

Samuel Beckett, *Endgame* (1957)

*Bare interior.*

*Grey light.*

*Left and right back, high up, two small windows, curtains drawn.*

*Front right, a door. Hanging near door, its face to wall, a picture.*

*Front left, touching each other, covered with an old sheet, two ashbins.*

*Center, in an armchair on castors, covered with an old sheet, Hamm.*

*Motionless by the door, his eyes fixed on Hamm, Clov. Very red face.*

*Brief tableau.*

*Clov goes and stands under window left. Stiff, staggering walk. He looks up at window left. He turns and looks at window right. He goes and stands under window right. He looks up at window right. He turns and looks at window left. He goes out, comes back immediately with a small step-ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window left, gets up on it, draws back curtain. He gets down, takes six steps (for example) towards window right, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window right, gets up on it, draws back curtain. He gets down, takes three steps towards window left, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window left, gets up on it, looks out of window. Brief laugh. He gets down, takes one step towards window right, goes back for ladder, carries it over and sets it down under window right, gets up on it, looks out of window. Brief laugh. He gets down, goes with ladder towards ashbins, halts, turns, carries back ladder and sets it down under window right, goes to ashbins, removes sheet covering them, folds it over his arm. He raises one lid, stoops and looks into bin. Brief laugh. He closes lid. Same with other bin. He goes to Hamm, removes sheet covering him, folds it over his arm. In a dressing-gown, a stiff toque on his head, a large blood-stained handkerchief over his face, a whistle hanging from his neck, a rug over his knees, thick socks on his feet, Hamm seems to be asleep. Clov looks him over. Brief laugh. He goes to door, halts, turns towards auditorium.*

CLOV (*fixed gaze, tonelessly*):

Finished, it's finished, nearly finished, it must be nearly finished.

(*Pause.*)

Grain upon grain, one by one, and one day, suddenly, there's a heap, a little heap, the impossible heap.

(*Pause.*)

I can't be punished any more.

(*Pause.*)

I'll go now to my kitchen, ten feet by ten feet by ten feet, and wait for him to whistle me.

(*Pause.*)

Nice dimensions, nice proportions, I'll lean on the table, and look at the wall, and wait for him to whistle me.

(*He remains a moment motionless, then goes out. He comes back immediately, goes to window right, takes up the ladder and carries it out. Pause. Hamm stirs. He yawns under the handkerchief. He removes the handkerchief from his face. Very red face. Black glasses.*)

HAMM:

Me—

(*he yawns*)

—to play.

(*He holds the handkerchief spread out before him.*)

Old stancher!

(*He takes off his glasses, wipes his eyes, his face, the glasses, puts them on again, folds the handkerchief and puts it back neatly in the breast-pocket of his dressing-gown. He clears his throat, joins the tips of his fingers.*)

Can there be misery—

(*he yawns*)

—loftier than mine? No doubt. Formerly. But now?

(*Pause.*)

My father?

(*Pause.*)

My mother?

(*Pause.*)

My . . . dog?

(*Pause.*)

Oh I am willing to believe they suffer as much as such creatures can suffer. But does that mean their sufferings equal mine? No doubt.

(*Pause.*)

No, all is a—

(*he yawns*)

—bsolute,

(*proudly*)

the bigger a man is the fuller he is.

(*Pause. Gloomily.*)

And the emptier.

(*He sniffs.*)

Clov!

(*Pause.*)

No, alone.

(*Pause.*)

What dreams! Those forests!

(*Pause.*)

Enough, it's time it ended, in the shelter too.

(*Pause.*)

And yet I hesitate, I hesitate to . . . to end. Yes, there it is, it's time it ended and yet I hesitate to—

(*he yawns*)

—to end.

(*Yawns.*)

God, I'm tired, I'd be better off in bed.

(*He whistles. Enter Clov immediately. He halts beside the chair.*)

You pollute the air!

(*Pause.*)

Get me ready, I'm going to bed.

CLOV:

I've just got you up.

HAMM:

And what of it?

CLOV:

I can't be getting you up and putting you to bed every five minutes, I have things to do.

(*Pause.*)

HAMM:

Did you ever see my eyes?

CLOV:

No.

HAMM:

Did you never have the curiosity, while I was sleeping, to take off my glasses and look at my eyes?

CLOV:

Pulling back the lids?

(*Pause.*)

No.

HAMM:

One of these days I'll show them to you.

(*Pause.*)

It seems they've gone all white.

(*Pause.*)

What time is it?

CLOV:

The same as usual.

HAMM (*gesture towards window right*):

Have you looked?

CLOV:

Yes.

HAMM:

Well?

CLOV:

Zero.

HAMM:

It'd need to rain.

CLOV:

It won't rain.

(*Pause.*)

HAMM:

Apart from that, how do you feel?

CLOV:

I don't complain.

HAMM:

You feel normal?

CLOV (*irritably*):

I tell you I don't complain.

HAMM:

I feel a little queer.

(*Pause.*)