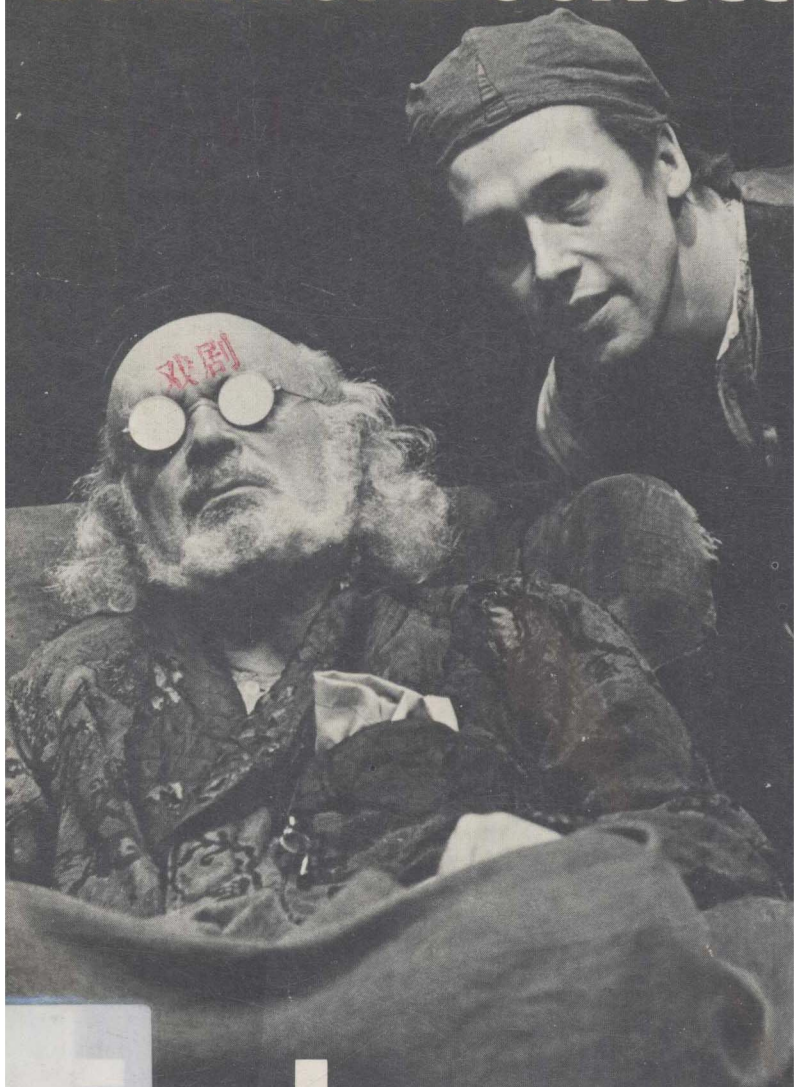


Samuel Beckett



5 **Endgame**

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END GAME

*A Play in one Act
followed by*

ACT WITHOUT WORDS

A Mime for one Player

by

SAMUEL BECKETT

*Translated
from the original French
by the author*



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The first performance in Great Britain of *ENDGAME* was given in French under its original title of *FIN DE PARTIE* at the Royal Court Theatre, Sloane Square, London, on 3rd April 1957. It was directed by Roger Blin, with décor by Jacques Noel. The cast was as follows:

HAMM	Roger Blin
CLOV	Jean Martin
NAGG	Georges Adet
NELL	Christine Tsingos

It was followed by the mime *Act Without Words* (*Acte Sans Paroles*) which was played and directed by Deryk Mendel. Music by John Beckett.

ENDGAME

For Roger Blin.

THE CHARACTERS

HAMM

CLOV

NAGG

NELL

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.

Centre, 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 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 refuge 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.*) Clov!

CLOV: Yes.

HAMM: Have you not had enough?

CLOV: Yes! (*Pause.*) Of what?

HAMM: Of this . . . this . . . thing.

CLOV: I always had. (*Pause.*) Not you?

HAMM: (*gloomily*). Then there's no reason for it to change.

CLOV: It may end. (*Pause.*) All life long the same questions, the same answers.

HAMM: Get me ready. (*Clov does not move.*) Go and get the sheet. (*Clov does not move.*) Clov!

CLOV: Yes.

HAMM: I'll give you nothing more to eat.

CLOV: Then we'll die.

HAMM: I'll give you just enough to keep you from dying. You'll be hungry all the time.

CLOV: Then we shan't die. (*Pause.*) I'll go and get the sheet.

He goes towards the door.

HAMM: No! (*Clov halts.*) I'll give you one biscuit per day. (*Pause.*) One and a half. (*Pause.*) Why do you stay with me?

CLOV: Why do you keep me?

HAMM: There's no one else.

CLOV: There's nowhere else.

Pause.

HAMM: You're leaving me all the same.

CLOV: I'm trying.

HAMM: You don't love me.

CLOV: No.

HAMM: You loved me once.

CLOV: Once!

HAMM: I've made you suffer too much. (*Pause.*) Haven't I?

CLOV: It's not that.

HAMM: (*shocked*). I haven't made you suffer too much?

CLOV: Yes!

HAMM: (*relieved*). Ah you gave me a fright! (*Pause. Coldly.*) Forgive me. (*Pause. Louder.*) I said, Forgive me.

CLOV: I heard you. (*Pause.*) Have you bled?

HAMM: Less. (*Pause.*) Is it not time for my pain-killer?

CLOV: No.

Pause.

HAMM: How are your eyes?

CLOV: Bad.

HAMM: How are your legs?

CLOV: Bad.

HAMM: But you can move.

CLOV: Yes.

HAMM: (*violently*). Then move! (*Clov goes to back wall, leans against it with his forehead and hands.*) Where are you?

CLOV: Here.

HAMM: Come back! (*Clov returns to his place beside the chair.*)
Where are you?

CLOV: Here.

HAMM: Why don't you kill me?

CLOV: I don't know the combination of the larder.
Pause.

HAMM: Go and get two bicycle-wheels.

CLOV: There are no more bicycle-wheels.

HAMM: What have you done with your bicycle?

CLOV: I never had a bicycle.

HAMM: The thing is impossible.

CLOV: When there were still bicycles I wept to have one. I crawled at your feet. You told me to get out to hell. Now there are none.

HAMM: And your rounds? When you inspected my paupers. Always on foot?

CLOV: Sometimes on horse. (*The lid of one of the bins lifts and the hands of Nagg appear, gripping the rim. Then his head emerges. Nightcap. Very white face. Nagg yawns, then listens.*)
I'll leave you. I have things to do.

HAMM: In your kitchen?

CLOV: Yes.

HAMM: Outside of hell is death. (*Pause.*) All right, be off. (*Exit Clov. Pause.*) We're getting on.

NAGG: Me pap!

HAMM: Accursed progeny!

NAGG: Me pap!

HAMM: The old folks at home! No decency left! Guzzle, guzzle, that's all they think of. (*He whistles. Enter Clov. He halts beside the chair.*) Well! I thought you were leaving me.

CLOV: Oh not just yet, not just yet.

NAGG: Me pap!

HAMM: Give him his pap.

CLOV: There's no more pap.

HAMM: (*to Nagg*). Do you hear that? There's no more pap. You'll never get any more pap.

NAGG: I want me pap!



HAMM: Give him a biscuit. (*Exit Clov.*) Accursed fornicator! How are your stumps?

NAGG: Never mind me stumps.

Enter Clov with biscuit.

CLOV: I'm back again, with the biscuit.

He gives the biscuit to Nagg who fingers it, sniffs it.

NAGG: (*plaintively*). What is it?

CLOV: Spratt's medium.

NAGG: (*as before*). It's hard! I can't!

HAMM: Bottle him!

Clov pushes Nagg back into the bin, closes the lid.

CLOV: (*returning to his place beside the chair*). If age but knew!

HAMM: Sit on him!

CLOV: I can't sit.

HAMM: True. And I can't stand.

CLOV: So it is.

HAMM: Every man his speciality. (*Pause.*) No phone calls? (*Pause.*) Don't we laugh?

CLOV: (*after reflection*). I don't feel like it.

HAMM: (*after reflection*). Nor I. (*Pause.*) Clov!

CLOV: Yes.

HAMM: Nature has forgotten us.

CLOV: There's no more nature.

HAMM: No more nature! You exaggerate.

CLOV: In the vicinity.

HAMM: But we breathe, we change! We lose our hair, our teeth! Our bloom! Our ideals!

CLOV: Then she hasn't forgotten us.

HAMM: But you say there is none.

CLOV: (*sadly*). No one that ever lived ever thought so crooked as we.

HAMM: We do what we can.

CLOV: We shouldn't.

Pause.

HAMM: You're a bit of all right, aren't you?

CLOV: A smithereen.

Pause.

HAMM: This is slow work. (*Pause.*) Is it not time for my pain-killer?