Luke. 3) When he says that one of the two was saved and makes it sound arbitrary, indeed, in the Bible, the act of salvation is not as arbitrary as Vladimir makes of it.

And so, there is a pattern of cause and effect in the Bible that Vladimir would like to, for some reason, invert as he has inverted the original story of the sheep and goats.

Back to the text, salvation becomes an **increasingly** smaller possibility as opposed to damnation.

Beckett said:

; Godot's arrival is possible, Godot's absence is possible.

The Concept of Godot

Godot is maybe a name that man has given to his ardent⁷ wishful fulfillment. But, at the same time, Godot does not come. He is present through his absence.

What is desire?

Consequently, Godot is that futuristic desire that continually plagues man with the need to hope and to despair.

Vladimir said yesterday:

tell him you saw me!

The point is that Godot will cancel his function if he turns up.

Godot foregrounds the fragmented or absent relationship between signifier and signified because it seems that in the context of the play he indicates the thing and its opposite at the same time.

1) *He is not damnation nor salvation, but he represents the prospect of both. He is arbitrary.*

2) *He is not suicide nor is he life . And so, he is both.*

And all those negative and positive qualities jostle⁸ within the name **Godot**.

The Boots

Now, Estragon has taken off his boots, and Vladimir will ask him:

VLADIMIR: Your boots, what are you doing with your boots?

⁷ showing strong positive feelings about an activity and determination to succeed at it

⁸ to push or knock against someone in a crowd, especially so that you can get somewhere or do something before other people

ESTRAGON: (*turning to look at the boots*). I'm leaving them there. (*Pause.*) Another will come, just as . . . as . . . as me, but with smaller feet, and they'll make him happy.

VLADIMIR: But you can't go barefoot!

ESTRAGON: Christ did.

VLADIMIR: Christ! What has Christ got to do with it. You're not going to compare yourself to Christ!

ESTRAGON: All my life I've compared myself to him.

Silence.

Estragon is yearning for a spiritual link with Christ.

Estragon marks a clear contrast between him and Christ, and that lies in: at least, Jesus Christ's suffering had a purpose; Jesus Christ died in order to redeem a sinful humanity, whereas Estragon experiences his life as an eternal suffering that is purposeless.

Estragon has left his boots on the stage; he doesn't want them.

VLADIMIR: (*triumphantly, pointing to the boots*). There they are! (*Estragon looks at the boots.*) At the very spot where you left them yesterday!

Estragon goes towards the boots, inspects them closely.

ESTRAGON: They're not mine.

VLADIMIR: (*stupefied*). Not yours!

ESTRAGON: Mine were black. These are brown.

VLADIMIR: You're sure yours were black?

ESTRAGON: Well they were a kind of gray.

VLADIMIR: And these are brown. Show me.

ESTRAGON: (*picking up a boot*). Well they're a kind of green.

And so, 1) these boots are not Estragon's.

2) They do not seem to have any distinguishing color.

Beckett said:

"One of Estragon's feet is blessed, and the other is damned.

The play started with "nothing to be done" and ended with "*they do not move*".

Lucky has reported the theme as such to shrink and dwindle on an impossible earth under an impossible heaven.

He has further structured that speech into three parts: 1) an **apathetic⁹ divinity**, 2) **dwindling¹⁰ man**, and 3) **indifferent nature**.

He is Pozzo's slave, not only in the sense that he is Pozzo's carrier, but also in the sense that Pozzo has used him to think for him.

⁹ not interested in something, and not willing to make any effort to change or improve things

¹⁰ diminish gradually

And so, Pozzo points to his slave Lucky to dance .

And so, Estragon and Vladimir will finally agree on the fact that they will have him dance first and think second.

Lucky in a stage direction is reported to dance:
Lucky dances. He stops.

He dances just very briefly.

ESTRAGON: Is that all?

Pozzo will say:

POZZO: Encore!

More!

Lucky executes the same movements, stops.

He is physically **deteriorating**, and so the dance that used to have several dimensions once is now reduced to one or two steps.

Estragon will **mock and scorn** this kind of performance by saying:

ESTRAGON: Pooh! I'd do as well myself. (*He imitates Lucky, almost falls.*) With a little practice.

POZZO: He used to dance the farandole, the fling, the brawl, the jig, **the fandango and even the hornpipe**. He capered. For joy. Now that's the best he can do.

These are names of dances enlisted.

Do you know what he calls it?

Estragon and Vladimir will begin a game of guessing the name of the dance.

ESTRAGON: The Scapegoat's Agony.

VLADIMIR: The Hard Stool.

POZZO: **The Net**. He thinks he's entangled in **a net**.

When Estragon suggests 'The Scapegoat's Agony', Lucky seems to be the sacrificial victim of Pozzo.

VLADIMIR: The Hard Stool.

'Stool' is a reference to a chair, and Lucky is carrying a small chair that Pozzo is supposed to sit on. 'Stool' is also a reference to **man's waste**.

VLADIMIR: (*to Pozzo*). Tell him to think.

POZZO: Give him his hat.

VLADIMIR: His hat?

POZZO: He can't think without his hat.

The 'hat' is representative of the seat of reason. And so, Lucky is supposed to wear his hat if he is to be capable of thinking.

Pozzo will say to Lucky:

POZZO: Stand back! (*Vladimir and Estragon move away from Lucky. Pozzo jerks the rope. Lucky looks at Pozzo.*)

Think, pig! (*Pause. Lucky begins to dance.*)

A robotization.

Stop! (*Lucky stops.*) Forward! (*Lucky advances.*) Stop! (*Lucky stops.*) Think!

Silence.

Lucky will begin to think :

Lucky pulls on the rope, staggers, shouts his text. All three throw themselves on Lucky who struggles and shouts his text.

LUCKY: Given the existence as uttered forth in the public works of Puncher and Wattmann of a personal **God quaquaquagua** with white beard quaquaquagua outside time without extension who from the heights of divine **apathia** divine **athambia** divine **aphasia** loves us dearly with some exceptions for reasons unknown but time will tell.....

The monologue reflects the fragmentary way of the thinking of modern man.

Lucky is indeed delivering this speech as part and parcel of his **automatic response** to Pozzo's order.

What have in this dramatic monologue is the image of a confrontation between **the uncomprehending reason**, on the part of man, and an **incomprehensible universe** that does not yield to reason.

Lucky's speech is a metaphor of the fragmentary thinking—or way of thinking that modern existentialist, absurdist man is capable of doing and is capable of doing nothing else.

And so, the dilemma that the Theater of the Absurd captures is this discrepancy, this gap, between what the mind desires and what it can have.

Lucky's speech is as a monologue about the play, or a play within the play.

Man cannot think anymore; reason has been redundant.

And so, the speech starts with the word "Given". "Given" introduces a hypothesis, a supposition.

And so, God is put forward not as an ultimate conclusion, but rather as a supposition which needs to be proved.

Incidentally, **the last word of this speech is: unfinished.**

'Puncher' is a reference to a ticket puncher (=the man who punches tickets on a bus or a train).

'Wattmann' is a reference to a tram driver.

And so, if God exists, then he is not accessible because he lies somewhere beyond time, outside time and without extension. He is beyond,

who from the heights of divine apathia divine athambia divine aphasia loves us dearly with some exceptions for reasons unknown

Now, there are certain characteristics of the God of Lucky's vision: He not only lies beyond time and without extension, but indeed he is characterized by apathy and athambia, which have roughly the same meaning. 'Apathy' means **indifference**.

He has a white beard. Towards the end of the play, and when the boy arrives, one of Vladimir questions to the boy is:

Has he a beard, Mr. Godot?

And the boy says: Yes Sir.

Then Vladimir asks about the color of the beard, and the boy says: white. And Vladimir will exclaim:

Christ have mercy on us!

This hypothetical God:

loves us dearly with some exceptions

In other words, he is arbitrary.

When Vladimir asked the boy:

VLADIMIR: And why doesn't he beat you?

BOY: I don't know, Sir.

VLADIMIR: He must be fond of you.

BOY: I don't know, Sir.

And so, God not only is arbitrary, but he is also mysterious; he is unfathomable, he works in mysterious ways.

And then, this God will go on practicing his arbitrariness and unfathomability for reasons unknown,
but time will tell

Lucky's words in the sense that **time will not tell**, for the simple reason that, God's cosmic time operates very independently from man's mechanical time, so much so that *Vladimir and Estragon were not capable of telling the difference between Saturday or Sunday.

Now, the speech will approach the subject of heaven and hell.

and suffers like the divine Miranda with those who for reasons unknown but time will tell are plunged in torment plunged in fire whose fire flames if that continues and who can doubt it will fire the firmament that is to say blast **hell** to **heaven** so blue still and calm so calm with a calm

Now, the speech is going to refer to the failure of science to offer any help to man. So, if God has betrayed man, then science has also betrayed him.

And so, Lucky is going to say:

and considering what is more that as a result of **the labors left unfinished**

ESTRAGON: His name is Godot?

VLADIMIR: I think so.

And so, man is wasting and pining.

The function is to refer to the fact that the natural world goes on existing irrespective of the agony of man.

The link between man and nature is a subjective link, but what Lucky is talking about here is a subjective phenomenon which lies out there.

And so, the reference to the sea, the river, the cold, the mountains, etc. is a reference to a cycle that will go on and on turning without any pause, without any need to consider that helpless creature living down here on this earth.

And so, man's reason is actually made redundant; it is a faculty that is paralyze i.e. defeated, and that is exactly the dilemma that ***Waiting for Godot*** problematizes, the dilemma of **man's being in time**.

'The skull' is actually a reference to the place of the skull where Jesus Christ was crucified. The skull, in Hebrew, is referred to as Golgotha. The place of the skull is on Mount Calvary outside the gates of the old city of Jerusalem.

Characterization

In the Theater of the Absurd, simply shown characters facing time or the human condition, and so the antagonist, if any, is the human condition, and so this is **transpersonal** (not personal).

The grouping of characters in this play:

Pozzo & Lucky

Vladimir & Estragon

1) the Pozzo-Lucky pair.

Pozzo is presented as the master: he is the one to lead Lucky, he is the one who has the whip, and Lucky is the one who carries his stuff.

And so, Pozzo is represented as a master whereas Lucky is represented as a slave.

There cannot be a master without a slave and there cannot be a slave without a master. This is the kind of **interdependent relationship**.

2. On the other hand, Vladimir and Estragon represent, reason and body; mental man, physical man. Vladimir is the one who philosophizes and muses most of the time while Estragon is the one who eats, plays with his boots, and more concerned with mundane and physical objects.

Pozzo and Lucky represent at least in the first act, namely 'social man' or 'economic man' represented by the master-slave relationship.

The master Pozzo seems to own his slave Lucky and to use him and to abuse him. Pozzo in the first act has a watch, so he is a creature of time, in the mechanical sense of the word; he is a creature of this world; he is not abstract, he is concrete. And so, if Vladimir and Estragon represent the totality of man, then Pozzo and Lucky represent the historical, social, economic thrust of man passing through time.

Thus, man (Vladimir and Estragon) and social economic man (Pozzo and Lucky) represent the abstract human condition, the metaphysical human condition, demonstrated by the absurd confrontation of Vladimir and Estragon waiting for Godot, and concrete mundane man getting, spending, exploiting, being exploited, owning, being owned; in short, a creature of this concrete world.

(Vladimir and Estragon):	represent the abstract human condition, the metaphysical human condition, demonstrated by the absurd confrontation of Vladimir and Estragon waiting for Godot.
(Pozzo and Lucky):	represent concrete mundane man getting, spending, exploiting, being exploited, owning, being owned; in short, a creature of this concrete world

Pozzo is an Italian name which means a well of water.

Lucky is an English name which is terribly ironic because Lucky is very unlucky; he can hardly think.

Vladimir is the name of a Russian prince, well-known in history.

Estragon is a French name coming from tarragon, which is a name of a herb that use to make salad; a herb grows very close to the earth, and like Estragon, it is perhaps the more earthly of the two.

1. Vladimir & Estragon

Vladimir and Estragon cannot exist separate from each other because if they exist separately, then if one speaks, there will be no one to listen.

And so, at the beginning of Act Two, Vladimir will ask Estragon:

Where did you spend the night?

ESTRAGON: Don't touch me! Don't question me! Don't speak to me! Stay with me!

Estragon is in need of human compassion.

VLADIMIR: Did I ever leave you?

ESTRAGON: You let me go.

VLADIMIR: Look at me. (*Estragon does not raise his head. Violently.*) Will you look at me!

Estragon raises his head.

They look long at each other, then suddenly embrace, clapping each other on the back. End of the embrace. Estragon, no longer supported, almost falls.

This embrace is a sign of the brotherhood of man. Another instance; Estragon is trying to sleep:

VLADIMIR: Wait. (*He goes over and sits down beside Estragon and begins to sing in a loud voice.*)

And so, he will go:

Bye bye bye bye

Bye bye—

ESTRAGON: (*looking up angrily*). Not so loud!

VLADIMIR: (*softly*).

Bye bye bye bye

So, Vladimir is singing Estragon to sleep as a mother might sing the baby to sleep.

Consequently, they have to stay together, because of interdependence against the void.

Estragon sleeps. Vladimir gets up softly, takes off his coat and lays it

VLADIMIR: There . . . there . . . Didi is here . . . don't be afraid . . .

ESTRAGON: Ah!

VLADIMIR: There . . . there . . . it's all over.

ESTRAGON: I was falling—

VLADIMIR: It's all over, it's all over.

And so, sinning in God's eyes, is the cause of an alarming nightmare.

ESTRAGON: I was on top of a—

Vladimir: Don't tell me! Come, we'll walk it off.

He takes Estragon by the arm and walks him up and down until Estragon refuses to go any further.

This subconscious fear that led to Estragon's dream also exists in Vladimir. So, Vladimir not only doesn't want to hear this story because he has heard it millions of times before, but also it is too painful for him to hear a story or a dream that echoes his own pain.

Estragon will ask:

How long have we been together all the time now?

And Vladimir will respond:

I don't know. Fifty years perhaps.

So, there is a double uncertainty balanced by 'Fifty years' which cancels the effect of any definite answer concerning the question 'How long'.

ESTRAGON: Do you remember the day I threw myself into the Rhone?

'The Rhone' is a river.

Vladimir says:

We were grape harvesting.

ESTRAGON: You fished me out.

And so, the memory of the river belongs to Estragon only.

Vladimir will comment: That's all dead and buried.

It is a neutral comment.

Almost to suggest that the past is irrelevant; it has nothing to do with the present

It is the difference between reality and appearance; it is the difference between actually existing and dreaming .

The impression of existence is being **decentered**.

VLADIMIR: You must be happy too, deep down, if you only knew it.

ESTRAGON: Happy about what?

VLADIMIR: To be back with me again.

ESTRAGON: Would you say so?

VLADIMIR: Say you are, even if it's not true.

In other words, they are going to cheat themselves into believing that they are happy.

ESTRAGON: What am I to say?

VLADIMIR: Say, I am happy.

ESTRAGON: I am happy.

VLADIMIR: So am I.

ESTRAGON: So am I.

VLADIMIR: We are happy.

ESTRAGON: We are happy. (*Silence.*) What do we do now, now that we are happy?

VLADIMIR: Come to my arms!

ESTRAGON: Yours arms?

VLADIMIR: My breast!

ESTRAGON: Off we go!

They embrace. They separate. Silence.

VLADIMIR: How time flies when one has fun!

And so, their primary antagonist time has to be beguiled.

2. Pozzo & Lucky

Lucky is carrying a heavy bag, a folding stool, a picnic basket and a greatcoat¹¹.

And so, everything that Lucky carries belongs not to him, but to Pozzo. Pozzo carries a whip.

The whip in Pozzo's hand is an expression of the sadism of the master, and the attachment of Lucky to Pozzo and then his willingness throughout the remainder¹² of this act to be Pozzo's slave is an expression of Lucky's sadomasochistic¹³ bondage to Pozzo. So, their master-slave relationship is symbolized iconically right from the very moment we see them in Act One.

It is possible to regard Pozzo and Lucky in the light of the circus. In that case, Pozzo would become a trainer and Lucky would become a circus animal.

In the first act, Pozzo introduces himself as a landowner, and he even goes so far as to accuse Vladimir and Estragon of waiting here on his land. So, he projects himself as a landlord, a landowner, a feudal master. But in Act Two, when he returns, he has lost everything. His watch is replaced by a bag of sand.

And the fact that he has lost his watch and that the rope is shorter indicates the very significant point that Pozzo and Lucky are in the end result human beings. Man divorced from any socioeconomic or political background that could give him definition.

Consequently, the supremacy of master to slave, symbolized by the rope, and symbolized by the fact that Pozzo leads Lucky in the first act, comes to become shorter and that means that the discrepancy between master and slave is erased almost, and it is now Lucky who leads Pozzo; they become men.

When Vladimir questions Pozzo about his blindness:

VLADIMIR: And it came on you all of a sudden?

POZZO: Quite wonderful!

VLADIMIR: I'm asking you if it came on you all of a sudden.

POZZO: I woke up one fine day as blind as Fortune. (*Pause.*) Sometimes I wonder if I'm not still asleep.

VLADIMIR: And when was that?

POZZO: I don't know.

VLADIMIR: But no later than yesterday—

¹¹ a long heavy coat

¹² The rest

¹³ the derivation of pleasure from the infliction of physical or mental pain on oneself

POZZO: (*violently*). Don't question me! The blind have no notion of time. The things of time are hidden from them too.

Pozzo doesn't seem to find any link between his blindness and any previous sin that he has committed and for which he has been punished.

Pozzo's speech about the **firmament**¹⁴:

Consequently, he is subjected to the whims of fortune; consequently, there is no point asking when blindness came or when dumbness did.

3. The Interrelationship of the Two Pairs

In both acts, have an arrival-departure pattern: Pozzo arrives with Lucky; Pozzo departs with Lucky.

And so, structurally speaking, we have **him** who arrives; consequently, in both acts and every time Pozzo arrives, the question arises: **Is Pozzo Godot?**

ESTRAGON: Is that him?

Pozzo and Lucky, master and slave, represent Vladimir and Estragon as slaves to the master Godot.

Next lecture , we will have something about the next play beforehand (**The Play Boy of the Western World**)

2023

¹⁴ **the firmament:** *literary* the sky or heaven

THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD By J. M. Synge

The Poetic Realist Theatre

Good morning everybody .

Today, Prior to reading and commenting on the second play, we are going to commence some general summary about the following points:

1-a short biography about the playwright

2- a brief account of the plot, and the main characters.

The new play is THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD By J. M. Synge . It is a very interesting one . John Millington Synge, like Samuel Beckett and Butler Yeats, is another great Irish dramatist. In Ireland, there were certain important dramatists who found a platform in the Abbey Theatre, the most famous one in Dublin, the capital city, which was opened in 1904. There were two movements; a realistic one which followed Ibsen, and a poetic one which sought inspiration, Irish myth and legend. Perhaps a greater dramatist was John Millington Synge whose famous play , THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD, deals with peasantry or people in the countryside. Much poetic style is used wonderfully in this play. It is also rich in imagination, poetry and myth because it is based on Irish peasant speech like the TV soap opera ضائعة ضائعة. It is written in the simple language used especially by the naïve people of the western part of Ireland. The play is not only a realistic one, like Waiting For Godot , but it also a poetical one. Because Irish people saw John Millington Synge defaming the Irish character when he was telling the truth about the human character, they were met with a strong reception. Synge was considered one of the pioneers of modern English Drama although he is Irish, but modern British Drama owes much to the Irish and the French contemporary drama. It is one of the glories of John Millington Synge. He was born in the suburbs of Dublin in 1871 and died in 1909. He studied in Trinity College in 1888 and he could win prizes for he was very brilliant. Then, he went to Germany to study music and he was exposed to Beethoven, Darwin and others. After that, he went to Paris where he became a great poet and critic as he studied many literary works of famous writers, but he was homesick. So he went back to Ireland , mixed with the normal peasants and he was very fond their language, style and even their way of life. They are like the people in the soap opera ضائعة ضائعة او الخربة مسلسل. Then, he decided to

write plays, and **THE PLAYBOY OF THE WESTERN WORLD** is one of them. Of course, people during Synge's life, were conservative; that is, a child should not confront or disobey his or her father. In this play, we will find a boy whose name is Christopher Mahon disobeying and fighting his father, Old Mahon. Christy's father told him to do what was required. He ordered him to help him in the potato field. Moreover, he told him to marry an ugly old lady but the boy could not stand that and said "Enough is enough" **طفح الكيل** to his father. The boy hit his father on the skull with a loy, and ran away.

He spent 11 days walking and looking for a shelter. At last, he got to a public house, shebeen, where a beautiful girl called Pegeen was working. She was the daughter of the shebeen's owner and she was engaged to Shawn who was a cowardly man. At first, Christy was welcomed as a hero by the villagers in Mayo County for killing his father, but in reality, his father was still alive though he was injured badly. He was considered as a brave courageous man by Mayo's people including Pegeen whose fiancée was a coward. Shawn was also dominated by Father Reilly, the priest. He could not marry Pegeen without the prior permission of the clergyman. Killing his father, Christy was considered a hero because he broke the authority's order. Furthermore, meals and drinks were served to him; people, especially ladies like Pegeen, Widow Quin and other girls quarreled over him. But truth knocks at the door of Pegeen's and Quin's house when Christy's father turns up to be alive. Now that, everything has already collapsed and the situation has dramatically changed. When he first told them about his parricide in a poetic way, he was praised and welcomed because they did not witness the crime for it was just a tale or fun, but later on, when he tried to kill him in front of the people of Mayo, they condemned this action and caught Christy and were ready to hand him to the police as a criminal. Finally, his father forgave him and took him back his home and they reconciled. Pegeen laments losing her only playboy. Let us now have a brief account about the plot and the main characters of the play.

Act I

The scene of the play is set in a shebeen on the outskirts of a village on the North West coast of County Mayo in a dark autumn evening, and the landlord's daughter Pegeen Mike is writing an order for supplies. She teases her fiancé Shawn Keogh because he refuses to stay alone with her until they have received a dispensation permitting their marriage. Pegeen's father Michael Flaherty arrives with their neighbours Jimmy and Philly and they all continue to tease Shawn. A young stranger – Christy Mahon – enters the shebeen tired and dishevelled. When he is questioned, he reveals that he has recently murdered his father with a spade, and buried him in a potato field. Impressed by this, and

encouraged by Pegeen, Michael offers Christy the position of pot boy at the shebeen, a role requiring him to look after Pegeen, and guard Michael's poteen (an illegal alcoholic homebrew). The older men leave the shebeen to attend a neighbour's wake, and Shawn leaves to see another neighbour, Widow Quin. Pegeen is fascinated by Christy, but as the two become close, Widow Quin arrives and interrupts them. Rumoured for having murdered her husband, she tells them that she would be a more appropriate friend to Christy than Pegeen. When the women exit, Christy reflects that if he had known that killing his father would have resulted in this amount of attention, he would have done it years ago.

ACT II

The following morning, Christy is still celebrating his new found glory, but hides in the back room when four local girls enter the shebeen. He eventually comes out to talk to them and receive their gifts. Widow Quin arrives and announces that she has entered him for a local sports competition. When Pegeen returns to find Christy and the Widow with their arms linked, she tells the women to leave and although she is initially angry with Christy, he manages to charm her with his poetic talk. Shawn enters and tells Pegeen to chase after her sheep that have escaped. Whilst she is gone, he and Widow Quin try to persuade Christy to leave, bribing him with new clothes and a boat ticket to America. While Christy tries on the clothes, at Widow Quin's insistence, Shawn leaves the two of them alone. Old Mahon – Christy's supposedly dead father – enters, and Christy hides from him behind a door. Mahon tells Widow Quin that he is looking for his weak and lazy son, who attacked him with a spade. She pieces together the true story, and sends him off, telling him that she saw his son fleeing over the hills to catch a boat. Once again left alone with Christy, Widow Quin promises to help him. She initially tries to persuade him to go and live with her, but when this fails, she promises to stop Pegeen and everyone else from finding out the truth, in return for various gifts. The village girls enter and escort Christy down to the beach to compete in the sports competition.

Act III

Philly and Jimmy return to the shebeen on their way back from the wake, and drunkenly discuss Christy. Old Mahon returns and shows them his injured head. Widow Quin tries to distract him, and tells the other men that he is mad and that they mustn't believe anything that he tells them. They are interrupted by loud cheering coming from outside, and they watch the mule race through the windows. Mahon recognises the winner of the race as his son, but Widow Quin assures him that he is imagining it, and should leave. He agrees, and is followed out by Philly and Jimmy. Christy enters triumphantly, and tells Pegeen that he intends

to marry her. As the couple discuss their romantic future together, Michael returns with the dispensation granting the marriage of Pegeen to Shawn. Pegeen tells her father that it is Christy that she wants to marry, and although he is initially horrified, he quickly realises that Christy is the better option for his daughter, and gives them his blessing. Old Mahon returns again, and begins to attack Christy. All present realise that Christy has been lying to them, and refuse to help him. Christy chases his father out of the shebeen brandishing a spade, and returns a moment later, apparently having really killed him this time. Widow Quin and Shawn try to disguise him by dressing him in petticoats so that he can escape, but he refuses. Expecting to have once again won everyone round, he is surprised to find that they are even more against him now, with Pegeen telling him that 'there's a great gap between a gallous story and a dirty deed.' Shawn and Pegeen tie him up, and encouraged by the crowd, Pegeen burns him with a lit sod of turf. To everyone's great surprise, Old Mahon enters once again, and unties Christy, saying that they will leave the village and tell everyone about 'the villainy of Mayo.' Newly confident, Christy tells his father that he will go with him, but that it will be him that gives the orders from now on. With Christy gone, Shawn believes that he and Pegeen will now be able to marry, but Pegeen rebuffs him, as she mourns the loss of 'the only Playboy of the Western World.'

1-Christopher 'Christy' Mahon is a young man from a different town, who arrives at Michael Flaherty's shebeen with the news that he has murdered his father. He is the 'playboy' that the title of the play refers to. It has double meaning of 'charmer' and 'trickster'. Christy portrays both of these characteristics over the course of the play. When he first appears, he is 'tired, frightened and dirty' and comes across as shy and humble. His father describes the Christy he knows as a 'dirty, stuttering lout' who is scared of girls, but as the play progresses, and he attracts attention and praise from the other characters – particularly the women – Christy becomes far more confident and charismatic, and he begins to speak using increasingly poetic language. Towards the end of the play, he reveals another side to his personality, becoming violent and aggressive, and leaves the shebeen seemingly full of new confidence.

2-Pegeen Mike (Margaret Flaherty) is Michael James's daughter, and the barmaid at the shebeen. She is described as 'a wild-looking but fine girl, of about twenty.' She is feisty and confident, bossing around her father, and Shawn, her second cousin to whom she has been engaged. However, her apparent independence is contradicted by her fear of staying in the shebeen alone, suggesting a certain dichotomy in her character. When she meets Christy, she is attracted to his danger, and to the outside world that he represents to her, a world of opportunities and romance that have

so far been lacking in her life. She behaves flirtatiously around Christy, but is abrupt and assertive towards Widow Quin and the girls of the village. She also has a violent streak, attacking Christy with a burning sod of earth when she learns that he has lied to her. However, when he finally leaves, she is bereft, and mourns the loss of ‘the only Playboy of the Western World.’

3-Widow Quin is a woman who lives in the village, whose children have died, and who has allegedly murdered her husband. Like Christy, she is an outsider, but unlike Christy, she been excluded, not welcomed by the community. Attracted to Christy, she seems to be driven by lust and money. She is witty and crafty, and manages to talk and joke herself out of difficult situations. When she finds out that Christy has lied, her feelings towards him do not change, and she agrees to help him – as long as he pays her. However, when the rest of the village turn against him, she tries to help him escape, this time without standing to gain anything herself, suggesting that she also has a caring side to her seemingly abrasive personality.

4-Michael James Flaherty is the proprietor of the shebeen in which the play is set. He is a popular figure within the local community, and the father of Pegeen Mike. He is described as being a ‘fat, jovial publican,’ and in Act I we see him teasing Pegeen’s fiancé Shawn, and being friendly and welcoming towards Christy when he arrives. He seems laidback, initially willing to leave his daughter alone overnight whilst he attends a wake, and is then surprisingly trusting of the alleged murderer. He is also a religious man, and when Christy’s lies are revealed, it is he who suggests that the locals hang him, so that God does not punish them for harbouring him.

5-Shawn Keogh is ‘a fat and fair young man’ who is engaged to be married to his second cousin, Pegeen Mike. He is submissive towards everyone, including Pegeen, and is frequently the butt of people’s jokes. He is also religious, initially refusing to stay alone with Pegeen until they are married. He is wary of Christy, and jealous of the attention he gets from Pegeen. He is driven through the play by his desire to get rid of Christy, and displays a certain amount of cunning in his attempts to get rid of him. When he discovers that Pegeen wishes to marry Christy, he becomes depressed and resentful, but is too scared to fight him.

6-Old Mahon is Christy’s father, who is assumed dead throughout Act I. When he appears in Act II, he is injured, having been attacked by Christy, and aggressive. He is proud of the injuries he has sustained and talks about Christy derogatively, describing him in such a way that makes him seem unrecognisable from the Christy the audience and the other characters have been introduced to. When he returns in Act III, Mahon becomes a more sympathetic character, tired, emotional and

is dead , they have this kind of celebration .For Muslims , for the man or the woman who is dead , they have what we call conclusion ختمة , but for Christians , they have this occasion in advance before the dead is buried , they have this night which is called the wake . So , he is busy attending wakes with his friends.

(She gets up and puts envelope on dresser, then winds clock.) Isn't long the nights are now, Shawn Keogh, to be leaving a poor girl with her own self counting the hours to the dawn of day?

- envelope ظرف الرسالة

Of course, here , she is addressing her fiancé, Shawn . She is complaining and she is blaming him for being left alone .

SHAWN — [with awkward humour.] — If it is, when we're *wedded* in short while you'll have no call to complain, for I've little will to walking off to wakes or weddings in the darkness of the night.

- Wedded = got married.

While = time .

PEGEEN — [with rather scornful good humour.] — You're making mighty certain, Shaneen, that I'll wed you now

Notice how witty this girl is . Although she is engaged to him , she doesn't love him and she doesn't want to get married to him , why ?

Because he is a cowardly man and he is busy attending wakes with her father and he is completely dominated by a Christian priest ; Father Reilly.

She says that she is left alone without her father and without her-to-be husband ,(Shawn), and she is left unprotected. Shawn tells her that she doesn't need to complain the moment they get married.

And now she has a witty response , and this shows that she doesn't agree with him .

PEGEEN — [with rather scornful good humour.] — You're making mighty certain, Shaneen, that I'll wed you now.

SHAWN. Aren't we after making a good bargain, the way we're now waiting these days on Father Reilly's dispensation from the bishops, the Court of Rome.

Shawn says , " Don't we have agreement about that marriage ? "

- Dispensation = leave , admission .

She is even complaining about the way that they are getting married . They can't get married without the prior admission or leave of the bishops . Father Reilly is doing this on their behalf .

Lecturer : What can we understand from these two lines?

She is attacking religious leadership. That is , this is something personal . She feels that she is not free. The only one who is supposed to give permission is one's parents . If you want to get married from someone

whom you love, sometimes you need not have the admission of your parents .

Student : It is good to have the blessing of the religious authority, but the problem is in the permission.

Lecturer : Because till the 19th or even the 20th , you couldn't do anything without the permission of the church

PEGEEN — [looking at him teasingly, washing up at dresser.] — It wonder, Shaneen, the Holy Father'd be taking notice of the likes you; for if I was him I wouldn't bother with this place where you meet none but Red Linahan, has a squint in his eye, and Patcheen lame in his heel, or the mad Mulrannies were driven from Califorma and they lost in their wits. We're a queer lot these times to go troubling the Holy Father on his sacred seat.

- the likes of you = people like you ناس مثلك

So , here , she is listing the people who proposed to marry her other than Shawn . The first one is Red Linahan . He is squint أحول . There is something wrong with his eyes . And the other one is Patcheen . He is lame in his heel , there is something wrong with his leg . He is a disabled , and the third one is mad .SHAWN KEOGH is a cowardly man and he is dominated by the priests and church . So she has four choices and SHAWN KEOGH is the best of the worst .

PEGEEN —

We're a queer lot these times to go troubling the Holy Father on sacred seat.

She is making fun of priests . We are making the religious people busy . We are troubling or bothering them by us .There is no need to bother them . They are poor.

Student 1 : They don't have any advantage .

Student 2 : حتى تريحهم يعني

SHAWN — [scandalized.] If we are, we're as good this place another, maybe, and as good these times as we were for ever.

Now down :

PEGEEN. Well, you're a daring fellow, and if they find his cor stretched above in the dews of dawn, what'll you say then to peelers, or the Justice of the Peace?

- daring = courageous / brave.
- fellow : شخص — زلمة

He is talking about something that happened to him . He heard some noise near the Shebeen and he dared not approach that place and she is

telling him , "Well , you are a daring fellow , you are brave and courageous and if they find this corpse!! . So he heard a noise of a man groaning يأن .

Student : Is she making fun of him or encouraging him ?

Lecturer : She is blaming him . She tells him that " You are responsible for that . Why don't you approach that man and find what happened to him ."

Student : She wants him to take an action .

Lecturer : Yes , because he may be dying .

Student : He is asking for help .

- the peelers = policemen .

She tells him that he is responsible if something has happened to that man who is asking for help . Because he was a cowardly man , he couldn't go to that place and help that man . We will see that man . These statements are foreshadowing . We are going to be introduced with a new character . We will see who this character is.

SHAWN — [thunderstruck.] I wasn't thinking of that. For the love of God, Pegeen Mike, don't let on I was speaking of him. Don't tell your father and the men is coming above; for if they heard that story, they have great blabbing this night at the wake.

Don't tell anybody because they will accuse me . Look here. Synge is not caring about his grammar and syntax because he is using the peasants' language of the western people of Ireland. They are simple peasants .

Student : Is he using the language of the farmers ?

Lecturer : Yes .

Student : He is using slang .

- Blabbing = chatting , gossiping , talking .
- at the wake. تمساية أو تعليلة الأموات.

PEGEEN. I'll maybe tell them, and I'll maybe not.

She is playing with him .

Student : She sets him on fire . (مصطلح بدھا تخلي على نار)

Lecturer : Yes , and she wants to hen-peck him . She wants to dominate or control him like a small puppet .

Like the famous series in Bab Al Haraa

📺. زلمة محكوم من قبل فوزية hen-pecked في باب الحارة ، ابو بدر كان

SHAWN. They are coming at the door, Will you whisht, I'm saying?

PEGEEN. Whisht yourself.

Shut up your mouth , please . She is dominating him .

MEN — [together.] — God bless you. The blessing of God on t

place.

PEGEEN. God bless you kindly.

Let' move to page 3

SHAWN — [screaming.] Leave me go, Michael James, leave me go, y
old Pagan, leave me go, or I'll get the curse of the priests on you, and
the scarlet-coated bishops of the courts of Rome. [With a sudden
movement he pulls himself out of his coat, and disappears out of
door, leaving his coat in Michael's hands.]

Lecturer : Who is Michael James ? He is PEGEEN'S father .

MICHAEL — [to men who go to the counter.] — Sit down now, and
take your rest. (Crosses to Shawn at the fire.) And how is it you and
Shawn Keogh? Are you coming over the sands to Kate Cassidy's walk?
He is asking him whether he is coming or not .

SHAWN. I am not, Michael James. I'm going home the short cut to
bed.

He is terrified and frightened by the situation he had made , so he
prefers going home and going to bed.

Student : He doesn't want to go to wakes any more .

PEGEEN — [speaking across the counter.] — He's right too, and he
you no shame, Michael James, to be quitting off for the whole night
and leaving myself lonesome in the shop?

Lonesome = alone

Lecturer :Look at this lady . She is talking to her father in this arrogant
way . She is not respecting him .

Student : Why ?

Lecturer : We don't know . Maybe because her mother is dead . She has
been raised as a boy , not as a girl . And she was exposed to the harsh
lashes of life from a young age . So she has acquired men's behaviour
and she becomes equal to them . She becomes men's counterparts. So she
is attacking and blaming her father for leaving her alone in the shop and
going out for wakes.

Student : As if she were the man and Shawn were the woman .

Lecturer :Here , we have a parent – child relationship , between Pegeen
and her father . She has the role of the father and he has the role of the
child .

So , she seems to be the father and he, Michael James ,seems to be the
child.

MICHAEL — [good-humouredly.] Isn't it the same whether I go

the whole night or a part only?

This is funny . He says , " Would it be the same for whether I go for the whole night or a part only?

MICHAEL

and I'm thinking it's a queer daughter you are if you'd have crossing backward through the Stooks of the Dead Women, with drop taken.

That is , he has to attend the wakes.

PEGEEN. If I am a queer daughter, it's a queer father'd be leaving lonesome these twelve hours of dark, and I piling the turf with the d barking, and the calves mooing, and my own teeth rattling with fear.

- Turf = waste of animal تفل للتدفئة
- Calves= cows
- Mooing = sound of cows.

You are a strange father to leave your daughter working in the shop alone and doing some jobs like collecting the grass and the waste for fire .

Student : She is supposed to do the jobs of men .

Jimmy is Michael's friend and he is one of the company who always goes for wakes. And there is another one who is Philly.

JIMMY — [flatteringly.] — What is there to hurt you, and you a fi hardy girl would knock the head of any two men in the place?

You are even stronger than two men . يعني فيك البركة .

PEGEEN — [working herself up.] — Isn't there the harvest boys w their tongues red for drink, and the ten tinkers is camped in the e glen, and the thousand militia — bad cess to them! — walking i through the land. There's lots surely to hurt me, and I won't stop al in it, let himself do what he will.

- Glen= valley .

So , here , she is talking about people who are working around them . They are harvesting crops and there are some criminals , and there are some tinkers who repair the pans and cooking utensils. ادوات الطبخ .

MICHAEL. If you're that afeard, let Shawn Keogh stop along w you. It's the will of God, I'm thinking, himself should be seeing to y

now. [They all turn on Shawn.]

Let him be with you .

SHAWN — [in horrified confusion.] — I would and welcome, Michael James, but I'm afraid of Father Reilly; and what at all would the Holy Father and the Cardinals of Rome be saying if they heard I did the like of that?

So , he is terrified .

MICHAEL — [with contempt.] — God help you! Can't you sit in the hearth with the light lit and herself beyond in the room? You'll be safe that surely, for I've heard tell there's a queer fellow above, going mad or getting his death, maybe, in the gripe of the ditch, so she'd be safe this night with a person here.

- Hearth = fireplace.

Now he is telling him that there is no problem , you will be isolated in a room and we are afraid that someone is in a ditch or a hole , he is asking for help .

MICHAEL — [to Shawn, getting between him and the door.] — Go now.

SHAWN — [at the top of his voice.] — Don't stop me, Michael James! Let me out of the door, I'm saying, for the love of the Almighty God! Let me out (trying to dodge past him). Let me out of it, and may God grant you His indulgence in the hour of need.

- Indulgence = forgiveness .

Now let's move to page 4

MICHAEL — [imitating him.] — What ails you?

SHAWN. The queer dying fellow's beyond looking over the ditch. He'll come up, I'm thinking, stealing your hens. (Looks over his shoulder.) God help me, he's following me now (he runs into room), and if he's heard what I said, he'll be having my life, and I going home lonesome in the darkness of the night.

— What ails you? = what's the matter with you.

He is talking about the man in the ditch in front of the shop .

- having my life = killing me .

Lecturer : Now who is this man ? He is Christy Mahon.

CHRISTY — [in a small voice.] — God save all here!

MEN. God save you kindly.

CHRISTY — [going to the counter.] — I'd trouble you for a glass of porter, woman of the house. [He puts down coin.]

PEGEEN — [serving him.] — You're one of the tinkers, young fellow? Is he beyond camped in the glen?

- Porter = dark beer.

- Tinkers مصلح ادوات الطبخ

CHRISTY. I am not; but I'm destroyed walking.

MICHAEL — [patronizingly.] Let you come up then to the fire. You looking famished with the cold.

- I'm destroyed walking = exhausted .
- You're looking famished with the cold = you are suffering from cold .

CHRISTY. God reward you. (He takes up his glass and goes a li way across to the left, then stops and looks about him.) Is it often police do be coming into this place, master of the house?

- God reward you الله يجزيكوا الخير

So , CHRISTY is afraid of the police .

Here , we are introduced with a new character , Christy Mahon.

Student : Each one is afraid of something .

Lecturer : He will be Shawn's rival and competitor .

MICHAEL. If you'd come in better hours, you'd have seen "Licen for the sale of Beer and Spirits, to be consumed on the premise written in white letters above the door, and what would the polis w spying on me, and not a decent house within four miles, the way ev living Christian is a bona fide, saving one widow alone?

- Decent = good.

a bona fide = original .

So, this house is licensedمرخص . So , there is no need for the police to come.

CHRISTY — [with relief.] — It's a safe house, so. [He goes over to fire, sighing and moaning. Then he sits down, putting his glass bes him and begins gnawing a turnip, too miserable to feel the oth staring at him with curiosity.]

It's a safe place .

MICHAEL — [going after him.] — Is it yourself fearing the pol You're wanting, maybe?

CHRISTY. There's many wanting.

I want something

The next page

PEGEEN. There's a queer lad. Were you never slapped in scho young fellow, that you don't know the name of your deed?

They are asking him what happened to him ? What is the problem ?

Haven't you joined your school ? You can't answer us ?

Student : She acts like a detective .

Lecturer : She is a dominating lady .She has a strong character .

Student : She knows everything and wants to control.

CHRISTY — [bashfully.] I'm slow at learning, a middling scholar or
He is not a good student .

MICHAEL. If you're a dunce itself, you'd have a right to know t
larceny's robbing and stealing. Is it for the like of that you're wantin

- Dunce = a fool .

You are a robber or a stealer .

CHRISTY — [with a flash of family pride.] — And I the son o
strong farmer (with a sudden qualm), God rest his soul, could ha
bought up the whole of your old house a while since, from the butt
his tailpocket, and not have missed the weight of it gone.

Strong = respectable , of high class.

God rest his soul, الله یرحمه

He is talking about his father . He says , " I am not a thief . I am not a
criminal , there is no need to steal because I am the son of a respectable
father and God rested his soul because he was a good and respectable
man .

Student : یعنی هو بدو يكون الوریث .

Lecturer : He can buy your shop and your old house in this area.

Student : from the butt of his tailpocket یعنی بشتري كل المكان تبعدوا من طرف
الجیبة .

Lecturer : He wants to say that he is rich .

MICHAEL — [impressed.] If it's not stealing, it's maybe someth
big.

CHRISTY — [flattered.] Aye; it's maybe something big.

JIMMY. He's a wicked-looking young fellow.

Those men are trying to get to the truth of this young fellow ..

Maybe he followed after a young woman on a lonesome night.

Why are you here ? because of stealing or raping a woman ?

CHRISTY — [shocked.] Oh, the saints forbid, mister; I was all time
decent lad.

[shocked

Oh, the saints forbid, mister لا سمح الله

decent lad. = a good man.

PHILLY — [turning on Jimmy.] — You're a silly man, Jimmy Farr
He said his father was a farmer a while since, and there's himself n
in a poor state. Maybe the land was grabbed from him, and he
what any decent man would do.

MICHAEL — [to Christy, mysteriously.] — Was it bailiffs?

CHRISTY. The divil a one.

- the land was grabbed from him الأرض تشلحت منهم

- bailiffs رهن على الأرض
- The devil a on : absolutely no . كلاً – بتاتاً .

MICHAEL. Agents?

CHRISTY. The devil a one.

MICHAEL. Landlords?

CHRISTY — [peevishly.] Ah, not at all, I'm saying. You'd see the l of them stories on any little paper of a Munster town. But I'm calling to mind any person, gentle, simple, judge or jury, did the like me. [They all draw nearer with delighted curiosity.]

PHILLY. Well, that lad's a puzzle—the world.

- Puzzle = something mysterious , riddle . لغز .
There is something mysterious behind him .

JIMMY. He'd beat Dan Davies' circus, or the holy missionaries making sermons on the villainy of man. Try him again, Philly.

What did he do ? They are trying to guess what he had done.

Now move to the bottom of page 5 .

JIMMY. Did you marry three wives maybe? I'm told there's sprinkling have done that among the holy Luthers of the preach north.

Now we move to page 6 .

CHRISTY — [shyly.] — I never married with one, let alone with couple or three.

CHRISTY. I never left my own parish till Tuesday was a week.

PEGEEN — [coming from counter.] — He's done nothing, so. (Christy.) If you didn't commit murder or a bad, nasty thing, or false coining, or robbery, or butchery, or the like of them, there is anything that would be worth your troubling for to run from now. You did nothing at all.

- Parish = area

CHRISTY — [his feelings hurt.] — That's an unkindly thing to saying to a poor orphaned traveller, has a prison behind him, a hanging before, and hell's gap gaping below.

So he is like an orphan who lost his father or mother .

So , he is threatened by being sent in prison , and being put to death by hanging .

PEGEEN [with a sign to the men to be quiet.] — You're only saying You did nothing at all. A soft lad the like of you wouldn't slit windpipe of a screeching sow.

CHRISTY — [offended.] You're not speaking the truth.

PEGEEN — [in mock rage.] — Not speaking the truth, is it? Won't you have me knock the head of you with the butt of the broom?

This lady is going to beat them with the broom . تضربهم بعصاية المكنسة أو المقشنة

CHRISTY — [twisting round on her with a sharp cry of horror.] Don't strike me. I killed my poor father, Tuesday was a week, for do the like of that.

PEGEEN [with blank amazement.] — Is it killed your father?

CHRISTY — [subsiding.] With the help of God I did surely, and the Holy Immaculate Mother may intercede for his soul.

He swears by Saint Virgin Mary .

PHILLY — [retreating with Jimmy.] — There's a daring fellow.

JIMMY. Oh, glory be to God!

This man is brave and courageous .

MICHAEL — [with great respect.] — That was a hanging crime mister honey. You should have had good reason for doing the like that.

So you are going to be hanged because of your evil deed of killing your father .

PEGEEN. And you shot him dead?

CHRISTY — [shaking his head.] — I never used weapons. I've license, and I'm a law-fearing man.

MICHAEL. It was with a hilted knife maybe? I'm told, in the big woods it's bloody knives they use.

CHRISTY — [loudly, scandalized.] — Do you take me for a slaughter boy?

Do you think I am a butcher who has a knife to kill ?

PEGEEN. You never hanged him, the way Jimmy Farrell hanged dog from the license, and had it screeching and wriggling three hours at the butt of a string, and himself swearing it was a dead dog, and peelers swearing it had life?

CHRISTY. I did not then. I just riz the loy and let fall the edge of it the ridge of his skull, and he went down at my feet like an empty sack and never let a grunt or groan from him at all.

- Riz = lift , raise .
- Loy: spade (معول) شوكة- شاعوب

He lifted the loy and hit him on his head and his father was dead at once.
That's enough for today .
Prepare the rest of ACT I .

Last lecture , I suppose ,we stopped at the bottom of page 6 when Christy reported how he killed his father . This story , or this play is very interesting .It is full of imagination and poetic language ,and we have a lot of imagery in it.

Lecturer : How did he kill his father ?

Student : By using a loy . He hit his father's skull with the loy and divided his skull into two halves . He is exaggerating .

What he did exactly is that he hit his skull severely but he didn't divide it into two halves. Let's see the response of Michael, Philly and Jimmy .
Philly and Jimmy are Michael's friends .

MICHAEL — [making a sign to Pegeen to fill Christy's glass.] — A what way weren't you hanged, mister? Did you bury him then?

CHRISTY — [considering.] Aye. I buried him then. Wasn't I digg spuds in the field?

- Spuds : potatoes .

Ireland was famous for producing potatoes .

This gentleman ,Christy , was working in his father's field . He was using the loy in the field . And he would like to say that , "I am very good at digging sand working , so I dug a hole and put my father in the hole. Because when you collect potatoes , you should dig . Nowadays, people use tractors for ploughing or collecting the potatoes because they grow under the ground. Yet, some people are still using old primary tool like loys or spades for doing that.

MICHAEL. And the peelers never followed after you the eleven d that you're out?

CHRISTY — [shaking his head.] — Never a one of them, and I walk forward facing hog, dog, or divil on the highway of the road.

- Peelers = policemen .

Notice , here , Synge is very keen on describing every detail in the countryside . He is describing the way that Christy killed his father and the way in which he worked .And we have a lot of imagery and imagination . Through imagination ,Christy is transformed into another

character . He is transformed into a daring and a courageous man ; now they claim he is a great hero .

PHILLY — [nodding wisely.] — It's only with a common week-end kind of a murderer them lads would be trusting their carcass, and the man should be a great terror when his temper's roused.

MICHAEL. He should then. (To Christy.) And where was it, miss honey, that you did the deed?

He is addressing him as Mr. honey. At that time, fathers had a strong control over their children. So , they are very happy to hear some saying " no " to their fathers or to the churchmen . And they consider hitting the father something heroic .

In the middle of the page :

PHILLY. The peelers is fearing him, and if you'd that lad in the house there isn't one of them would come smelling around if the dogs it were lapping poteen from the dungpit of the yard.

Notice , here , Synge uses wrong agreement(The peelers is fearing him) between the subject and the verb . He is using the peasants' language ,a simple language because he lived with them for a while . Synge , the playwright , lived with the peasants before writing the play . He'd like to depict people.

And you know the play was written to be acted on the stage in order to entertain and to teach . There are two goals for any piece of literature : entertainment and teaching .And Synge himself was faced with strong criticism because nothing like this happened before. There weren't any children who were able to hit their parents . So he was bitterly criticized when the play was first shown .

JIMMY. Bravery's a treasure in a lonesome place, and a lad would his father, I'm thinking, would face a foxy divil with a pitchpike on flags of hell.

- الشجاعة كنز لا يُفنى Bravery's a treasure
- Lad = man

Notice , here , we have a poetic language which is full of imagery . They are praising his deeds . They are praising him for killing his father . He is a hero .

PEGEEN. It's the truth they're saying, and if I'd that lad in the house wouldn't be fearing the loosed kharki cut-throats, or the walking dead

Lecturer :Now what is Pegeen's response ? She agrees. She is very happy .It would be good idea if we let him live here and work with me and I would be no longer afraid because he is a hero.

She needs this gentleman . She has been looking for him for a long time because she has only Shawn who is a cowardly man and she was given four choices of men : one is a who is squint , another who is lame and one is criminal .But he is not a criminal . They never condemned his crime . In reality , he is a criminal . Killing a father or anyone is a crime. But Pegeen says that he is the best man for her. These sentences are foreshadowing , they tell us what will happen. Christy now is the great hero. Shawn will be put aside .

CHRISTY — [swelling with surprise and triumph.] — Well, glory be to God!

Now at the bottom of the page .

CHRISTY — [overcome with wonder.] — And I'd be safe in this place from the searching law?

That is , he would be safe in the Shebeen , in the Pubic House and he wouldn't be pursued by the police.

Student : Why is he using a question mark at the end of the sentence ?

Here , he is asking a rhetorical question which needs no answer. The question mark is used for emphasis .

Page 8

CHRISTY — [looking round with satisfaction.] It's a nice room, and it's not humbugging me you are, I'm thinking that I'll surely stay.

SHAWN — [to Pegeen.] — Are you wanting me to stop along with you and keep you from harm?

Shawn is like أبو بدر في باب الحارة . He is too late . He is the antagonist الخصم whereas Christy is the protagonist البطل .

So , in a play there should be a conflict . The hero is Christy and he is the one who starts the conflict and there is another one who responds to this conflict. Shawn is the antagonist . Christy is attacking and Shawn is defending. We will discuss these dramatic terms later on.

PEGEEN — [gruffly.] Didn't you say you were fearing Father Reilly?

What happened with you ? When I asked you to come and stay here , you said , " I cannot . I am afraid of Father Reilly".

Student : Father Reilly , the priest , controls Shawn .

Lecturer : I don't mean religion itself as ideas or beliefs , but I mean ,here , people who dominated religion . They dominated everything in Ireland at that time.

Student : There was authority of the church .

Lecturer : Synge has chosen the peasants or the simple people in his play . Ireland was a farming land and people depended on farming in their life .

Lecturer : He is jealous of Christy , of the new comer . Pegeen would quit him and she would welcome the other guest because the other guest is brave and he was praised by her father and the people in that area . We will see the other girls from the other villages come to him carrying presents like chickens ,and some food because he is the lad who dared killing his father .

Let's move to page 9 :

PEGEEN. If they are itself, you've heard it these days, I'm thinking and you walking the world telling out your story to young girls or old Pegeen , herself , becomes jealous of the other girls over Christy .

She fears that he has some kind of relation with the other girls during his eleven-day journey.

CHRISTY. I've told my story no place till this night, Pegeen Mike, and it's foolish I was here, maybe, to be talking free, but you're decent people, I'm thinking, and yourself a kindly woman, the way I was fearing you at all.

- decent people = good people .

So , here , we have a kind of flittering مغازلة – مداعبة .

PEGEEN — [filling a sack with straw.] — You've said the like of that maybe, in every cot and cabin where you've met a young girl on your way.

- Cot = rocking bed كرسى هزاز للطفل

CHRISTY — [going over to her, gradually raising his voice.] — I said it nowhere till this night,

CHRISTY — [drawing a little nearer to her.] — You've a power rings, God bless you, and would there be any offence if I was asking you single now?

He is using the peasant language . He is asking about her marital status if she is married or single .

PEGEEN. What would I want wedding so young?

CHRISTY — [with relief.] — We're alike, so.

- We're alike, so. نحنا بالهوا سوا .

He says to her , " I am single and you are single . "

The incidents of the action are complicating and going faster. We are about to have a climax .

PEGEEN — [she puts sack on settle and beats it up.] — I never killed my father. I'd be afeard to do that, except I was the like of yours with blind rages tearing me within, for I'm thinking you should have had great tussling when the end was come.

She is very clever when he tells her that they are alike . Notice her witty response . She says , " No , we are not alike , you killed your father but I didn't . There is a difference between you and me ."

Student : But she likes him in deep and she deeply likes him to stay with her. Her love for him is not expressed overly .She admires and loves him deep in her heart .

At the bottom of page 8

PEGEEN — [with disappointment.] — And I thinking you should ha been living the like of a king of Norway or the Eastern world. [S comes and sits beside him after placing bread and mug of milk on table.]

He tells her that he is somebody simple and normal who works in a field and lives a simple life . She tells him , " I think you have been living an easy life".

CHRISTY — [laughing piteously.] — The like of a king, is it? An after toiling, moiling, digging, dodging from the dawn till dusk w never a sight of joy or sport saving only when I'd be abroad in the da night .

So , Synge, reflects the real life of farmers in Ireland . So we have a kind of realism or reality . Here , we have normal people.

At the bottom of page 10

CHRISTY — [clinging to Pegeen.] — Oh, glory! it's late for knocki and this last while I'm in terror of the peelers, and the walking de [Knocking again.]

PEGEEN. Who's there?

VOICE — [outside.] Me.

PEGEEN. Who's me?

VOICE. The Widow Quin.

The Widow Quin is a beautiful young lady who is in her thirty and she killed her husband . The area in which they live is full of criminals . So ,we have two protagonists and two antagonists .

Lecturer : Who are they ?

Student : The protagonists are represented by Pegeen and Christy and The antagonists are represented Shawn and Widow Quin. So ,here , we have the Widow Quin as Pegeen's rival or competitor .

PEGEEN [jumping up and giving him the bread and milk.] — Go now with your supper, and let on to be sleepy, for if she found you w such a warrant to talk, she'd be stringing gabble till the dawn of d (He takes bread and sits shyly with his back to the door.)

She is warning. She is telling him about Widow Quin . She is warnig him of her , that is She is a talkative lady and she is ready to talk till the dawn.

PEGEEN [opening door, with temper.] — What ails you, or what is it you're wanting at this hour of the night?

Why are you coming to us at night at this late hour ?

WIDOW QUIN — [coming in a step and peering at Christy.] — I came after meeting Shawn Keogh and Father Reilly below, who told me about your curiosity man, and they fearing by this time he was may be roaring, romping on your hands with drink.

- curiosity man = Christy .

Widow Quin says that she has been told by Shawn and Father Reilly about some fears from Christy. That is, they and she are afraid that Christy will kill her because of being drunk.

Widow Quin would like to attract Christy and we would see how she would invite this lad and ask him to go to her house .

PEGEEN [pointing to Christy.] — Look now is he roaring, and stretched away drowsy with his supper and his mug of milk. Widen the door down and tell that to Father Reilly and to Shaneen Keogh.

Shaneen Keogh. = Shawn .

PEGEEN — [seizing his arm.] — He'll not stir. He's pot-boy in the kitchen place, and I'll not have him stolen off and kidnaped while himself is abroad.

They are quarrelling over him . Who is going to take him to her house ? Pegeen or Widow Quin .

- pot-boy سقاي - شخص يعبأ الكاسات في الحانة

So they are quarreling about who will take him .

I wouldn't let you take him . He is mine .

In the middle of page 12 :

PEGEEN — [to Christy.] — Don't heed her. Tell her to go into the kitchen pigsty and not plague us here.

Don't obey her.

Pigsty = yard where pigs are kept زريبة خنازير

At the bottom of page 12

CHRISTY. That God in glory may be thanked for that.

Now the end of act I .

PEGEEN. There's your bed now.

Now she has prepared everything for him . She tells him that this is your room and go and have some rest .Now you have finished your dinner and you are no longer hungry . Go to your room and have some rest.

CHRISTY — [as she goes to inner room.] — May God and Mary and St. Patrick bless you and reward you, for your kindly talk. [She shuts the door behind her. He settles his bed slowly, feeling the quilt with immense satisfaction.] — Well, it's a clean bed and soft with it, and

great luck and company I've won me in the end of time — two fine women fighting for the likes of me — till I'm thinking this night was I a foolish fellow not to kill my father in the years gone by.

two fine women fighting for the likes of me يتشاجروا على حالاتي

We stopped at Act I page 15 , the last conversation said by Christy.

CHRISTY — [as she goes to inner room.] — May God and Mary and St. Patrick bless you and reward you, for your kindly talk. [She shuts the door behind her. He settles his bed slowly, feeling the quilt with immense satisfaction. Well, it's a clean bed and soft with it, and it's great luck and company I've won me in the end of time — two fine women fighting for the likes of me — till I'm thinking this night was I a foolish fellow not to kill my father in the years gone by.

- quilt = the blanket لحاف

Look here at the power of imagination . Here, Synge is very keen on introducing us with another illusion . In the first play , we have an illusion to be saved , and which is waiting for Godot . Here , we have another illusion created .So he seems to be as a hero because he is the only one who says , " No " to his father , so he is respected .He is surprised to be met with welcome : drinks and food are served for him , and he is welcomed and he is praised everywhere. Even, the girls of the nearby villages come to see him and they bring some presents for him . Here , we have another illusion , created by imagination , by community and by individuals like Christy. When Christy adds something , he creates something from his imagination. So , the first step he is welcomed , he adds more . When he was met by those people , they never opposed him or condemned him , so he tried to narrate the story of killing his father and he adds something from his imagination , so he is welcomed , and people are interested in imaginative power , in poetic language , because they are peasants ; they are simple - hearted people . We will see Christy ,later on, in a terrible situation . So , here ,we have two extremes : first he is welcomed and , then, when his father appears to be alive , of course ; he survived although he was injured or damaged badly . We will see that the community condemns his act or his deed. So people are interested only in the way he communicates or narrates his story , so Christy was nothing , he was a ploughboy boy or a farmer , and now he turns into a playboy .This is the great power of imagination . He is turned or transformed from a ploughboy into a playboy by the great power of imagination . So imagination can change a lot of things in our modern life .

Student : A propaganda .

Lecturer: Yes , it's a kind of propaganda .

Because , here , people are so stressed and compressed by the parental power , whether the family or the religion . So , he is trying to escape this

kind of power , so he is welcomed . And now he is welcomed because it's just a story ;they never witness the fighting . When they , later on , witness the fight between Christy and his father , OLD MAHON, we'll see the situation completely different , it's completely the opposite . Notice , he adds something . " I wish I killed my father earlier" ." He wishes he had killed his father earlier " .

So , now , he collects the fruit of his lie and imagination .

Now Act II

SCENE, [as before. Brilliant morning light. Christy, looking bright and cheerful, is cleaning a girl's boots.]

Because he is Pegeen's helper . Notice

CHRISTY — [to himself, counting jugs on dresser.] — Half a hundred beyond. Ten there. A score that's above. Eighty jugs. Six cups and a broken one. Two plates. A power of glasses. Bottles, a school-master be hard set to count, and enough in them, I'm thinking, to drunken the wealth and wisdom of the County Clare.

A score = twenty

Now we have some girls coming from other villages Susan , Nelly , Honor , Sara .

SUSAN. There's nobody in it. [Knocks again.]

She knocks again at the door of Shebeen .

There is a difference between drama or a play and a novel in the case of setting .We have unity of place in a play which is written to be acted on the stage within twenty four hours . So the time should be limited to twenty four ideas. And the place , should be the same one ,whereas in a novel , it may take fifty years or a hundred years , or it may happen in different places . For example , a Tale of Two Cities written by Charles Dickens , had the setting or the place in both London and Paris .Here,in our play, we are in the same place and have a unity of action

Lecturer : What is a unity of action ? It means there should be a relation between characters and actions . So , everything is done or said should be related to the characters. So , this is what we call unity of action .

So , here , we have Nelly and Susan . They are eager to see the Playboy , the hero who dared killing his father .

SUSAN. Is that blood there, Sara Tansey?

SARAH — [smelling it.] — That's bog water, I'm thinking, but it's own they are surely, for I never seen the like of them for whity m and red mud, and turf on them, and the fine sands of the sea. T man's been walking, I'm telling you. [She goes down right, putting one of his boots.]

She means the blood of Christy's father .

Page 14 :

CHRISTY — [smiling innocently and piling presents on glass.] — I am very thankful to you all to-day...

WIDOW QUIN — [coming in quickly, at door.] — Sara Tansey, Susan Brady, Honor Blake! What in glory has you here at this hour of day?

She is wondering and she is welcoming them and she knows them . That is the man who killed his father .

In the middle of the page 15 in the middle :

WIDOW QUIN. And you went asking money of him, or making talk getting a wife would drive him from his farm?

CHRISTY. I did not, then; but there I was, digging and digging, and "You squinting idiot," says he, "let you walk down now and tell the priest you'll wed the Widow Casey in a score of days."

Now he is telling them why he killed his father . So Widow Quin is asking him , " , before you killed him , what happened with you and your father? " She has something to invent from her imagination .

WIDOW QUIN. And you went asking money of him, or making talk getting a wife would drive him from his farm?

WIDOW QUIN. And you went asking money of him, or making talk getting a wife would drive him from his farm?

That is , did you ask your father for money , or did you ask him that you would like to get married ?

CHRISTY. I did not, then; but there I was, digging and digging, and "You squinting idiot," says he, "let you walk down now and tell the priest you'll wed the Widow Casey in a score of days."

He was working hard .

Lecturer :What is the cause of his father's anger ? He was waiting for help and his father began to shout at him and told him that he was a fool or a squint fool , and Christy must be going to marry Widow Casey in twenty days .

WIDOW QUIN. And what kind was she?

CHRISTY — [with horror.] — A walking terror from beyond the hills and she two score and five years, and two hundredweights and five pounds in the weighing scales, with a limping leg on her, and a blind eye, and she a woman of noted misbehaviour with the old and young.

She is terrifying , she is awful . She is very old and she is very fat . One of her eyes is not working . She is bad-tempered lady .

GIRLS — [clustering round him, serving him.] — Glory be يا الله.

Page 16 / in the middle .

WIDOW QUIN. That's a right toast, Sara Tansey. Now Christy. [They drink with their arms linked, he drinking with his left hand, she with her right. As they are drinking, Pegeen Mike comes in with a milk can and stands aghast. They all spring away from Christy. He goes down left. Widow Quin remains seated.]

They are bringing some kinds of food and drinks for him, and now Widow Quin is praising them for their presents .

As they are drinking, Pegeen Mike comes in with a milk can and stands aghast. They all spring away from Christy. He goes down left. Widow Quin remains seated.]

So , Pegeen is surprised to see a crowd of girls with Widow Quin in the shebeen meeting , and talking happily with Christy .

Student : Her future husband !!!!

PEGEEN — [angrily, to Sara.] — What is it you're wanting? شو بدكوا

SARA — [twisting her apron.] — An ounce of tobacco. شوية دخان

PEGEEN. Have you tuppence? هاتي حقهم

SARA. I've forgotten my purse. نسيت محفظة النقود

PEGEEN. Then you'd best be getting it and not fooling us here. (To Widow Quin, with more elaborate scorn.) And what is it you want, Widow Quin?

- not fooling us here ما تستهيلي علينا

- **WIDOW QUIN** — [insolently.] A penn'orth of starch . نشا .

-

All of them are creating excuses . That is , the causes of their coming .

PEGEEN — [breaking out.] — And you without a white shift or a starch in your whole family since the drying of the flood. I've no starch for you like of you, and let you walk on now to Killamuck.

She wouldn't see any rivals , she is very jealous of them and she is very jealous over Christy , too . And she is following the famous English proverb " The early bird catches the worm " . So , he belongs to me . I am the first one to welcome , and he is mine ; and you have nothing to do with him , and you are not even allowed to talk to him .

We have another proverb applied here which is "A stitch in time saves nine".

So , she is the boss ; and no one has nothing to do with her new hero .

Page 16 / at the end .

She is addressing now Christy .

PEGEEN — [imperiously.] Fling out that rubbish زبالة and put the cups away. (Christy tidies away in great haste). Shove in the bench the wall. (He does so.) And hang that glass on the nail. What disturbs it at all?

rubbish زبالة = waste

By the end of page 17 . / six lines before the bottom or the end .

CHRISTY — [with terror.] — And you're thinking they'd tell?

PEGEEN — [with mock sympathy.] — Who knows, God help you.

He is asking her if those girls would tell the police about him. She is playing with his nerves . So she is strumming her violin on his fear .
Student : She touches the chord .

CHRISTY — [loudly.] What joy would they have to bring hanging the likes of me?

Now he is afraid to be hanged . He is afraid of punishment .

Now page 18 / By the end of the page :

PEGEEN — [sharply.] Christy! (He turns round.) Come here to me (He goes towards her.) Lay down that switch and throw some sods on the fire. You're pot-boy in this place, and I'll not have you mitch from us now.

She is trying to take control of him . She is dominating him , because she knows he has no place in the world except this place.

CHRISTY. You were saying I'd be hanged if I stay.

Now page 19 .

PEGEEN — [quite kindly at last.] — I'm after going down and reading the fearful crimes of Ireland for two weeks or three, and there wasn't a word of your murder.

So she says , " Take it easy . Calm down , there is nothing dangerous ." But here she is trying to take control of him .

CHRISTY — [astonished, slowly.] — It's making game of me you are (following her with fearful joy), and I can stay so, working at your side and I not lonesome from this mortal day.

PEGEEN. What's to hinder you from staying, except the widow woman or the young girls would inveigle you off?

Now she is very frank and very open . She tells him the truth . Try to be mine and get rid of Widow Quin and the girls , and you will be safe . This is the right equation. If you are getting rid of the ladies and you obey me , then you are safe . That is the only solution for you . And you know her father , Michael , has chosen him as a husband for her , hasn't he ? Her father agreed that she can get married or he can propose for her marriage. She is thinking of Christy and her father praised him and blessed their marriage , and you know that her father represents the whole community , so he praises his deeds or Christy's deeds of killing

his father , that is , he is a hero when he says , " That's the lad " : That's the good boy ."

The last quarter of page 19:

SHAWN — [looking to the Widow for help.] — I'm a poor scholar with middling faculties to coin a lie, so I'll tell you the truth, Christy Mahon. I'm wedding with Pegeen beyond, and I don't think well of having a clever fearless man the like of you dwelling in her house.

CHRISTY — [almost pugnaciously.] — And you'd be using bribery to banish me?

Here , we have a kind of rivalry , a competition between Christy Mahon and Shawn . They are still fighting over Pegeen although Pegeen now quits Shawn and she welcomes Christy . And now Shawn is telling Christy , " I can give you money and I can give you land . Shawn is ready to give him everything but he should leave Pegeen ."

SHAWN — [in an imploring voice.] — Let you not take it badly, miss honey, isn't beyond the best place for you where you'll have gold chains and shiny coats and you riding upon hunters with the ladies of the land. [He makes an eager sign to the Widow Quin to come to him.]

Don't misunderstand me . Here , Shawn , is very practical. He would like to get to his goal by a good means .

WIDOW QUIN — [coming over.] — It's true for him, and you'd be quit off and not have that poor girl setting her mind on you, for then Shaneen thinks she wouldn't suit you though all is saying that she wed you now. [Christy beams with delight.]

Notice , here , there is a great relationship between Widow and Shawn . They have agreed upon something that Shawn should marry Pegeen and so Christy is left alone to widow Quin .

Now page 20 / ten lines before the END .

CHRISTY — [as proud as a peacock.] — I'm not going. If this is a place itself, I'll make myself contented to be lodging here. [Widow Quin makes a sign to Shawn to leave them.]

- as proud as a peacock شایف حالو مثل الطاووس

He doesn't mean the place itself .He means Pegeen herself . So he is sticking to this place and he would not leave Pegeen herself .

Now , here , Widow Quin is trying to mediate يتواسط between

Shawn and Christy , because here we have two interests : one for her , she is going to gain Christy the moment he quits the Shebeen or the moment he leaves Pegeen , and the other interest is that Shawn would get married to Pegeen . So she can gain money .

CHRISTY — [swaggering.] I'm going abroad on the hillside for to see Pegeen.

WIDOW QUIN. You'll have time and plenty for to seek Pegeen, and you heard me saying at the fall of night the two of us should be good company.

We should be close friends and more than friends .

Page 21 . / Line number 8

CHRISTY — [wildly.] Where'll I hide my poor body from that ghostly hell? [The door is pushed open, and old Mahon appears on threshold. Christy darts in behind door.]

So there is a knock at the door and his father comes and he hides behind the door. So , here , we will have a kind of climax . We will see that everything collapses the moment Old Mahon , Christy's father , appears .

WIDOW QUIN — [in great amusement.] — Cod save you, my poor man.

MAHON — [gruffly.] Did you see a young lad passing this way in early morning or the fall of night?

WIDOW QUIN. You're a queer kind to walk in not saluting at all.

She is very clever and she is trying to calm down this angry man.

MAHON. Did you see the young lad?

WIDOW QUIN — [stiffly.] What kind was he?

WIDOW QUIN pretends not to know him .

MAHON. An ugly young streeler with a murderous gob on him, and a little switch in his hand. I met a tramper seen him coming this way the fall of night.

She is trying to blind him to the truth , because her goal is to gain Christy .

On page 22 / in the middle .

WIDOW QUIN. I'd give the world and all to see the like of him. What kind was he?

MAHON. A small low fellow.

WIDOW QUIN. And dark?

MAHON. Dark and dirty.

WIDOW QUIN. A hideous, fearful villain, and the spit of you. هوغد مجرم بشبهك

MAHON. What way is he fled?

She is telling him that he fled to the other hills. But he is still hiding .

Page 23

WIDOW QUIN. Well, you're the walking Playboy of the Western World, and that's the poor man you had divided to his breeches belt.

She is making fun of him and you know , here , our play belongs to a comedy of ideas . In the play we have 4 main kinds of play :

1. comedy : which has happy ending .
2. tragedy : which has a sad ending .
3. historical play
4. a comedy of ideas

So , here , we are not laughing at people . We are laughing at their ideas and behavior . We have a kind of bravery in the form of illusion or imagination .

Page 23 .

CHRISTY — [looking out: then, to her.] — What'll Pegeen say when she hears that story? What'll she be saying to me now?

He is asking what the reaction of Pegeen is, what kind of reaction she will have .

WIDOW QUIN. She'll knock the head of you, I'm thinking, and drag you from the door. God help her to be taking you for a wonder, and you a little schemer making up the story you destroyed your da.

She will beat you and she will reject you for your lies.

Page 23

CHRISTY. And what would I be doing if I left Pegeen?

This question is complicated for Christy . He is trapped in a corner . He is afraid that Pegeen will know everything and what is the worst is leaving Pegeen . That is , I am nothing . Because , when he met Pegeen , he becomes something . He becomes the playboy of the western world.

Page 24 .

CHRISTY. And if he chances to return again?

Here , he is talking about his father, Old Mahon . Suppose that he will come , what will happen .

WIDOW QUIN. We'll swear he's a maniac and not your da. I can't take an oath قسم I seen him raving on the sands to-day. [Girls run in.]

Now Pegeen is attending the sports show , there is a sports show , a racing . And now she is sending Susan .

SUSAN. Come on to the sports below. Pegeen says you're to come.

SARA TANSEY. The lepping's beginning, and we've a jockey's suit fit upon you for the mule race on the sands below.

- mule race

HONOR. Come on, will you?

CHRISTY. I will then if Pegeen's beyond.

SARA. She's in the breen making game of Shaneen Keogh.

CHRISTY. Then I'll be going to her now. [He runs out followed by girls.]

Now the girls know nothing about the story of Old Mahon .
The only one who know is Widow Quin and Christy himself .

WIDOW QUIN. Well, if the worst comes in the end of all, it'll be gr game to see there's none to pity him but a widow woman, the like me, has buried her children and destroyed her man. [She goes out.]

She is reminding him that he committed a true crime . And she is the only one who is ready to help him except Widow Quin .

=====

Christy, here, has collected the fruit of his big lie as being the most important person in Mayo County. He is being invited to participate in a great sports event which is the mule racing. We will see that he has got many fans. Now let's go back to the end of Act II page 24 / the last three lines .

CHRISTY. Then I'll be going to her now. [He runs out followed by girls.]

Pegeen orders the girls to tell Christy to come and participate in the sport activities which is animal racing .

WIDOW QUIN. Well, if the worst comes in the end of all, it'll be gr game to see there's none to pity him but a widow woman, the like me, has buried her children and destroyed her man. [She goes out.]

Here , Widow Quin would like to gain Christy . She has already tried to seduce him but he has been reluctant to follow her . He doesn't accept her company . He has preferred Pegeen to her . And as I said, now ladies are quarreling over him . In the past , he was nothing , but now he is to be something , because of the great power of imagination . And you know this play is a beautifully written one . It is full of poetic language . It has a lot of imagery , metaphors . So , here , we have a language which is very simple. The writer, Synge, indeed proves that he is a realistic one by reflecting everything . It doesn't mean that he is like a camera or a mirror but he adds something , he omits something else and he focuses on certain things and he neglects other things . He is, intentionally, concentrating on the peasants' or farmers' language and their behavior.

Student : Does it mean that he describes things as they are ?

Lecturer : No , he doesn't describe things as they are . He adds something from his imagination . Of course , here , any writer or a playwright or a novelist cannot convey his message directly . He should use some characters to convey his message . And we are going to discuss his message later on .

Now Act III

SCENE, [as before. Later in the day. Jimmy comes in, slightly drunk]

Jimmy is Michael's friend , that is , Pegeen's father's friend . He gets in the sheeben drunk after spending all his night the wakes with his friends .

Page 25 / in the middle.

PHILLY. It was no lie, maybe, for when I was a young lad there was a graveyard beyond the house with the remnants of a man who had thighs as long as your arm. He was a horrid man, I'm telling you, and there was many a fine Sunday I'd put him together for fun, and he was shiny bones, you wouldn't meet the like of these days in the cities of the world.

Here , Philly comments on the entire situation . The world is full of surprises . Wherever you go , you see killed people and their bones .

OLD MAHON — [slightly emotional from his drink.] — I'm poor only, for it's a hard story the way I'm left to-day, when it was I did take him from his hour of birth, and he a dunce never reached his second book, the way he'd come from school, many's the day

MAHON is Christy's father .

- second book = grade in the school.

Notice the funny description of Old Mahon's son; Christy . He is describing his son . And you know , here , we have a comedy of ideas although we have a lot of farce هزلية .

He's talking about his son and he's describing him in a funny way . He is not using farce or comedy for the sake of comedy . Here , he is introducing ideas in a comic way . And you know when a play is written , it is written to be acted on a stage . When the audience or spectators watch the play, they laugh but at the end they would think . And , you know , one of the main messages of literature is to teach and make you think .

Student : to entertain and to learn . .

MAHON — [triumphantly.] It was my own son hit me. Would you believe that?

Now he is complaining about his son .

Now by the end of the page .

WIDOW QUIN — [coming to Mahon quickly.] — you here, is it? You didn't go far at all?

Here , Widow Quin still has some hope to gain Christy . So , she would like to mislead his father .

Page 26 / at the bottom

WIDOW QUIN — [with the shade of a smile.] — They're cheerin' young lad, the champion Playboy of the Western World. [M cheering.]

Now Christy is in the racing field . Widow Quin and Old Mahon are in the same place in the Shebeen .

Now page 27 . / Ten lines before the end

WIDOW QUIN. He'd lick them if he was running races with a sc itself.

Christy is going to win a prize or a reward .

MAHON. Look at the mule he has, kicking the stars.

This means that MAHON enjoys looking at the race . He means that the racer, Christy, is very fast . You see , here ,the language used is full of imagery .

MAHON. Good boy to him! Flames, but he's in! [Great cheering, which all join.]

They are cheering him . عم بشجعوه

Page 28 / at the top of the page .

MAHON [with hesitation.] What's that? They're raising him They're coming this way.

Now he is looking steadily and he is gazing at that man . Now he knows that he is Christy

(With a roar of rage and astonishment.) It's Christy! by the stars God! I'd know his way of spitting and he astride the moon. [He jumps down and makes for the door, but Widow Quin catches him and pulls him back.]

WIDOW QUIN. Stay quiet, will you. That's not your son. (To Jimm) Stop him, or you'll get a month for the abetting of manslaughter and fined as well.

So , Widow Quin would like to protect Christy to the last moment .

Now tens lines before the end of page 28 .

MAHON — [getting up more cheerfully.] — Then I'd best be going the union beyond, and there'll be a welcome before me, I tell you (w

great pride), and I a terrible and fearful case, the way that there I v
one time, screeching in a straightened waistcoat, with seven doct
writing out my sayings in a printed book. Would you believe that?

He is telling her that he is experiencing a terrible situation. Even seven doctors were treating him as a result of the hit of the loy done by his son, Christy.

Page 29 .Line number 6 .

VOICES. There you are! Good jumper! Grand lepper! Darlint b
He's the racer! Bear him on, will you! [Christy comes in, in Jocke
dress, with Pegeen Mike, Sara, and other girls, and men.]

PEGEEN — [to crowd.] — Go on now and don't destroy him and
drenching with sweat. Go along, I'm saying, and have your tug-
warring till he's dried his skin.

• don't destroy him = leave him alone because he is tired. لا تتعبوه.
sweat تعرق

CROWD. Here's his prizes! A bagpipes! A fiddle was played by a p
in the years gone by! A flat and three-thorned blackthorn would l
the scholars out of Dublin town!

• Fiddle = violin

So Christy has got a lot of prizes as a result of winning the race.

TOWN CRIER — [outside, ringing a bell.] — Take notice, last even
this day! Tug-of-warring on the green below! Come on, the lot of y
Great achievements for all Mayo men!

Mayo men = the area .

By the end of page 29

PEGEEN. That'll be right fun, Christy Mahon, and any girl wo
walk her heart out before she'd meet a young man was your like
eloquence, or talk, at all.

Again, PEGEEN is trying to take control over Christy, sometimes by threatening and sometimes by being very gentle to him. Now she is very gentle to him and she tells him that any girl is ready to talk to you and you are a good man .

Now by the end of the page 30 / ten lines before the bottom .

PEGEEN. And to think it's me is talking sweetly, Christy Mahon, an
the fright of seven townlands for my biting tongue. Well, the heart
wonder; and, I'm thinking, there won't be our like in Mayo, for gall
lovers, from this hour, to-day. (Drunken singing is heard outsid
There's my father coming from the wake, and when he's had his sle
we'll tell him, for he's peaceful then. [They separate.]

- my biting tongue = she has a sharp tongue .

Pegeen and her father are going to talk with him about marriage . She knows nothing about the story of Old Mahon , his father .

MICHAEL — [singing outside] — The jailor and the turnkey Th
quickly ran us down, And brought us back as prisoners Once more
Cavan town. [He comes in supported by Shawn.] There we
bemoaning All in a prison bound.... [He sees Christy. Goes and sha
him drunkenly by the hand, while Pegeen and Shawn talk on the left
He's talking about the idea that there are some criminals .

MICHAEL — [to Christy.] — The blessing of God and the holy ang
on your head, young fellow. I hear tell you're after winning all in
sports below; and wasn't it a shame I didn't bear you along with me
Kate Cassidy's wake, a fine, stout lad, the like of you, for you'd ne
see the match of it for flows of drink.

Michael seems to be friendly with Christy . He takes him to the wakes .He wants him to get acquainted of people because he has won the race.

Student : He becomes the real hero.

Lecturer : The whole play itself, (The Playboy Of The Western World), is a journey into the self and into the world as a whole . Christy himself becomes everything now through imagination and he creates new ideas and images for himself that he is a hero and a champion . So , here , he is the image and he is the idea itself . He becomes something of high prestige for them , he is an ideal for them . Indeed, Michael is ready to accept his proposal for marriage . Michael is like any father who should take responsibility towards his daughter and he is looking for the right man for her . He thinks so.

Page 32

Now here we have a kind of dialogue between Pegeen and Shawn , her fiancé. Now, she tells Shawn that he is a fine person and he should look for another lady to marry.

In short, she tells Shawn that she can not marry him because she has made up her mind to marry Christy, her playboy.

PEGEEN. I'm thinking you're too fine for the like of me, Shawn Ke
of Killakeen, and let you go off till you'd find a radiant lady w
droves of bullocks on the plains of Meath, and herself bedizened in
diamond jewelleries of Pharaoh's ma. That'd be your match, Shane
So God save you now! [She retreats behind Christy.]

- Pharaoh's = An Egyptian king

SHAWN. Won't you hear me telling you...?

CHRISTY — [with ferocity.] — Take yourself from this, young fello
or I'll maybe add a murder to my deeds to-day.

MICHAEL — [springing up with a shriek.] — Murder is it? Is it n
yous are? Would you go making murder in this place, and it piled w
poteen for our drink to-night? Go on to the foreshore if it's fighting y
want, where the rising tide will wash all traces from the memory
man. [Pushing Shawn towards Christy.]

Here , we have Michael trying to oppose Christy in his offensive towards Shawn . If you are brave , go to the sea and fight the waves .

Now ten lines before the end of page 32 .

PEGEEN [at the other side of Michael.] — Bless us now, for I swear
God I'll wed him, and I'll not renege.

MICHAEL — [standing up in the centre, holding on to both of the
— It's the will of God, I'm thinking, that all should win an easy o
cruel end, and it's the will of God that all should rear up leng
families for the nurture of the earth. What's a single man,

Now , here , Michael is a practical man . He is going to choose
the best man for his daughter . He tries to convince her that Christy is
not only good for you , but he is also illusive . The whole society or
community is illuded by Christy ;that Christy is a great man , a hero ,
a decent man . Shawn can give them money and land ,whereas Christy is
going to be a consumer , not a producer . Shawn is ready to give them,
whereas Christy is going only to take , he is a consumer .

CHRISTY AND PEGEEN. Amen, O Lord!قراءة الفاتحة

PAGE 33 .

[Old Mahon rushes in, followed by all the crowd, and Widow Quin.
makes a rush at Christy, knocks him down, and begins to beat him.]

Old Mahon , Christy's father , could catch him and he started beating
him .

PEGEEN — [dragging back his arm.] — Stop that, will you. Who
you at all?

So , here , we have a kind of irony of fate .

And unfortunately, when his father comes, everything has collapsed.

Student : Vanished .

So ,here , we have a kind of illusion .So his glory now is not real .And he
thinks that he is saved in this place , but unfortunately, he is not saved .

CROWD. You're fooling Pegeen! The Widow Quin seen him this d
and you likely knew! You're a liar!

Of course , people are addressing as a liar .

Lecturer : Why did they praise him for his crime at first ?

Do they think that he is a liar? Do you know why?

The first time when people are going to accept something which is untrue
and unrealistic , something which is imaginary, they would accept that as

a kind of entertainment . But when they witness a crime , their attitude would be different .

Now by the end of the page

CHRISTY — [to Widow Quin.] — Will you come between us and protect me now?

The only one who is supposed to help him is Widow Quin .

Now Pegeen rejected Christy . She pushed him out . Now he is going back to the last choice .

Lecturer : What is the last choice ?

Students : Widow Quin .

WIDOW QUIN. I've tried a lot, God help me, and my share is done.

Page 34 / line number 8

PEGEEN — [to Mahon, vehemently, fearing she will break into tears] — Take him on from this or I'll set the young lads to destroy him here.

Pegeen is very angry now and she is ready to hit him.

MAHON — [going to him, shaking his stick.] — Come on now if you wouldn't have the company to see you skelped. تعال معي أحسن لك.

CHRISTY — [more threateningly.] — Leave me go, I'm saying.

MAHON. I will maybe, when your legs is limping, and your back blue. يعني ما راح اتركك حتى اكسر لك اجريك . بدي اربيك يعني .

CROWD. Keep it up, the two of you. I'll backساند the old one. Now playboy.

CHRISTY — [in low and intense voice.] — Shut your yelling, for you're after making a mighty man of me this day by the power of a you're setting me now to think if it's a poor thing to be lonesome, worse maybe to go mixing with the fools of earth. [Mahon make movement towards him.]

Six lines before the end .

CHRISTY. I'm going, but I'll stretch you first. [He runs at old Mahon with the loy, chases him out of the door, followed by crowd and Widow Quin. There is a great noise outside, then a yell, and dead silence for a moment. Christy comes in, half dazed, and goes to fire.]

WIDOW QUIN — [coming in, hurriedly, and going to him.] — They're turning again you. Come on, or you'll be hanged, indeed.

CHRISTY. I'm thinking, from this out, Pegeen'll be giving me praise.

the same as in the hours gone by.

What is the response of Pegeen now ?

WIDOW QUIN — [impatiently.] Come by the back-door. I'd think to have you stifled on the gallows tree.

WIDOW QUIN — [going.] — It's in the mad-house they should put him, not in jail, at all. We'll go by the back-door, to call the doctor, and we'll save him so. [She goes out, with Sara, through inner room. M. crowd in the doorway. Christy sits down again by the fire.]

Now she is talking about Christy . That is , Christy should be taken to the mad-house .

Now the bottom of the page .

MICHAEL. If we took pity on you, the Lord God would, maybe, bring us ruin from the law to-day, so you'd best come easy, for hanging is easy and a speedy end.

Now Michael would like to hand Christy to the police and legal authorities .

Now page 36 .

CHRISTY. I'll not stir. (To Pegeen.) And what is it you'll say to me and I after doing it this time in the face of all?

PEGEEN. I'll say, a strange man is a marvel, with his mighty talk; but what's a squabble in your back-yard, and the blow of a loy, have taught me that there's a great gap between a gallous story and a dirty deed.

Now this moment is very central . Pegeen regrets for praising Christy for his deed. She has already perceived that there is a difference between bravery and a crime. She is telling him that you are a criminal .

Student : She is afraid of him.

Lecturer : No , she is not afraid of him .

Now Christy is tied by the rope. So the crowd tied him and they would like to hand him to the police . Now he is begging Pegeen to cut the ropes.

CHRISTY — [twisting his legs round the table.] — Cut the rope, Pegeen, and I'll quit the lot of you, and live from this out, like madmen of Keel, eating muck and green weeds, on the faces of cliffs.

"Please save me , help me ." he is begging her her assistance .

PEGEEN. And leave us to hang, is it, for a saucy liar, the like of you? (To men.) Take him on, out from this.

You should be sentenced to death and hanged .

At the end of the page .

PEGEEN [coming over.] — God help him so. (Burns his leg.)

Page 37 / line 4 .

CHRISTY — [scrambling on his knees face to face with old Mahon.]
Are you coming to be killed a third time, or what ails you now?
MAHON. For what is it they have you tied? لكان ليش ربطوك
CHRISTY. They're taking me to the peelers to have me hanged
slaying you.

Is his father killed ? This is the second time he hits his father , but his father has survived although he is badly injured .

MAHON — [grimly, loosening Christy.] — It's little I care if you put
bag on her back,

CHRISTY. Go with you, is it? I will then, like a gallant captain with
heathen slave.

Now Christy agrees to go back home with his father on the following terms after realizing that he has led a life of illusion with Pegeen. He has got to know the truth of human thinking and psychology. He has reached to maturity through his experience. “ *He is the master now and his father is the slave.* “

CHRISTY. Ten thousand blessings upon all that's here, for you
turned me a likely gaffer in the end of all

He is praising Pegeen and the society of Mayo for making him a true man .

MICHAEL. By the will of God, we'll have peace now for our drinks.

PEGEEN — [hitting him a box on the ear.] — Quit my sight. (Putt
her shawl over her head and breaking out into wild lamentations.)
my grief, I've lost him surely. I've lost the only Playboy of the Western
World.

She laments her bad luck and her terrible situation for losing her only Playboy of the Western World. People know that this is something not real ; he is not a real hero , but they'd like to associate themselves with some imagery and illusion because life , as a whole , is an illusion or an empty dream .

Lecturer : Good morning , everybody .

Today ,it would be our last lecture to discuss and comment on the Playboy of the Western World . We are going to handle themes, characters, dramatic techniques and devices, style, language and others. Before discussing the new topics , I'd like to go back to the last words said by Pegeen .

Lecturer : What does she do ? She laments herself for losing the playboy of the western world , Christy. So this plays shows the great and the tremendous force of imagination .

Lecturer : What made Christy a hero and a playboy ?

His imagination and her imagination .

And , of course , here , Pegeen made him and his imagination made him , too . He was nobody and he became everybody or somebody , if you'd like .

Lecturer : Did he lose himself ?

Lecturer : Absolutely not . He didn't lose himself .He gained himself because he became a hero . What about Pegeen , she lost the great image of the playboy ; her hero , so she laments herself for losing that man .

Student : She is disappointed at him .

Lecture : She made him but she couldn't unmake him , she made him the hero or the playboy or she couldn't unmake him .

Student : What is done can be undone .

This is because the dice is cast , everything is done . There is no way to change again . He has become the playboy and she couldn't unmake . He moves from nothing to everything by the force of imagination and by Pegeen herself . She is everything in the Shebeen and in the community of Mayo , or the area she belongs to , but he was nothing .He even was a cowardly man and becomes a brave hero . And she could make him participate in the sports and he knows nothing about sport , and he is a winner , so he is lucky . Pegeen could have got rid of him the moment he got to the Shebeen , but she has made him . First , when he tells the story of killing his father , he starts to add and fabricates some lies or some untrue incidents .Then, he becomes something who interests all , all people are interested in him , so he cannot retreat , he would go forward and he can participate in the race and the sports .

So we can say the glory and the dreams are established but reality knocks at the door of Christy when his father , Old Mahon , appears for the first time . Everything collapses .So this is a kind of temptation play ,and it is so beautifully written one by a great writer in which we have a full description of the landscape , imagery and even imagery of loneliness.

And we also have a lot of poetic and living imagination of language .

Now let's move to discuss some topics , the themes .

Lecturer : What are the themes we have faced in Playboy of the Western World ?

1- Fatherhood : Here ,we have two kinds of fatherhood :

a-family fatherhood b- religious fatherhood.

What about Shawn ? Shawn obeys his father , Father Reilly , the priest . What about Michael , Pegeen's father . He sometimes seems to be

careless about his only daughter , and you know his daughter is orphan , she lost his mother . But he is still obeyed by Pegeen herself .

Lecturer :What about Christy ?

He demands , power , desires and authority from his father , Old Mahon , and he tries to kill him twice ;the first one is for the sake of authority and gaining power , whereas the second one is to preserve with the image of the playboy .

This leads us to the second theme which is :

- 2- **Religion (The Church authority)** : Here , we have the playwright criticizing the priests indirectly . Synge, indirectly , criticizes the priests' authority and power over people in their civil affairs like marriage and their personal lives and relationships. He'd like to show us how horrible and rigid the rules of the priests were at that time; you cannot get married without the permission or dispensation of the priests and the Pope of Rome, Father Reilly , and you know , here , Shawn was about to lose Pegeen for this relationship with religion , because Shawn is completely controlled by religious people like Father Reilly . So , here , we have a kind of metaphor , in which we have an indirect attack for religion .Why ? Because religion at that time was against freedom and individuality .

Student : They used religion for their own purposes and special benefits .

Lecturer : Yes . And Pegeen herself represents the society at that time on surface , but deep in heart they are abusing that .

They pretend to obey the priest , but deep in their heart , they are not satisfied with that . They hate the religious authority .

The same thing for parental or fatherhood authority. Be brave and the whole community will be rebellious against their fathers.

Student : This is like a hidden message saying to the church that they are with any challenge towards the church .

Lecturer : Yes, you are completely right . So , there is a secret message conveyed to people that they are against the authority of parents especially fathers and you know here even Pegeen insists on marrying the playboy , Christy before his father , Old Mahon , appears .

So , here , there is a difference between illusion and reality .

- 3- **Darkness** : It has two meanings . Literal meaning and metaphorical meaning . In the case of , literal meaning , naturally : most people feel afraid of darkness at night .So Pegeen herself is left alone in the Public House and she was afraid of darkness. The same thing for Shawn who is unwilling to protect her because he is afraid of darkness . He comes to her during the daytime and he leaves her during the night . Even Christy himself is considered as a brave man because he spent some nights in a ditch or in the fields, and

there is a metaphorical darkness: it's the darkness of the human capacity for violent sub-conscious desires. So there is literal darkness which is opposite of light or daytime and there is darkness inside the self . The dark symbolizes people. So, here , Michael himself is full of darkness because he never pays attention to his daughter who is left alone . She needs some gentle and kind fashion . She needs love from him , he prefers spending his nights at the wakes to staying with his only daughter. So she needs a man to protect her to feel that she is safe . So , there are two kinds of darkness : 1- darkness that can be felt with the eyes and 2 – darkness which can be felt by lively selves .

4- Social expectations :

We have unfixed social values . Sometimes , they are supporting crimes and other times , they condemn crimes . The first time Christy gets to Pegeen's house , he is welcomed although he commits crimes . It's called parricide or patricide . قتل الأب

- Suicide انتحار = killing oneself .
- parricide or patricide = the crime of killing your father.

Here , we have , the first one is normal . When a criminal commits a patricide , he is expected to be condemned by the community . But on the contrary , he is being praised by the community when he starts telling them the story of killing his father . " God bless you " . You are the true hero . But later on when his father appears and when he witnesses the crime once again , he is condemned . So , here , there are no fixed truths or values in society , sometimes. There is a kind of shift . So , in the first situation , he is welcomed , in the second situation he is condemned , and he is considered as a murderer .

5- Marriage :

We have a few trials of making marriage .The first one is between Shawn and Pegeen . She accepts him to be her future husband ; and Michael himself welcomes him as his son – in – law at the beginning because he has been the best for the works but later on when Christy appears , Pegeen kicks Shawn away and she is ready to marry Christy. And even her father Michael , at last , gives his approval or agreement for their marriage , I mean Pegeen and Christy . And we have another kind of marriage between Widow Quin and her flirting with Christy . Widow Quin killed her husband . So , their process of marriage, I mean Widow Quin and her husband , was not successful . so she killed him and got rid of him .And , here , we have a kind of quarrel between Widow Quin and Pegeen and Pegeen over Christy .

Student : It's a kind of competition , and the winner gets the prize .

Lecturer : Yes. Why are they quarreling ? To marry Christy , the hero or the playboy , and at last Pegeen could take him on her side for a while , but when Old Mahon appears , everything collapses.

6- **Poetry** : Poetry is introduced as a great and tremendous factor of change in society . And you know in poetry , we have the power of imagination , so Christy becomes a hero through poetry. And you know , here , the poetry used by Synge, is a poetic language .It's full of images , metaphors and imagination.

So Christy ,who is not well-educated , becomes a poet when he describes killing his father , so he adds something from imagination .

Student : So he is like Beowulf when he describes the master and becomes a legend .

7-**Bravery and Heroism** :

Once again , Christy who was very shy and he was a cowardly man , becomes a hero , how ?

Student : By using his imagination and by being supported by Pegeen . So man can be transformed from being a cowardly one into a brave man by two things and by being supported by others. And what kind of bravery here ? We see a series of successes . The moment you get rid of fear , you are brave . So the first step you are not afraid , you will be courageous .

Lecturer : What is the first step that denotes Christy as a brave boy ? When he raises the loy and hits his father on his skull . He becomes a brave man and a hero , so he went into the darkness and he is no longer afraid. And when he spends some time in the ditch , he was praised by other people that he is a brave man .He spent eleven days walking in the dark passing through the woods which are full of wild animals.

What is the second step ? When he was invited to participate in the sport . He accepts the challenge . So everyone can be praised the moment he or she gets rid of one's fears. But , unfortunately , by the end , when he tries to challenge his father and kill him for the second time , he is criticized by people and he is being got rid of .

Student : Could you repeat the last idea , please ?

Lecturer : The moment you get rid of your fears , you become brave . But later on ,by the end of the play , Christy tries to challenge his father and show us that he is a brave man , he is condemned by people .

Killing a father is a crime . We have a father and a son and the son is trying to kill the father and people have no choice except condemning this killing .

8- **Flirting** الغزل

There are some girls from the nearby villages and they'd like to flirt with the playboy . These are attracted to something ideal .

Some of those girls are دلوعات مثل نانسي عجرم . So people are associated with ideal models or images . So they'd like to discover new experiences . That is , they'd like to go into oneself and they'd like to build up an ideal person for themselves . So the playboy is ideal husband or young man for them , so girls come to see him , why ? Because they'd like to convince themselves that they are going to get him or at least get someone who is similar to him .

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• **Plot :**

Lecturer : The plot of this play is simple and easy to trace . It's not complicated although we have a story within a story , we have two stories . The first one is Christy's crime and the second is Christy's in the Mayo's community when he comes to Pegeen in the Shebeen . So , again , the plot is direct , it's not complicated , and we have exposition .Of course , we have 5 steps for the plot :

- 1- **Exposition** : We have the premise or the opening , in which we have the description of the Mayo community . It is isolated .
- 2- **Rising action (the crisis)** : When Christy tells people about his crime .
- 3- **Climax** : The top of the complicated crisis. When his father appears , and he tries to kill him .
- 4- **Falling action** : This is when he is criticized by people and he is condemned for his crime and when people hand him to the police (This is the falling action) .
- Inflation = rising
- Deflation : falling .
- 5- **Resolution** : When he leaves the Mayo community . When he leaves Pegeen and Pegeen starts lamenting herself for losing the only playboy .

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I suppose that we have not discussed the plot of **Waiting for Godot** . It's a very simple one . It's a classical traditional one . We have **exposition** which is premise or an introduction when they are shown on the hill , Vladimir and Estragon .

And the we have **rising action** : When Pozzo comes to them .

And then we have the **climax** when Godot's messenger came , the boy. After that ,we have **falling action** . But what about the Resolution or the Conclusion ? Becket is a very clever playwright . He left the resolution or the conclusion for us to complete . So we have more than one possibility : whether Godot would come or they are going to wait or they are going to leave , we cannot decide . So this is the case of the theatre of the absurd .The theatre of the absurd leaves the reader or the audience to decide the end of the play . One of the characteristics of the theatre of the absurd

,and Waiting for Godot belongs to this type of comedy or drama theatre , is to leave the readers without an conclusion . The spectators are going to decide the conclusion themselves .So the playwright wouldn't end his play with a resolution , The readers or he spectators are going to choose or decide the end they think that it is right . This drives us to decide what kind of comedy we have in the playboy .We cannot decide exactly what kind of comedy. We have farce and comedy of ideas .

Student : we have tragedy and comedy : tragicomedy .

Lecturer : The spectators are going to decide the conclusion themselves : Of course , in a comedy , you cannot have all the play laughing . You may have a touch of tragedy , part of it would be tragedy and this would not affect the whole play .So , in a comedy , we have seriousness .When we say farce , it doesn't mean that all the play is not serious , we have seriousness. And , of course , when we have a lot farce or black comedy or low comedy in our play .Synge mocks heroism and the Irish society at that time when they welcome people who commit crimes like Christy and you know he makes Christy tell the story of his crime time after time , why ? Not to make us laugh. Yes ,we laugh and the girls who come to see Christy laugh and they are happy but he'd like to make the spectators or the audience mocked . He'd like to mock the society . And you know literature is not a reflection of real life exactly .

So , here , we are commenting on the two plays , in Waiting for Godot ,we have the same thing . When they ask themselves and when they play sometimes with their hats and their boots . Beckett would like to mock society at that time . They are interested in trivial things .This is in the case of Waiting for Godot . And in the case of the Playboy of the Western World, Synge launches a bitter attack of criticism on the Irish society , because they welcome criminals , but later on, they become conscious . and they condemn his crimes. So ,here , we have a kind of illusion in the two plays . In the first one , Waiting for Godot ,we have an illusion for false hopes . They'd like to be saved ; they are looking for salvation . And in the second one , I mean ,the Playboy of the Western World, we have a different kind of illusion which is bravery, and there is a difference between bravery and crime. They realize that a crime cannot be considered bravery . And in the case of Waiting for Godot , the only one who realizes the truth and the importance of thinking is Vladimir . And , here , we see in the Playboy of the Western World all the characters realize the truth and the reality when they condemn Christy's crime for the first time. When he commits a crime for the second time , he is not welcomed . On the contrary , people are trying to hand him to the police because they know the truth . A crime is a crime . A crime cannot be considered as an act of bravery .

Now regarding the three unities . In Drama , we should have three unities :

1. Unity Of Place
2. Unity Of Time
3. Unity Of Action .

Now let's apply these unities to the two plays we have covered , Lecturer : What about Waiting for Godot ? It's the same place , no change in the place , which is the mound or the small hill near a tree in a nearby village .

Lecturer : What about time ? It takes less than two days , about 24 hours .

Lecturer : What about action ? We have unity of action. Everything said or done by the characters is related to the theme of the play . So they are talking about time , memory , consciousness , and other themes .

Lecturer : What about the second play we have already discussed , the Playboy of the Western World ? We have the same thing . We have 24 hours for time and the place in the Shebeen , public house , and we also have a unity of action . So everything is said or done by the characters is completely and exactly related to the themes of the play . We have a lot of themes in the Playboy of the Western World . We have heroism , bravery , darkness , fatherhood . So this leads to an important question .

Lecturer : Why is the time of the play limited to 24 hours ? Because , you know , a play is written to be acted on a stage and there are people who are in a hurry and they'd like to watch the play in two hours or three hours , which should take place in 24 hours .

Lecturer : How can this be done ? By having a kind of light, décor , or sound effects . So , the spectators would think that now it's dawn , or it's night and so on . So every word or every act in the play is very important .

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So in a play , we have so much concentration , as I said .

Lecturer : How can a dramatist comment on the incidents of a play ? By one of the characters or by a chorus . In a novel , he has got plenty of time to comment .

Lecturer : Now what about the characters ? In a play , the characters should be concrete محسوسة . You should see them . In a novel , they are abstract . So , we are going to depend on imagination, Why ?

Lecturer : Do you know why we have concrete characters in a play ? To gain interest , excitement and suspense .

Art is an imitation of life . but it is not a complete imitation . It is not a camera photo of life ; We should add something . In a play , we have a lot of exaggeration . When Christy kills his father , we have an imagination that his father is safe for the first time. And in the second

time , he is also safe . So , this is exaggeration . What kind of man is Old Mahon ? This is something exaggerated . He is being hit twice and he never dies. This is supernatural .

Lecturer : What about the structure of the play ? Any play should have a conflict . In the two plays we have studied , we have a lot of conflicts . Now let's first have the Playboy of the Western World . We have a conflict between the protagonist, Christy, and Shawn over Pegeen , the beautiful girl .

Lecturer : And who won the conflict ?

Student: Shawn .

Lecturer : Yes , Christy for a while ,then Shawn, of course .

Lecturer : And we have another conflict between Pegeen and Widow Quin over Christy. And we have the main conflict between Christy , the son , and his father , Old Mahon .

So the stronger the protagonist is , the stronger the antagonist will be . We cannot have a play with a conflict .

Lecturer : Now what about the first play ?

Do we have conflicts in the first play , Waiting for Godot ? Yes, we have some conflicts between Estragon and Vladimir .We don't mean the physical conflict . I mean in ideas. We have another conflict between Pozzo and his slave , Lucky . And we have a conflict between Godot and one of his shepherds . So conflict is necessary to push the incidents of the action forward.

Lecturer : So what makes conflict strong is the obstacle. Now what is the obstacle placed in the way of Christy ? His father , another one is Shawn when he tries to marry Pegeen . Who was the obstacle ? Shawn . We are going to have something about dramatic irony in the exam .

Lecturer : How many types of irony do we have ?

- 1- Dramatic irony / or Irony of situation : When something is said by a character , and this character knows not that other characters hear him or listen to him . In this way , it is called dramatic irony . When old Mahon , Christy's father , comes asking for Christy and Christy knows nothing of what has happened , but we only as readers or spectators know . This is called dramatic irony or irony of situation .
- 2- Verbal irony : You say something and you mean the opposite. For example , when Pegeen tells Shawn , " You are brave " . She makes fun of him . She means he is a coward .
- 3- Irony of fate : When a character does something and he / she thinks that what he / she does is something good for him but later on , he turns back . For Example , when Pegeen thinks that Christy is the best one for her and she finds that she is wrong . This is called irony of fate .

4- **Retrospective irony** : Something happens and after a period you feel that it is irony , you go back and remember what happened in the past . **For Example**, when Pegeen tells him , " Go away ."

In the case of Pegeen we have 3 examples of irony : verbal irony , irony of fate and retrospective irony .

That's all for today and Goodbye .



The feminisit & Soialist Theatre

Top Girls by Caryl Churchill



Good morning everybody .

Good morning everybody .

Today, Prior to reading and commenting on the third play, we are going to commence some general summary about the following points:

- 1- a short biography about the playwright.
- 2- a brief account of the plot, and the main characters.
- 3- a comprehensive gist about socialist and feminist movement.

The new play is Top Girls written by Caryl Churchill. It is a very amazing one. It is also really worth studying as well as watching.

Biography of Caryl Churchill Caryl Churchill is a British playwright whose product has been associated with surrealist and postmodern theatre. She was born in

London on September 3, 1938. Her family moved to Montreal in Canada after World War II, where Churchill matriculated at the Trafalgar School for Girls. In 1957, Churchill moved back to England to attend Oxford University, where she earned a B.A. in English Literature in 1960. During her study at Oxford, Churchill wrote four plays – *Downstairs*, *You've No Need to be Frightened*, *Having a Wonderful Time*, and *Easy Death* – all of which were performed by Oxford student theater groups. In 1961, Caryl married David Harrister, with whom she has three sons.

Churchill started her post-college career writing radio and television dramas for the BBC. Her notable works from this era include *The Ants* (1962), *Lovesick* (1967) and *Abortive* (1971). In 1972, Churchill wrote her

first stage play, *Owners*, which premiered at London's Royal Court Theater. She became the resident dramatist there from 1974-1975. During

the 1970s and 1980s, Churchill worked with numerous theatre companies, including Joint Stock and Monstrous Regiment. She has won three Obie Awards for her plays *Cloud Nine* (1979), [Top Girls](#) (1982), and *Serious Money* (1987), and two Susan Smith Blackburn prizes for *Fen* (1984) and *Serious Money*. During the 1990s and 2000s, she continued to write plays and more experimental works such as *Hotel* (1997), a collaborative sung ballet set in a hotel room, and *Love and Information* (2012), an experimental collage of 100 characters performing over 50 short, fragmentary episodes.

Churchill's drama is widely recognized for abandoning realist approaches

to theatre in favor of surrealist experimentation, postmodern exploration of language, and an emphasis on the sexual politics and legacies of feminism. She draws upon Bertolt Brecht and Antonin Artaud's experimental approaches to theater which consider plays to be a political art form with the power to transform false senses of reality. Churchill is associated with Socialist Theater and left wing critical responses to the policies of Margaret Thatcher, the British Prime Minister. Churchill wrote *Top Girls* during Thatcher's rule, and it explores the complicated relationship between capitalism and feminism. Churchill has translated and published a version of Seneca's *Thyestes*, and an adaptation of August Strindberg's *A Dream Play*.

Top Girls Summary

Act I of [Top Girls](#) takes place in a hip London restaurant where [Marlene](#) is gathering five other women to celebrate her promotion to managing director of Top Girls, the employment agency where she works. This scene is surreal, because Marlene's five dinner guests are female figures from different historical eras: [Isabella Bird](#); a 19th century writer and traveler, [Lady Nijo](#); a 13th century courtesan and later, Buddhist nun, [Dull Gret](#); the subject of a Brueghel painting who led an army of women into hell to fight the devils, [Pope Joan](#); a 9th century woman who disguised herself as a man and became Pope, and [Patient Griselda](#); the obedient wife from The Clerk's Tale in Chaucer's [The Canterbury Tales](#).

These women are bound together by their struggles against patriarchy and oppression - and Marlene relates to each of them differently.

Act 2 is set at the Top Girls employment agency. Marlene is interviewing a woman named [Jeanine](#) who wants a new job because there are no prospects for advancement at her current position. Through her questions, Marlene reveals that she looks down on Jeanine for her desire to get married young, have children, and her uncertainty about her

professional future. Marlene only offers Jeanine two openings, one at a company that makes knitwear and the other lampshades - neither of which fulfill Jeanine's request for opportunities and travel. Regardless, Marlene tells Jeanine to be confident and present herself well, because her performance reflects on Marlene and the agency.

Act 2, Scene 2 is set in Joyce's backyard, where two young girls, [Angie](#) and [Kit](#), have built a shelter out of junk. They tease and challenge each other, and make a plan to see an X-rated film in town. Angie speaks in a blunt and monosyllabic manner, and vocalizes her desire to kill her own mother. Angie also reveals secret plan to visit her aunt (Marlene) in London. Later, Joyce (Angie's mom) makes Angie clean her room before she can go to the movies. Angie returns wearing an old best dress that is slightly small for her. It begins to rain and Joyce and Kit run inside while Angie stays put. Kit comes out of the house and shouts at Angie to come inside, then goes down to Angie. Angie tells Kit "I put on this dress to kill my mother."

Act 2, Scene 3 is set in the Top Girls Employment Agency on a Monday morning. [Win](#) and [Nell](#) have just arrived to begin work. They are drinking coffee and chatting about the men they dated or had affairs with

over the weekend. Marlene arrives and Nell and Win applaud and whistle for her after being promoted over Howard, but Nell also indicates that she envies Marlene's success.

Later, Win interviews [Louise](#), who is 46 and feels that it's time to move on from her long-term job. Louise is frustrated at her lack of a personal life due to her sustained commitment to the job, and has watched as younger men are consistently being promoted to better positions while she is never considered. Win tells Louise the reality of the situation: that some companies may value her experience but they are more likely to hire younger men.

After the break, the setting reverts to the main office at Top Girls. Angie comes to see Marlene - who does not recognize her niece at first. Angie reveals that she has come to London on a one-way ticket without telling Joyce and will be needing a place to stay. Angie idolizes Marlene and starts asking questions about her job. While Angie is in Marlene's office, [Mrs. Kidd](#) enters. She is the wife of Howard Kidd, who lost the promotion to Marlene. Mrs. Kidd tells Marlene that the news has left Howard a nervous wreck and requests Marlene to give up the promotion - since Howard is a man and he has a family to support. Marlene brushes off Mrs. Kidd and her absurd request - and in response, Mrs. Kidd calls Marlene "one of those ballbreakers" and tells her she'll end up "miserable and lonely."

After the break, Nell is interviewing [Shona](#), who claims to be twenty-nine and working at her current sales job for four years. Nell, impressed, suggests that Shona might a good employee for the Top Girls employment agency. Nell then presses Shona a bit on her current job and

personal life, collecting details to present to potential employers. Shona delivers a far-fetched story about driving a company Porsche and staying in hotels on the company's expense account. Nell realizes that Shona is lying and calls the interview a "waste of time". Shona finally admits that she is only twenty-one and has no experience.

After a scene break, Win enters the main office to find Angie seated at her desk. She introduces herself and praises Angie's aunt Marlene. They start talking and Win tells Angie about her professional trajectory. She offhandedly mentions getting married but indicates that her husband has been imprisoned. However, Angie falls asleep during Win's story.

Moments later, Nell comes into the office and tells Win that Howard's Kidd has had a heart attack. Marlene comes into the office and sees Angie

asleep. Win tells Marlene that Angie aspires to work at Top Girls, and Marlene says bluntly, "Packer in Tesco more like." Win says she thinks Angie is a nice kid, but Marlene says she's "a bit thick...a bit funny" and that she's "not going to make it."

Act 3 is a flashback scene set at Joyce's home on a Sunday evening, three years earlier - the last time Marlene visited Joyce and Angie in Ipswich.

One of the gifts Marlene has brought is the dress that Angie wears in Act 1. Joyce grumbles that Marlene's surprise visit has caught her off-guard, and we learn that Angie has orchestrated the visit and invited Marlene without telling Joyce. In this scene, we learn more about Joyce and Marlene's past as the sisters begin sharing a bottle of whisky. At one point, Angie asks her aunt to tuck her in, and Marlene does.

When the sisters are alone, Joyce scolds Marlene for leaving town when she was younger and leaving Joyce to look after their mother and Angie, who is actually Marlene's biological child. The sisters continue to argue, and it comes out that Marlene got pregnant with Angie at age seventeen, but didn't tell anyone about it until it was too late for an abortion. Joyce and her husband Frank offered to take the child, after being married for three years and having no children of their own. However, Joyce blames the stress of raising Angie for her subsequent miscarriage. Marlene and Joyce begin to argue about British politics, with Marlene taking the pro-Thatcher conservative side, and Joyce siding with the socialist left wing. The two change the subject and begin talking about their parents' working class struggles and difficult marriage.

Marlene tells Joyce that she doesn't "believe in class." Anyone ought to

be able to pursue their desires if they “have what it takes.” Marlene does not feel that she should be expected to help “stupid or lazy or frightened”

people find jobs. Joyce thinks that Angie falls into the "stupid, lazy, and frightened" category, but Marlene brushes off her concerns. Joyce, meanwhile, expects Angie to have a wasted life so long as England is run by “them” meaning Thatcher’s conservative party. Joyce accuses Marlene of being one of "them". Later, Marlene tries to tell her sister to relax and says she did not mean everything she said. Joyce does not accept the gesture and holds onto her claims. She does not want to be friends with her sister - it is clear that their opposite life choices have driven a wedge between them. Joyce goes to bed.

Alone, Marlene sits wrapped in a blanket and pours herself another drink.

Angie comes into the room and calls out “Mum?” Marlene says “Angie? What’s the matter?” and again Angie calls out “Mum?” Marlene replies, “Not, she’s gone to bed. It’s Aunty Marlene.” Angie then says “Frightening” and when Marlene asks if she’s had a bad dream and suggests things are fine now because she’s awake, Angie again says “Frightening” and the play ends.

Top Girls Character List

1-Marlene :The *central protagonist* of *Top Girls*, who has just been promoted to managing director at the employment agency where she works. Marlene’s career ambitions have led her to abandon her family, including her daughter, Angie, who was instead raised by Marlene's sister, Joyce.

2-Isabella Bird :An English woman who lived from 1831-1904. She was an avid explorer and travelled all around the world between the ages of 40 and 70. She wrote extensively about her experiences abroad. Bird married late in life because of her professional aspirations, but her husband died short of their 5-year anniversary. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I.

3-Lady Nijo :A concubine to the Emperor of Japan in the 13th Century, and later, a Buddhist nun. She had 4 children, all of whom were taken away from her. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I

4-Dull Gret :The subject of Brueghel's famous painting called Dulle Griet, which depicts a woman in an apron and armor leading an army of women in battle against a horde of demons in Hell. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I.

5-Pope Joan: *A legendary Englishwoman believed to have disguised herself as a man and served as the Pope from 854-856.* Joan is brilliant and well-versed in philosophy, theology, metaphysics, and poetry. Her reign as Pope ended tragically - she revealed her gender when she gave

birth during a public procession and was subsequently stoned to death. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I.

6-Patient Griselda: She is based on the character of the obedient wife in the "Clerk's Tale" from Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*. In Chaucer's story, Griselda marries a Marquis who tests her fidelity by taking her children from her. She remains obedient, and the Marquis eventually rewards her by reuniting her with her children. She is one of Marlene's dinner guests in Act I.

7-Jeanine: A twenty-year-old woman who Marlene interviews at Top Girls. Jeanine wants to save money for a wedding and eventually have children. Marlene takes this to mean that Jeanine lacks career ambitions and therefore, Marlene treats her as an inferior.

8-Joyce: She is Angie's adoptive mother and Marlene's sister. Joyce and Marlene do not get along well. Joyce raised Angie because Marlene wanted to escape Ipswich and pursue a career. Joyce represents the perspective of the working class. However, she is not a particularly sympathetic character and is very resentful of her sister.

9-Angie: Marlene's 16-year-old biological daughter who was adopted by Marlene's sister, Joyce. She is aggressive and unintelligent and spends most of her time with her younger neighbor, Kit. Angie makes an unexpected visit to London to see Marlene (whom she believes to be her aunt) because she aspires to be like her.

10-Kit: Angie's younger next-door neighbor and closest friend. Kit is a bright girl with academic ambitions.

11-Win: One of the female employees at Top Girls. She is focused on her career.

12-Nell: One of the female employees at Top Girls. She is also career-driven and is jealous of Marlene's promotion.

13-Louise: A forty-six year old woman interviewing at Top Girls. She wants a new job after twenty-one years at a firm that does not truly value her experience, but Win feels that her age will make it difficult to find her a new position.

14-Mrs. Kidd: The wife of Howard Kidd, Marlene's co-worker. Mrs. Kidd visits Marlene at the Top Girls office to request Marlene to give up her promotion since Howard has worked at the firm longer and has a family to look after.

15-Shona: A young girl who interviews with Nell. Nell is impressed with her until she discovers that Shona has falsified her background and actually has no experience at all.

Top Girls Caryl Churchill and Socialist Theatre

Bourgeois theater emphasizes the timelessness of human experience.

Meanwhile, socialist theater works against this paradigm, attempting to demystify forms of social life and the human experience that are commonly portrayed as universal conditions. Bertolt Brecht, a 20th century German playwright and Marxist, argued that theater should not aim simply to represent a particular field of human emotion and action, but to intensify the audience's experience of theater in order to transform

the field itself. This notion of a political activism through theater is integral to the concept of Socialist Theater, which includes [Caryl Churchill](#)'s work. Churchill, however, explores a specifically feminist set of concerns, and her plays – including [Top Girls](#) – seek to demystify categories of class and gender in order to contribute to the political transformation of women. *Top Girls*, for instance, situates the narratives of Act 1 in a concrete historical situation which calls into question the idea that “woman” is an inherently stable or essential category. Similarly, the final scene of the play takes place in [Joyce](#)'s kitchen and living room, which constitutes a realist domestic space. The dialogue and conflict between [Marlene](#) and Joyce reveals that Marlene has effectively internalized and now reproduces some guiding presumptions of late capitalism – an intense emphasis on the individual, the denial of class as a meaningful category, and the notion that economic freedom by way of access to the market is the greatest freedom of all. These are among the supposedly “timeless” values that Churchill's play means to challenge from a feminist angle.

Feminist Drama:

The men Marlene mentions in her life are given no status as significant individuals. The apparent cost of achieving male-style success in the male world is devaluing and dismissing meaningful attachments with men as individuals. In a discussion about relationships with her sister, Marlene states: 'Oh there's always men.' When Joyce asks 'No-one special?' Marlene merely runs on returning the focus to herself:

There's fellas who like to be seen with a high-flying lady. Shows they've got something really good in their pants. (II,ii)

The picture is one of men and women exploiting each other to promote themselves and failing to achieve any kind of genuine connection. It is the fulfillment of an articulate prediction made by Germaine Greer more than ten years earlier in her work *The Female Eunuch*:

If women understand by emancipation the adoption of the masculine role, then we are lost indeed. If women can supply no counterbalance to the blindness of male drive the aggressive society will run to it's lunatic extremes...

Most women who have arrived at positions of power in a man's world have done so by adopting methods which are not incompatible with the masquerade of femininity. They still exploit the sado-masochistic hook-up of the sexes in which we have only the choice of being hammer or anvil.

In this sense, assault *is* being perpetrated not only upon women, but by women upon humanity in general. Marlene's achievement falls short of redressing the problem of inequality because it fails to question its own criteria. Her lack of clarity about her own values is reflected in her repeated vague references to having or not having 'what it takes'. Rather than being in power, she is in the service of elusive absolutes and retains no scope for compassion towards those who fall short, even her own daughter. At the close of act two, Angie comes to visit the office and sleeps in the chair while Marlene and Win discuss her:

WIN: She wants to work here.

MARLENE: Packer in Tesco more like.

WIN: She's a nice kid. Isn't she?

MARLENE: She's a bit thick. She's a bit funny.

WIN: She thinks you're wonderful.

MARLENE: She's not going to make it. (II,i)

Marlene's off-hand dismissal of the child (whom we later discover is her own) puts a serious blemish on her apparent life of achievements. Ironically adept at 'finding places' for people, she cannot find a place for her daughter in her own life. At this point in the play it seems unlikely that Marlene's accomplishments, unlike those of Grace in *Byrthrite*, will impart a legacy of strength and self-determination to the generation of women to follow her. Ironically it is Marlene rather than 'the man's world' defining Angie's limitations and charting an impoverished future for her.

Scene ii of Act II journeys back from this seeming impasse to an earlier time in Angie's childhood. This manipulation of usual chronological structure means that the conclusion of the play is left open. Having demonstrated a possible outcome, there remains the implicit suggestion that things could have been otherwise.

After treating various cross-sections of individual experience, the focus tightens to show Marlene in the context of her own family. Her domestic context finally occasions the need for self-reflection - yielding up all the raw, unresolved contingencies that have paved her road to success. It is revealed that Angie is Marlene's daughter, born when Marlene was seventeen and passed to the care of Joyce, Marlene's older sister. The loss of, or giving up of children, in both *Top Girls* and *Byrthrite* carries the metaphorical significance of disempowerment. Lady Nijo and Griselda have their children taken; women in *Byrthrite* lose children through

clumsy medical intervention and Marlene gives up Angie. 'Making it' or just surviving in the various societies represented has required from these women separation or estrangement from their own offspring. This raises questions about individual responsibility and about a status quo so inhospitable to women's self-determination and indeed to most kinds of human connection.

The last moments of *Top Girls* are evocative and push the audience to ask what future there is for individuals in a world where the levy for success and achievement is so destructive. Marlene and Joyce have a confrontation about their different life choices and lack of choice that culminates in an embittered, emotional dual over Angie:

JOYCE: I don't know how you could leave your own child.

MARLENE: You were quick enough to take her.

JOYCE: What does that mean?

MARLENE: You were quick enough to take her.

JOYCE: Or what? Have her put in a home? Have some stranger take her would you rather?

MARLENE: You couldn't have one so you took mine. (II,ii)

When the argument has subsided, Angie returns to the lounge-room calling for her mother. Marlene is there alone:

ANGIE: Mum?

MARLENE: Angie? What's the matter?

ANGIE:

Mum?

MARLENE: No, she's gone to bed. It's Aunty Marlene.

ANGIE: Frightening.

MARLENE: Did you have a bad dream? What happened in it? Well you're awake now, aren't you pet?

ANGIE: Frightening. (II,ii)

Marlene hurries to dismiss Angie's fear as the residue of a bad dream. But Angie never answers Marlene's question. She never tells whether it was sleep or a terrible new wakefulness occasioned by overhearing the preceding conversation that prompts her fear. Angie's dread remains ambiguous. 'Frightening', she says, twice. It is the inarticulate fear of a vulnerable child with which the audience is finally left.

Neither *Byrthrite* nor *Top Girls* carve out a battlefield of fixed trenches. Nor do they conform to stereotypical notions of the feminist position. Nor are these plays primarily assaults on men. Each play does carry out a complex evaluation of feminist objectives. Objectives such as attaining 'equal opportunity' within existing systems of power and commerce are seen for their capacity to blight possibilities for individual self-determination. The plays constitute a radical challenge to their contemporary political climate. In Britain in the 1980's the election of a

female Prime Minister was assumed by many to have brought closure to debates of equal opportunity. Daniels and Churchill continue, however, to raise challenges for a social order in which the cost of success is self-alienation, alienation from others and ultimately disempowerment. Feminism as a movement, is characterised by questioning the way things are and by conscientious self-evaluation. By exploring 'new subject and new form' feminist dramas such as *Byrthrite* and *Top Girls* seek likewise to engage their audiences in questioning the way things are and in conscientious self-evaluation.

Top Girls is respectively and purely a feminist play where women dominate the whole play setting exposing their experience in life and work from a modern point of view. The play is set in England in different places : a restaurant, the Top Girls' Employment Agency and Joyce's backyard and kitchen. Let us start with the first lines in page 1.

Marlene: Excellent, yes, table for six. One of them's going to be late, we won't wait. I'd like a bottle of Frascati straight away if you've one really cold.

Marlene, here, reserves a table to treat five women due to being promoted to the post of Managing Director in Top Girls' Employment Agency. Who are the five guests ? Of course, they are all top women; Isabella Bird, Lady Nijo, Dull Gret, Pope Joan, and Patient Griselda. The MD, Marlene, is their hostess. Each lady tells her own story and experience in life.

Now let see the first guest at the top of page 2.

Isabella: Hennie was happy. She was good. I did miss its face, my o pet. But I couldn't stay in Scotland. I loathed constant murk.

Isabella is talking about her sister, Hennie. Although she missed her, she could not stay with her owing to Scotland's foggy weather.

Nijo: It was always the men who used to get so drunk. I'd be one of maidens, passing the sake.

Lady Nijo would like to stress the importance of women's role as leaders and makers of decisions. She would like to play men's roles as dominators in this world. The title of the play, itself, has been chosen ironically by Churchill. Women who are supposed to achieve and take up top and great posts are being mocked of as they are only interested in them superficially, not deeply and they are subjected to males' domination in their real life because they psychologically still feel that they are inferior to men.

Nijo: One night my father proposed three rounds of three cups, wh was normal, and then the Emperor should have said three rounds three cups, but he said three rounds of nine cups, so you can imagi Then the Emperor passed his sake cup to my father and said, 'Let

wild goose come to me this spring'.

Here Churchill uses a lot of modern techniques such as juxtapositions, paradox, contradiction and imagery by letting her characters describe and tell their own experience and stories.

Page 3 line 11

Isabella: I certainly never saw my father drunk. He was a clergyman
And I didn't get married till I was fifty.

Isabella: Hello Gret ! (Continues to NIJO) I tried to be a clergyman's daughter. Needlework, music, charitable schemes. I had a tumour removed from my spine and spent a great deal of time on the sofa studying the metaphysical poets and hymnology. ?/ I thought I enjoyed intellectual pursuits.

Here, Isabella tells us about her interests ,study and experience in her life.

Isabella is similar to the playwright Caryl Churchill. She has travelled to different part of the world and she has known a lot about peoples and their cultures and situations.

Page 4 and 5

Joan : Damnation only means ignorance of the truth. I was always attracted by the teachings of John the Scot, though he was inclined to confuse / God and the world.

The top of page 7

Nijo: How else could I have left the court if I wasn't a nun ? When my father died I had only His Majesty. So When I fell out of favour I had nothing. Religion is a kind of nothing/ and I dedicated what was left of me to nothing.

Nijo is telling us about the oppression she has suffered during her work at court , and later at a nunnery. She could get nothing even from learning religion.

The bottom of page 8

Isabella: Well I always travelled as a lady and repudiated strongly any suggestion in the press that I was other than a feminine.

Isabella is telling us that she travelled and knew a lot about the world. She had acquired great position but in vain for press considered her and women as inferior to masculine. This is a bitter attack on press and capital society done implicitly by the playwright.

Page 9

Joan: They noticed I was a very clever boy/ And when I

Joan: shared a bed with my friend, that was ordinary-two people

students in a lodging house .I think I forgot I was pretending.

Joan is telling us how she learnt to disguise as a school boy before she became Pope JOAN .She is making fun of gender difference either in education and later on in church.

In the middle of page 10

Joan:(to Marlene). I'd quarrelled with him over the teachings of John the Scot, who held that ignorance of God is the same as his ignorance of himself. He only knows what he creates because he creates everything he knows but he himself is above being- do you follow?

Caryl Churchill, here, launches another bitter attack on the men of religion on the tongue of her character, Pope Joan. Clergymen consider themselves above other people because they think what they order or say is God's.

In the bottom of page 16

Joan: I didn't know of course that it was near the time. It was Rogat Day, there was always a procession. I was on the horse dressed in robes and a cross was carried in front of me. And all the cardinals were following , and all the clergy of Rome, and a huge crowd of people./ They set off from

The top of page 17

Joan: 'The Pope is ill, The Pope is dying '. And the baby just slid off onto the road.

Here Joan's story reaches its climax and her mystery has already been revealed dramatically once and forever.

Page 18

Marlene: How many children did you have , Gret ?

Gret : Ten.

Gret tells her hostess that she had ten children as other guests narrates their sad stories about their children.

Page 20

Marlene: Yes, Griselda's life is like a fairy-story, except it starts with marrying the prince.

Page 21

Griselda: nobody knew who the bride was, we thought it must be a foreign princess, we were longing to see her. Then the carriage stopped outside the cottage and we couldn't see the bride anywhere. And she came and spoke to my father.

Page 21

Nijo: And your father told you to serve the Prince.

Page 21

Griselda: My father could hardly speak. The Marquis it wasn't

order, I could say no, but if I said yes I must always obey him in everything.

In this dialogue, the playwright shows us how humiliated women are. They are too meek, mild, and feeble to refuse a proposal for marriage although it is purely personal and they are supposed to be the only one to decide and approve of in their future life.

Page 22

Griselda: He said all the people hated me because I was just one of them.

And now I had a child they were restless. So I had to get rid of the child to keep them quiet. But he said he wouldn't marry her, I had to agree and obey and give her up. So when I was feeding her a man came in and took her away. I thought he was going to kill her even before he was out of the room.

Griselda here narrates the story of their first daughter when her husband the prince obliged her to quit her.

Page 25

Nijo: Did you feel anything for the children?

Page 25

Griselda: Of course, I loved them.

Page 26

Nijo: They wouldn't let me in the palace when he was dying. I hid the room with his coffin, then I couldn't find where I'd left my shoes. I ran after the funeral procession in bare feet, I couldn't keep up.

When I got there it was over, a few wisps of smoke in the sky, that's all that was left of him. What I want to know is, if I'd still been at court, would I have been allowed to wear full mourning?

Page 25

Marlene: I'm sure you would.

These lines provide us with a true panoramic account of the disastrous situation that top women endure throughout their history all over the world. Women are nothing. They are mere brilliant goods.

Page 27

Gret: We came into hell through a big mouth. Hell's black and red. It's like the village where I come from. There is a river and

Page 28

Marlene: (to JOAN) SHUT UP,PET.

Isabella: Listen, she's been to hell.

Gret: All the ladies come.

The whole play shows the women's inability to really listen to each other's stories generating a darkly comic irony that speaks more for the scene than any individual participant can.

Gret ,a woman wearing an apron and armor is leading an army of women fighting against a group of demons in Hell.

Act II scene I page 31

Jeanine: I'm saving to get married.

Marlene: Does that mean you don't want a long-term job, Jeanine ?

Jeanine : I might do.

Marlene: Because where the prospects come in ? No kids for a bit?

Jeanine is a young girl who comes to the TOP GIRLS AGENCY to find a job. During the interview with the MD (Marlene), Jeanine informs Marlene that she wants to save money for a wedding and eventually have children. Marlene takes this to mean that Jeanine lacks career ambitions and therefore, Marlene treats her as an inferior. In short, women are abused not only by men but also by women,themselves.

Act II scene II page 37

Angie : I'm going to kill my mother and you're going to watch.

Kit: I'm not playing.

Angie:Now I'm a cannibal. I might turn into a vampire now.

Angie speaks in a blunt and monosyllabic manner, and vocalizes her desire to kill her own mother.

Angie: Marlene's 16-year-old biological daughter who was adopted by Marlene's sister, Joyce. She is aggressive and unintelligent and spends most of her time with her younger neighbor, Kit. Angie makes an unexpected visit to London to see Marlene (whom she believes to be her aunt) because she aspires to be like her.

The bottom of page 38

Kit: I want to go somewhere away from the war.

Kit is Angie's younger next-door neighbor and closest friend. Kit is a bright girl with academic ambitions

Kit Her friendship with Angie further complicates Angie's relationship with Joyce, because Kit is more intelligent and has a more promising future than her older friend.

Page 40

Angie: I'm going to London to see my aunt.

Kit : I see my aunt all the time.

Angie: I don't see my aunt.

Kit : What's so special ?

Angie: My mother hates her.

Page 41

Kit : I remember her. That aunt , What's so special ?

Angie: She gets people jobs.

After treating various cross-sections of individual experience, the focus tightens to show Marlene in the context of her own family. Her domestic context finally occasions the need for self-reflection - yielding up all the raw, unresolved contingencies that have paved her road to success. It is revealed that Angie is Marlene's daughter, born when Marlene was seventeen and passed to the care of Joyce, Marlene's older sister. The loss of, or giving up of children, carries the metaphorical significance of disempowerment.

Marlene reminds us of the iron woman, the former Prime Minister of Britain, Margret Thatcher and the German Councilor, Angela Merkel. Today, let us go on reading and commenting on the third play, we are going to start with page 42-43.

Joyce: I didn't like it. And look at me. If your face fits at school going

To fit other places too. It wouldn't make any difference to Ang
She's not going to get a job when jobs are hard to get. I'd
sorry

for anyone in charge of her. She'd better get married. I don't
know who'd have her, mind. She's one of those girls might ne
leave home. What do you want to be when you grow up, Kit?

Kit : Physicist

Joyce: What?

Kit : Nuclear physicist.

Page 44

Kit : Angie, Angie, come on, you'll get wet.

Angie: I'll put on this dress to kill my mother.

The female employees Nell, Win, and the MD Marlene all back each other at the employment agency, referring to themselves as “tough birds” who recognize that they are playing and winning in a man’s world. Yet there is also a strong degree of competition between these women, which we see when Nell expresses envy that Marlene has been promoted over her. The conflict between supporting other women and viewing them as professional rivals is central to the play’s critical evaluation of modern capitalist values. Similarly, Angie and Joyce have a hostile, even violent relationship, even though Joyce has raised Angie as her daughter and she is indeed Marlene’s biological daughter. [Kit](#)’s friendship with Angie further complicates Angie’s relationship with Joyce, because Kit is more intelligent and has a more promising future than her older friend. Churchill strikingly captures the aggression between Angie and Joyce when Angie changes into the dress that Marlene gave her, which symbolizes the intense conflict between Joyce and Marlene, and states her intent to kill her mother. Kit has got prospects in her life and she, as a top girl, can achieve something which can be gained by her counterparts, men. By the way, the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, who is a top girl has earned a PhD in nuclear physics.

Act ii scene three page 46

WIN : Howard’s really cut up.

**Nell: Howard thinks because he’s a fella the job was his as of right. C
Marlene’s got far more balls than Howard and that’s that.**

Win and Nell are working for Top Girls’ Employment Agency which is being run by their MD Marlene. Yet, they still support men like Howard whom they think that he is the best to be employable for this post than Marlene.

Page 49

WIN: It’s the top executive doesn’t come in as early as the poor working girl.

MARLENE: Pass the sugar and shut your face, pet.

WIN: Well I’m delighted.

Again, these girls are jealous of Marlene and they envy her.

Page 54

MARLENE: So where's Joyce?

Angie: She's at home.

MARLENE: Did you come up on a school trip then?

Angie: I've left school.

Here we have a dramatic irony. Angie never knows that Marlene is her biological mother. She still believes that Marlene is her aunt and Joyce is her mother although they are not always on good terms.

Page 60

Nell : why do you want a change ?

Shona : Just a change.

Nell : Change of product or change of area ?

Shona : Both

Nell who is working for Top Girls' Employment Agency is interviewing Another job female applicant called Shona.

Page 66

WIN: She wants to work here.

MARLENE: Packer in Tesco more like.

WIN: She's a nice kid. Isn't she?

MARLENE: She's a bit thick. She's a bit funny.

WIN: She thinks you're wonderful.

MARLENE: She's not going to make it.

Marlene is taken greatly by being promoted to the MD of Top Girls' Employment Agency without being any attention to her ethics and even her personal life. She is mixed up as well as left uncertain about the difference between capital business and social human values. Marlene's achievement falls short of redressing the problem of inequality because it fails to question its own criteria. Her lack of clarity about her own values is reflected in her repeated vague references to having or not having 'what it takes'. Rather than being in power, she is in the service of elusive absolutes and retains no scope for compassion towards those who fall

short, even her own daughter. At the end of act two, Angie comes to visit the office and sleeps in the chair while Marlene and Win discuss her: Marlene's off-hand dismissal of the child, Angie, (whom we later discover is her own) puts a serious blemish on her apparent life of achievements. Ironically adept at 'finding places' for people, she cannot find a place for her daughter in her own life. Ironically it is Marlene rather than 'the man's world' defining Angie's limitations and charting an impoverished future for her.

Page 71

Joyce: I'll give you a surprise / one of these days.

Angie: I thought you'd like to see her. She hasn't been here since I was nine . People do see their aunts.

Angie still thinks that Marlene is her aunt and she would like to call over her or visit her.

Page 75

Angie: I want to go to America. Will you take me ?

Joyce: She's not going to America, she's been to America, stupid.

Angie is very fond of Marlene and she would like to accompany her in her journey to America but Joyce absolutely refuses that.

Page 81

Joyce: Then stop trying to get Angie off of me.

MARLENE: I come down here after six years. All night you've been saying I don't often come enough. If I don't come for another six years she'll be twenty-one, will that be OK

Here the quarrel between Angie's adoptive mother, Joyce and biological mother, Marlene over Angie has reached its climax. Marlene would like to regain her child Angie while her sister ,Joyce can not quit her.

Page 87

Joyce : No pet. Sorry.

Angie: Mum?

MARLENE : Angie ? What's the matter ?

Only by the closing scene at the end of the play, which takes place a year before the office scenes, does the audience hear that Marlene, not Joyce, is Angie's mother. This notion, as well as the political quarrel between the sisters shifts the emphasis of the play and formulates new questions about motherhood, capitalism, socialism and ethics

Top Girls Themes

American individualistic feminism and British socialist feminism

“Top Girls” setting is exposed in the United Kingdom of Britain of the early 1980s during the rule of the ‘iron woman’ [Margaret Thatcher](#), and examines the issue of what it means to be a successful woman; initially using 'historical' characters to explore different aspects of women's 'social achievement'. Churchill has stated that the play was inspired by her conversations with American feminists: it comments on the contrast between American feminism, which celebrates individualistic women who acquire power and wealth, and British socialist feminism, which involves only collective group gain. In addition, there is also a commentary on [Margaret Thatcher](#), then Prime Minister, who celebrated personal achievement and believed in free-market capitalism ([Thatcherism](#)). Marlene the tough career woman is portrayed as soulless, exploiting other women and suppressing her own caring side in the cause of success. The play argues against the style of feminism that simply turns women into new [patriarchs](#) and argues for a feminism where women's instinct to care for the weak and downtrodden is more prominent. The play questions whether it is possible for women in society to combine a successful career with a thriving family life. In this case it comes to our minds the following proverb : “If you run after two sheep, you will catch neither”.

Dreamlike and Parallel Style

Top Girls is distinguished by its dreamlike opening sequence in which Marlene meets famous women from history, including [Pope Joan](#), who, disguised as a man, is said to have been [Pope](#) between 854–856; the explorer [Isabella Bird](#); [Dull Gret](#) the harrower of Hell; [Lady Nijo](#), the Japanese mistress of an emperor and later a [Buddhist](#) nun; and [Patient Griselda](#), the patient wife from [The Clerk's Tale](#) in [Geoffrey Chaucer's Canterbury Tales](#). All of these characters behave like a gang of city career women out on the town and get increasingly drunk and maudlin, as it is revealed that each has suffered in similar ways. The stories of the historical women parallel the characters in the modern-day story. For example, [Bird](#), like Marlene, got to where she was by leaving her sister to deal with family matters. Dull Gret's monosyllabic inarticulacy is comparable to Angie's. Some of these parallels are emphasised by the actors doubling the roles of the historical and modern characters.

The structure of the play is unconventional (non-linear). In Act I, scene 1, Marlene is depicted as a successful businesswoman, and all her guests from different ages celebrate her promotion in the 'Top Girls' employment agency. In the next scene we jump to the present day (early 1980s) where we see Marlene at work in the surprisingly masculine world of the female staff of the agency, in which the ladies of 'Top Girls' must

be tough and insensitive in order to compete with men. In the same act, the audience sees Angie's angry, helpless psyche and her loveless relationship with Joyce, whom the girl hates and dreams of killing. Only in the final scene, which takes place a year before the office scenes, does the audience hear that Marlene, not Joyce, is Angie's mother. This notion, as well as the political quarrel between the sisters shifts the emphasis of the play and formulates new questions

Women and Work

The relationship between women and work is essential to [Top Girls](#) from its opening act. The surrealist dinner party in Act I is a celebration of [Marlene](#)'s promotion over her male colleague Howard Kidd. As the play develops, we learn that Marlene has achieved professional success at the cost of a meaningful personal life. Meanwhile, all the women who attend Marlene's dinner party have transcended gender roles during their lives and have occupied positions generally associated with men: Joan was Pope, Gret led an army (of women), Nijo violently retaliated against her lord, the Emperor, and Isabella spent her life exploring and writing books about her travels. Churchill critically examines the context of economic independence for women during 1970s Britain through Marlene and the other women who she encounters at the Top Girls employment agency. [Joyce](#) is an antithesis to Marlene, as she got married and became a stay-at-home mom. In Act 3, however, it becomes clear that neither Marlene nor Joyce is completely fulfilled - leading the audience to ponder the ways in which women can strike a balance between work and life.

Language and Deciding Identity

Language attributes deeply to personal and collective identity in *Top Girls*. In Act I, Churchill explores this relationship through an experimental and surrealist technique, interweaving the different characters' stories in a kaleidoscopic way. Each woman speaks in the idiom of her particular historical era, but their speeches overlap, emphasizing their common experiences resisting patriarchy across generations. Churchill also uses language as an indicator of class status and social differentiation her depiction of 1970s Britain. The female characters who work at Top Girls – [Nell](#), [Win](#), and Marlene – speak in a casual, slang-heavy manner that places them inside an elite and competitive circle of professional women. Meanwhile, Joyce and [Angie](#) use caustic, curse-laden language that marks them as working class individuals. Angie's simple vocabulary, however, also carries an emotional intensity and directness that recalls [Dull Gret](#)'s speech in Act I.

The English Iron Woman and Feminist Politics

Caryl Churchill has publicly acknowledged that Margaret Thatcher's rise to the position of British Prime Minister was an important inspiration for writing *Top Girls*. Churchill is deeply interested in feminism and the ongoing consequences of the women's liberation movement. There was a certain irony in Margaret Thatcher's ascent to power in the wake of feminism, since Thatcher's policies were deeply conservative and anti-feminist. The feminist movement in Britain has been typically connected to left-wing political positions, especially socialism. In *Top Girls*, Churchill draws upon this contradiction in her depiction of Marlene, a woman who is extremely successful in the professional world, but whose victories on this front appear to come at the cost of ignoring her personal life. Churchill clearly depicts the conflicting views over Thatcher in the conversation between Joyce and Marlene. Marlene is proud that Thatcher, a woman, has become such a powerful elected official, while Joyce does not consider Thatcher's gender in her assessment that the Prime Minister's policies are suffocating the working class.

Surrealism versus realism

Churchill's play draws upon techniques of surrealist theater, especially in Act 1. First and foremost, the dinner party collects female guests from various moments in history, and impossibly brings them together for a night of celebration in light of Marlene's promotion. In addition, the group's interwoven, choppy dialogue is a departure from the ordered, linear progression that defines most dramatic writing. The women tell their stories in a dream-like, associative quality - an essential aspect of surrealist art. The play's explicit political affiliations with left-wing socialism also connect it to traditions of surrealist art and theater, which sought to shatter the illusions of bourgeois society. In Acts 2 and 3, instances of unnerving behavior stand out as subtly surrealist elements with the power to upset the status quo - such as Angie's macabre statement: "I put on this dress to kill my mother."

Public Versus Private Life

Bourgeois capitalist societies tend to erect a strong barrier between the public and private spheres, and *Top Girls* calls this divide into question. Contemporary capitalism depends upon the basic presumption that individuals are born as autonomous public persons with equal access to the market, which allows them to amass wealth through hard work. Meanwhile, individuals also have the freedom to pursue their own religious, moral, and romantic desires in their private lives. Churchill challenges these basic presumptions through her depictions of Marlene, Nell, and Win as professionally successful women who play by the vicious

rules of the corporate game in order to secure their success. These women have fractured or nearly non-existent private lives, whereas the men they work with, such as Howard Kidd, depend upon women to secure their private lives - having their children and running their homes. Joyce's character represents the opposite side of this split, since she is a single woman who has chosen to remain bound to familial obligations, but is deeply unhappy and frustrated by her lack of opportunities. Ultimately, Churchill's play suggests that the public-private distinction makes unjust demands upon women.

Suffering, Oppression and Empowerment

Top Girls depicts political economic conditions of oppression in 1970s Britain. Many working class families, like Joyce and Angie, experienced nothing but difficulty, and saw no opportunities for advancement. Joyce and Marlene's blue-collar upbringing was marked by parental conflict and constant disappointment due to their father's limited opportunities for work. This led him to beat Marlene and Joyce's mother, who was effectively trapped in a situation of domestic abuse. However, the play also suggests that there may be opportunities to resist structures of oppression that stem from conventions surrounding class and gender. For instance, the dinner party in Act I allows Churchill to draw surprising connections between women from vastly different classes and historical eras, through their common resistance to patriarchal oppression. Also, the success of the women at the Top Girls Agency shows a form of empowerment, although it is qualified by the fact that the women use their intelligence to further their individual situations rather than to critically engage the patriarchy that undergirds their professional environment.

Conflict, Aggression and Female Relationships

Through Churchill's representations of women's struggles across history, *Top Girls* critically examines the mutual aggression that can arise between women. Nell, Win, and Marlene all support each other at the employment agency, referring to themselves as "tough birds" who recognize that they are playing and winning in a man's world. Yet there is also a strong degree of competition between them, which we see when Nell expresses envy that Marlene has been promoted over her. The conflict between supporting other women and viewing them as professional rivals is central to the play's critical evaluation of modern capitalist values. Similarly, Angie and Joyce have a hostile, even violent relationship, even though Joyce has raised Angie as her daughter. [Kit](#)'s friendship with Angie further complicates Angie's relationship with Joyce, because Kit is more intelligent and has a more promising future than her older friend. Churchill strikingly captures the aggression

between Angie and Joyce when Angie changes into the dress that Marlene gave her, which symbolizes the intense conflict between Joyce and Marlene, and states her intent to kill her mother. These examples represent the critical challenges women face in building meaningful and supportive relationships with other women, especially in a world that inflates the role of individual over the collective.

A contrastive and comparative study of the three plays:

Dramatic Structure



The structure of a play refers to its plot; the arrangement of material, sequence of events and the placing of scenes for dramatic effect. A plot structure must be carefully planned in order to intrigue the audience and captivate attention. When considering the structure of a play, it is useful to use the following pattern to explore and analyse the plot:

1-Exposition – this is the opening section of a play. The main characters, their relationships and the events that surround them are set up.

- 2-Rising Action or Inflation = Crisis

(Dramatic Incitement) – event or action that precipitates the main action of the play.

3-Complication & – (the climax of the play).– This part presents a challenge or dilemma or other development that will have consequences. The characters will react and respond and maybe undergo some change as a result.

4-Falling Action or Deflation: – the end of the play. The strands of the plot

5-Resolution – the end of the play. The strands of the plot are brought together, characters are assessed, in traditional plays good ones are rewarded and evil punished.

The structure of the 'The Playboy of The Western World' by Synge follows the above-listed five steps of traditional plot whereas Waiting for Godot lacks the fifth step which Resolution. It is already left to the audience to think over the end they believe to be the best. They are linear plots whereas Top Girls plot is non-linear. 'The Importance of Being Earnest' by Oscar Wilde and 'A Streetcar named Desire' by Tennessee Williams are plays that fall nicely into this structure. However, modern drama is less predictable and resists traditional ways of structuring the plot. In particular Theatre of the Absurd plays are

with conventional plot and structure in order to create drama that is much more puzzling and ambiguous and that does not correspond to traditional expectations. 'Waiting for Godot' by Beckett is so misleading, irrational and unrecognisable as conventional drama lacks progression and a linear plot and fails to offer a clearly defined resolution. In Top Girls, the plot is completely different. It is completely ambiguous and confusing. Due to traditional criteria, we can state that it is plotless.

The Ancient Greeks took the writing of drama very seriously and created rules for the structuring of drama, rules that have had a lasting influence on dramatic theory. An important concept is that of the Three Unities: Unity of Time, Unity of Space, Unity of Action. According to the Greek writers these Unities need to be in place for a drama to be orderly and unified. The unities can be defined further:

- **Unity of Time** –The events of the drama should take place over a continuous time period and should take no longer than the length of the performance. In the plays we have covered, only the first two plays- Waiting For Godot and The Playboy Of The Western World- cope with the unity of time while the third one-Top Girls- never do that.
- **Unity of Place** – the events should take place in one geographical place. Again, Waiting For Godot and The Playboy Of The Western World- comply with the unity of place where the events take place nearly in the same place. As for the third one-Top Girls- settings are changing where the acts of the play are set in different places.
- **Unity of Action** – there is only one clear plot.

Although most dramatists find this concept too rigid and restrictive, it is worth knowing about the Unities because it is interesting to consider how playwrights manipulate them to suit particular dramatic purposes. For example, in 'A Streetcar named Desire' Williams adheres to the Unity of Place, all the action is set outside or inside Stanley's apartment, maintaining Unity of Place. Williams creates an oppressive, stifling atmosphere that reinforces themes of male power and female powerlessness and highlights the difference between the security of the owner and the vulnerability of the dispossessed. Other plays and writers clearly flout the concept of the Three Unities. In Caryl Churchill's 'Top Girls' Churchill, influenced by Brecht, abandons traditional dramatic structure. The disruption to a chronological order; the last scene takes place a year before the first one, overlapping dialogue and characters doubling all unsettle and disrupt conventional expectations.

When considering dramatic structure it is important to consider the positioning of acts and scenes. The organization of a play influences

emotional response from an audience and creates dramatic tension impact. Scenes can become more powerful through contrast. example in Shakespeare's 'Hamlet' scene one is set in the middle of night, the set is gloomy, dark, shadowy and mysterious. This scene followed by the entrance of the King and his court, in a magnificent procession lit by torches, full of colour and spectacle. Each scene benefits through contrast with each other. The arrangement of scenes and events and action that take place in these scenes play a crucial part determining the audience response. The pacing of the narrative and organisation of the story are vital in creating interest and in maintaining suspense and tension.

The sub-plot is a crucial part to a play's structure. The sub-plot is used to provide parallels and contrasts with the main plot. Through sharing similar themes and concerns the sub-plot can illuminate aspects of the main plot and it is worth considering how the sub-plot is woven into the main drama. In *Top Girls*, we are provided with many subplots which are sometimes considered as misleading because they shake a lot from the main plot. In the first two plays, we can easily trace out the main plot although we are introduced with a subplot.

The tensions between work and private life

Top Girls critically examines the relationship between work and marriage through its depictions of the sacrifices made by successful women at the London employment agency. Win, Nell, and especially Marlene have made great strides in their careers, they have all done so by making sacrifices in their private lives in order to focus on their work. Marlene is the central character, and her career ambitions have depended upon her leaving her daughter, Angie, to be raised by her sister Joyce. The play suggests that the price that Marlene has paid for her success is extreme, and that women being forced to choose between having a successful career and a fulfilling private life is a form of social injustice.

Who are the protagonists and the antagonists in the three plays ?

So the stronger the protagonist is, the stronger the antagonist will be. We cannot have a play without a conflict, nor do we have a conflict without an obstacle. The obstacle may be the antagonist (a person) or a thing or even an idea. In *Top Girls*, the main protagonist is Marlene. Other characters can be also protagonists, too. The other top girls are also considered protagonists; [Pope Joan](#), [Isabella Bird](#); [Dull Gret](#), [Lady Nijo](#), [Patient Griselda](#). Marlene's sister, whereas Joyce is antagonist.

In the *Playboy Of The western World*, Christy and Pegeen are the protagonists. On the other hand, Old Mahon, Shawn and Widow Quinn are the antagonists or the hero's and heroine's rivals. In *Waiting For Godot*, the protagonists are Vladimir and Estragon but the antagonist is

the idea of being obsessed by waiting for Godot who is going to save them but in vain.

Do we have conflicts in the first play, *Waiting for Godot*? Yes, we have some conflicts between Estragon and Vladimir. We don't mean the physical conflict. I mean in ideas. We have another conflict between Pozzo and his slave, Lucky. And we have a conflict between Godot and one of his shepherds. So conflict is necessary to push the incidents of the action forward.

Lecturer: So what makes conflict strong is the obstacle. Now what is the obstacle placed in the way of Christy in The Playboy Of The Western World? His father, another one is Shawn when he tries to marry Pegeen. Who was the obstacle? Shawn.

Marlene and Joyce are sisters who serve as foils as the play unfolds. We first see Marlene celebrating her promotion to a managerial position, and later we observe her hyper-professional, no nonsense demeanor while she is at work. She has no time for personal issues, and her character represents the choice that many women in 1970s Britain were struggling with - should they have to sacrifice a private life in order to succeed in their careers? Meanwhile, Joyce is the archetypal bitter housewife - confined to the drudgery and difficulties of caring for family. However, despite her efforts, Joyce's family is still unhappy - her husband has left her and her adopted daughter hates her. In *Top Girls*, Caryl Churchill uses these characters to elucidate important contradictions in the social and professional demands placed upon women in contemporary British society.

The role of travel in the play, and in the lives of the various people who discuss their experiences of, can be of very great value. Through travel characters become more mature and brilliant. Christy in the *Playboy of The western* has transformed from a ploughboy into a playboy. He finally realizes the human identity when he goes back home with his father.

Several of the independently minded women in Act 1 are avid travelers. Isabella Bird speaks constantly of her travels across the globe and attaches great value to those experiences, whereas she associates the demands of societal life in England with disappointment and a frustrating obligation to her husband. Lady Nijo likewise speaks about the second half of her life as a Buddhist nun, traveling Japan on foot as a way of healing after her time as the Emperor's concubine. Later, Marlene and Win both speak of having spent time abroad as part of their journeys towards fulfilling careers. The play suggests that travel allows women to develop independent ways of thinking and experiencing the world that social duties and familial obligations often prevent. Travel opens their eyes and imaginations to new possibilities.

The use of language to establish a particular character's identity, class, or social status.

There are numerous examples of a link between identity and language in *Top Girls*. Dull Gret, for instance, hardly speaks. Her lack of linguistic prowess contrasts sharply with the rest of the women at the dinner table, and situates her as a peasant woman of the Middle Ages. Yet when Gret does eventually decide to join the conversation, the brutish simplicity of her narrative is striking, and helps to convey the raw emotion that she and her fellow village women experienced while watching Spanish soldiers murder their families. Meanwhile, the three women working at Top Girls – Nell, Win, and Marlene – exemplify an essential link between language and identity that is both personal and collective. When they first arrive, Nell and Win banter about “Coffee coffee coffee” and poke fun at their inadequate male colleague, Howard – “Howard can just hang onto himself” and “Howard’s really cut up.” When Marlene enters, she falls easily into this style of conversation, telling Win “Pass the sugar and shut your face, pet.” All three women use slang, shared associations and phrases, and a quick delivery of caustic speech in ways that reinforce shared membership in an elite circle of professional females.

-Synge was a master at writing lively dialogue laced with exaggeration and colorful imagery. In *The Playboy of the Western World*, he infuses the speech of his characters with the rich English-language dialect of the Mayo County Irish. To learn the intonations and speech patterns of the people of western Ireland, Synge lived several years in the Aran Islands off the Atlantic coast, in Galway Bay..

-When writing the dialogue for *Playboy*, Synge laced it with authentic western-Irish regionalisms and vulgarisms, as well as inflections and rhythms characteristic of western-Irish speech. However, he also peppered the dialogue with words or phrases common in other parts of Ireland. Synge explained his writing scheme in the preface to the play. The preface says, in part:

“In writing *The Playboy of the Western World*, as in my other plays, I have used one or two words only that I have not heard among the country people of Ireland, or spoken in my own nursery before I could read the newspapers”.

As to the imagery, it relies heavily on vivid metaphors and hyperboles. For example, when Michael Flaherty asks Christy Mahon whether he has committed larceny, Christy replies that he has no need to stoop to thievery, for his father “could have bought up the whole of your old house a while since, from the butt of his tail pocket, and not have missed the weight of it gone.” Most of the humor in the play grows out of the dialogue—but not all of it. Synge also relies on situation comedy for humorous effect—having a character hide behind a door or barge in

unexpectedly. Old man Mahon pulls off the ultimate surprise—coming back from the dead. In making the transition from one conversation to the next, Synge demonstrates superlative writing skill. Never do the transitions seem forced or contrived; instead, one conversation flows smoothly into the next. The trick is that Synge steers the dialogue in one conversation toward a subject of interest to a person who initiates a new conversation. The theatergoer or reader hardly notices that the author has been tugging at his marionette strings.

Type of Work
 . *The Playboy of the Western World* is a comedy with satiric and tragic elements. Synge wanted his audience to laugh at his characters, but he also wanted the audience to notice their humanity—for they have their faults and defects. The people who frequent Flaherty's country tavern are stuck in a boring corner of Ireland. But except for Christy Mahon, they do nothing to improve their lot. Even Pegeen Flaherty—an attractive and intelligent young woman who is full of spirit—fails to extricate herself from the humdrum life of rural Mayo County. The reader is led to believe at the end of the play that she will end up with the spineless lout Shawn Keough for her husband.

Waiting for Godot is often described as a play in which nothing happens, twice. No doubt any audience will have some sympathy for this assessment. The first and the second half of the play are remarkably similar and there is little if any dramatic movement.

How is it, then, that this is considered one of the greatest plays of the twentieth century?

The first question that undoubtedly springs to mind is 'Who or what is Godot?'

There are a number of equally valid answers to this question but, whoever or whatever Godot may be, the play is a fable about existence. However, as Gunther Anders points out (in [Esslin \(Ed.\)](#)), *Waiting for Godot* is no ordinary fable.

Essentially one could argue that *Waiting for Godot* is like a fable that lacks a moral or a lesson. Godot never arrives and, as such, there are no sudden revelations about the meaning of life, about the existence of God, or even about death. The lesson of *Waiting for Godot* is that there are no answers,

that there is no moral.



A good way to try and understand what a play may be about is to look at each of the elements in the play, such as the setting, action, dialogue, relationships, and themes. Each of these elements often helps to elucidate the important themes of the work. The main theme of both the stories is to pursue the challenging decision taken by women to liberate themselves from the traditional roles and to remain steadfast despite the unfulfillment of certain personal aspects of their lives, however, the satisfaction of deciding for themselves gets prioritized the most in their lives.

• Why are there no men physically present in *Top Girls* and no women physically present in *Waiting For Godot*?

Although the women in “*Top Girls*” speak often and critically about men, there are never any male characters onstage in the play. The settings of each Act reinforce this fact – a group of women have taken over a restaurant and dinner table in Act 1, women have taken over the traditionally male-dominated space of an office in Act 2, and we see conversations in Joyce’s kitchen and living room, which are typically feminine domestic spaces, in Act 3. Many of the roles and professions of the women in the play are linked to men (courtesan, wives and daughters, Pope, modern professional), but the fact that men are absent helps to create a conceptual space in which Churchill examines female relationships and interactions outside of a male presence. This tactic allows Churchill to critically acknowledge the extent to which her characters’ lives are shaped directly or indirectly by men and patriarchal power. Because the women in the play display aggression, conflict, and competition alongside their friendship and support for each other, Churchill also implies the far-reaching consequences of patriarchal oppression and capitalist exploitation.

The absence of women in ‘*Waiting for Godot*’ has been popularly related to the play’s cynicism in cancelling out a possibility of redemption through the reproductive cycle of life. The absence of a female, I think is also due to the fact that the relational scheme of this play is homosocial if not homoerotic. Didi and Gogo are a ‘pseudocouple’, to use Beckett’s own expression. In a radical Gay figuration of the world, where does the woman fit in? Another way of answering the question would be to see Godot as a woman/mother. In this sense, the play might be seen to represent the invisibility (patriarchal) and unknowability (psycho-analytical) and yet the irresistible desire to know the feminine enigma. If truth were a woman, can Godot not be a mother? Vladimir and Estragon are like two kids who look forward to an impossible encounter with the other as love.

The flashback technique and its effect on our perception of the relationship between Joyce, Angie, and Marlene.

Although Marlene appears overly harsh and dismissive of Angie when she visits her at the agency in London, the play makes room for some sympathy in later scenes. Angie arrives entirely unannounced and interrupts Marlene at her place of work. Moreover, in an earlier scene, we have witnessed Angie's violent feelings against her mother, Joyce, and her friend, Kit, - painting her as a difficult and rowdy teen. However, by moving back in time in the following scene, Churchill forces her audience to examine our initial impressions of these characters. We learn that Marlene is Angie's biological mother, and that she left Angie to be raised by Joyce because she wanted to escape her working class background. This creates sympathy for Joyce and her frustrations with Angie, but also creates sympathy for Angie's character and her intense desire to identify with Marlene. The narrative structure allows Churchill to create a dramatic reversal based on the delivery of knowledge previously hidden.

Top Girls is as a piece of feminist socialist drama.

On one hand, Act 1 of *Top Girls* investigates feminism as a concept: did feminism exist in some form before it was given that name during the social justice movements of the 20th century? Is feminism simply the resistance to patriarchy by women? Can there be feminist identifications across historical periods? In the first Act, Churchill suggests that shared struggle against male oppression and patriarchy can connect women and empower them. However, within the modern era, as we see in Acts 2 and 3, feminism must battle against the unique challenges of capitalist exploitation and the drive to isolate and elevate the role of the private individual over collective life. Churchill layers her narrative with economical, political, and historical context. By doing this, she presents critiques of capitalism and the innate patriarchy that has existed throughout history - which allows us to categorize *Top Girls* as a feminist socialist drama.

How does Churchill's play represent the power and status of the individual in the 1970s and 80s capitalist society?

Top Girls examines and implicitly critiques the elevated status of the private individual in late capitalist society. Marlene's character represents the fulfillment of capitalist values - she seems to have been successful because her individual resolve has allowed her to escape the poverty into which she was born. Yet we learn at the end of the play that Marlene was able leave Ipswich because she abandoned her daughter, Angie, and essentially cut her family out of her life. Marlene regards Angie as a weak and unmotivated girl with no future, and this perspective helps her to justify a conservative view that class doesn't truly exist, and all individuals have the power to elevate themselves

financially through determination and hard work. The play suggests this perspective (parallel to Thatcherism) is flawed, showing that financial autonomy and success is built on socially oppressive relationships and structures of exploitation. The self-determining power of the individual is a myth, Churchill suggests, even if that myth shapes the dominant view of modern capitalist life.

The historical figures of Act 1 tell stories about their lives that are strikingly different. At the same time, the play suggests that these women all share something important.

As the different guests arrive and tell their life stories over the course of Act 1, it becomes clear that there are radical differences among these women. These differences are due to their respective upbringings, historical periods, religious and philosophical values, and materially embodied conditions. However, the interwoven narratives also suggest that these women have experienced something common: they all found ways to thrive in worlds controlled largely by men. Each woman has endured significant forms of hardship and labor demanded by husbands, lords, or patriarchal institutions, but each woman's story also tells of unique achievements and a refusal to inhabit their expected roles quietly, which shows their collective spirit of opposition to injustice against women. The idea of a shared struggle and empowering action that cuts across historical periods is a key theme in Churchill's play. Also, Marlene shares something in common with each one of these characters - showing that her conservative views - however flawed they may be - are borne out of years and years of patriarchy and oppression. While Marlene thinks she has it all figured out, the unhappy ending of the play shows that Marlene, like all of the women at her dinner party in Act 1, has made major sacrifices in order to succeed and that the feminist movement is still evolving. The initial setting of Act 1, at a dinner table, evokes the domestic space of the kitchen and the privacy of life at home. The surreal aspects of the staging, however, dislocate the typical expectations of security and comfort associated with private life. The women constantly interrupt each other and their narratives only emerge in fragmented form, which requires the audience to pay close attention and piece together each thread. This fragmentation is jarring, and provokes us to abandon our expectations of a linear dramatic narrative in favor of new possibilities for exploring the connections between these women. Churchill's technique therefore complements the implication that women in the modern era must seek out new and unexpected solutions to conquer their political and economic struggles.

The End See you in the Exam