

I Am Godot: A No-Man Show

(This section is read aloud by the voice of the speaker.)

The lights come up on a figure,
standing, down-front, mid-stage.

This character, who calls himself Godot,
reveals himself as the "no one" who exists
to speak the lines of the character he represents.

He is defined by his presence and the lines he speaks.
As in any written play, he does not exist outside the play.

He is neither the actor who plays him,
nor is he the writer who created him.

He could be, in part, all three, as in a one-man show,
written and performed by one person.

He could also be the presence of the creator, the writer, the actor,
and the character, without being defined by any of them.

All of these take the form created, so that the form created
is all of these and none of these.

He is energy that has taken form, and he speaks
to make clear who he is and who he is not.

He is energy speaking, but even
that sort of speaking is misleading.

"I am Godot," is misleading, because whenever he says "I",
he begins to misrepresent himself, even to mislead himself.
Or herself.

As this energy takes form, it begins to identify itself
as the character on stage, as the actor playing that character,
as the creator of the character, as the writer of the character,
as the energy of all these, his true self.

He speaks to the audience to include them in this expression
and declaration of relative reality and of reality itself.

He has no past and no future outside the play.
He also has the backstory of all of the parts he is,
with which he can identify himself, as he chooses,
or so he believes.

He is torn by the recognition of these parts,
until he can accept who he is and who he is not.

This presents the opportunity for the audience
to do the same, as audience, as a person in the audience,
as mind, body, and soul, as personality, character and being,
as energy, separate from, and in union with, Godot,
who does not exist, and cannot not exist. I am Godot.

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Scene One:

I come to this place from another place.
In fact, it was nothing. It was nowhere.

I come from nowhere to somewhere,
to be here now, as you can see.

Anyone could be here in my place. It's as if someone
called me and I came to be here, saying these things.

"Godot, where are you? Godot, come here."
I didn't know how to answer. I had no voice.

I heard other voices. I was compelled to say something,
even when I had no voice to speak from. Or of. Or in.

There's nothing to say, really, but now that I'm here,
now that I'm speaking, I feel like saying more.

Speaking is that sort of thing.
Once it starts, it wants to go on.

Silence has a certain calling of its own.
There used to be nothing but silence.

Once there is speaking, silence becomes a thing
that occurs, in between moments of speaking.

Silence could be seen as merely and wholly
nothing, before, during, and after speaking.

Silence is good for the ears.
Then, we hear a voice speaking.

If we listen, we hear the silence
speaking, in its own quiet voice.

This silent voice is my voice,
as if it were my voice,

As if I had possession of it,
like a thing I owned.

As if this voice was the voice of the one
speaking, but it could be anyone's voice.

I say, this is anyone's place, where we're together
and a voice is speaking in this place.

This time and place wasn't,
and then it was.

Then it is, again, and here
we are, where we are.

A place out of the dark, in the light,
from nothing to something.

Something of nothing,
in this place of not being thought alone.

Thinking thinks of aloneness,
and then it thinks of not being alone.

I am Godot. I am alone.
We are not alone.

Scene Two:

I seem to be making this up as I go along,
the one you may imagine me to be.

It's a facade, but it goes deep,
all the way to its reality,

Made up of all its parts, made up of all
the degrees of everyone who's ever been.

Here I stand, at your service, in a way, at least.
I serve no master except myself and everyone.

I belong to this moment only, I belong to time
and timelessness. I belong to nothing and no one.

I'm in the service of serving
this moment of our existence.

Because we are here together,
we share it, we share this moment.

This moment is everything, and it's nothing.
It occupies the space of our lives.

It occupies who we are.
and we occupy it.

It has no beginning and no end,
and yet it is nothing, here and gone.

This moment is here always,
without starting or stopping.

I will stop. I start and stop,
I stop and start, or so it seems.

My words and my sentences
give this moment shape and form.

At least they give the illusion
of shape and form.

I speak, with breaks of silence.
I am silent, with interruptions of language.

The light stays on in the dark,
and when it's off, there is darkness.

Between the dark and the light,
there is the illusion of something occurring.

The light in the dark,
the dark in the light.

Something occurs
movement occurs.

Nothing occurs between
moments of something occurring.

Nothing occurs,
and "nothing" occurs.

There is something in the moment, and there
are moments in the movement of something.

I say, "the" moment. A foolish word, "the."
What power we assume, to say "the" moment.

I sound foolish.
I sound to make sound.

The silence resounds with the sound
of making sound of the silence.

I interrupt myself with sound,
I answer, where I'm called to speak.

No one was here for the starting point. No one
will be here for the ending. No one is here now.

I will seem to have been and gone. In the meantime,
I take up the time of our being together.

I am Godot. We breathe the same air,
you and I. I wish I could say I knew you.

But I do know you. We share time and space
and air and energy. We share the moment.

How foolish I am to say who I am, when
who I am is shared with who you are.

You are who I am.
I am Godot. Or so I say.

We wait for this moment to be here,
to come and go, to go and remain.

This moment of waiting for the light,
waiting for the dark, comes and goes.

The moments of the moment
live in the life of energy.

I circle myself in time,
for the sake of being here,

In this moment
in which I speak.

Someone thought this, that
I am saying, before I say it.

I say what was thought,
I say what's been said.

I am what has been,
in the moment just before now.

I am what is being, and in the moment
of what has been thought, I speak.

I am exhausted by time
in this inexhaustible moment.

The moment is smiling on us,
for what it's worth. Where is Godot?

I suspect Godot is living in your head,
As if I am somewhere outside myself.

He is living outside himself,
inside you, inside me, I am Godot.

I feel as if I'm making it all up. How
foolish I am to make up what already is.

Very slowly, I have invented these walls,
that I begin to wear like a suit of clothes.

I am the body within its clothing.
I am dressed in these walls.

In this time of being, I eat
the air, I wear the walls.

I sit in the world and speak
the universe. I am Godot.

There's nothing to say,
and, as always, there's something to say.

And really, there's also nothing
and something to do.

Not to mention, there's much to be
done, and there's nothing to be done.

And, as always, nothing has been done,
and it is done.

Scene Three:

Everyone dies on stage.
There's no shame in it.

No matter how one plays one's part,
no matter how well one's lines are said.

Everyone dies, at some point or other.
It happens to all of us, without fail.

We come to this spit of land,
this stage, this earth.

We die on its stage.
We die, on stage, or not.

We're actors in our drama, players in our
lives, players, alive in this dramatic life.

I am what I am. I am Godot.
I am the energy of my reality.

I am false. I am not real. I am Godot.
I throw myself into who I become.

I am not false. I am real.
I am Godot. Or so I say. As I say.

Scene Four:

Suspend your beliefs,
willingly and unwillingly.

Everything here is unbelievable,
and it is so often believed.

Be faithless in your faith. Leave it
alone. Don't have any use for it.

Let go of letting go.
There's nothing to see here.

Be as you are. I am Godot.
That is who I say I am.

I am not what I say.
I am what I am.

I am not waiting for anyone.
If no one comes, I'm satisfied.

I walk in circles, as the sunlight circles
the sun, as the sun circles in the light.

There is no compensation package
for this moment of exquisite reality.

I am not a poet in this poetic moment,
and whatever poetry comes, is on its own.

Everyone learns the names of the known,
and then everyone dies. I am Godot.

Scene Five:

Abandon all vows of certainty, look ahead
by looking behind, the past runs ahead of itself.

Language is the quicksilver of breath,
breath is the quicksilver of language.

Wordsworth wandered as a cloud,
until he saw a crowd of daffodils.

In private, his bank of jonquils
became narcissus to his solitude.

I am Godot. Whether or not you hear me,
I am listening. I listen to see who I am.

This bank of daffodils is a river
by the ocean beneath the Milky Way.

I turn to walk along the path,
and then I turn in another direction.

The journey changes its mind
in the middle of the road.

Scene Six:

I can change my mind, improvise, and
show you who I really am, but I can't.

You know who I am,
you are witness to who I am.

Who I am is always here,
always obvious to those who witness it.

I am the one who is no one,
I am no one.

I'm here, but nothing I can say,
nothing I can do, can show it.

Everything I am is in everything I say and do,
I am unmistakable in my invisibility.

It's hard for me to know myself in this way,
when I spend so much time moving and talking.

I'm the perfect example of what I'm not,
all the while being exactly what I am.

When I tell you that you're seeing and
hearing me, I betray my own reality.

I lead you astray about who I am,
as I reveal who I am.

I cheat you of the truth,
while I'm telling you the truth.

This is the dilemma of being alive in this form;
as soon as I take form, I obscure my reality.

When I act in this form,
I deceive my reality.

At the same time,
I bring my reality to the present.

Here I am, here I am not.
See me. See me not. I am Godot.

I am the illusion of the real,
and I am the voice of the real.

I'd like to jump out of my skin
and be beside myself in joy.

I'm an actor playing a role on stage,
who is trying to stop playing this role.

I am trying to speak as myself,
even though I am not any self.

Even if I say I'm not the one I play,
I'm here speaking these lines.

The best I can do is be silent long enough for you
to begin to see the truth of my impersonation.

Then you may become uncomfortable,
and walk out of the performance of who I am.

Or else, knowing the sham of what you witness,
you may remain transfixed by its revealed reality.

I invite you to drop your faith and see
the empty stage, even as I stand here.

I suggest you pay attention to the absence of illusion,
as you lose faith in what you think you're seeing.

You may turn your attention
to some other illusion,

Or you may turn your attention
to the absence of illusion.

I am Godot,
I am a presence in my place,

And I am these words
that speak of my presence.

These words seem to
come out of my mouth,

But these words could be
a dream of words in your head.

These words were unthought,
before they were unspoken.

I was absent, before I was
present, just like you.

We assume this presence of reality
was present before we were present.

We have no evidence of presence,
except the presence

Of ourselves and what
we think about it.

I turn my back,
and where is my presence?

I leave the stage,
and where is presence itself?

Your presence,
the presence of the empty stage,

These are still examples
of tangible presence.

But what is the presence
of no evidence,

The presence of no word, thought,
movement, of nothing and no one?

I am Godot, a streak of light, a passing
sense, a projection on an empty wall.

You think you see me,
you think you hear me,

You think you are present
in my presence and I in yours.

(There is a pause, in which the character
of Godot seems to shift in himself.)

I once wrote a book called, "101 Ways
to Avoid Reading Self-Help Books."

Someone asked me how long it took me to
write it, and I said, "Four hours... and a lifetime."

I said, "If the book is any good,
you should be able to read it,

Do nothing it recommends,
and it should still work."

Everything accumulates to nothing.
I am a man in passing.

Did you see how I went from
being Godot to being an author?

(Godot looks at the audience,
and another shift occurs.)

I'm an unknown author who
wrote a book about learning,

About doing, about not paying
attention, about becoming wise.

I could take off my shoes
and show you my feet.

I could tell you stories
of my many lives,

To which you may already
have begun to listen, or not.

The illusion is powerful
in our illusory minds,

Watch my hand passing through the space
in front of my body. See how it moves.

Do you see the hand, the object, the space,
the movement, the streaking light,

The space around the hand,
this body, this stage, this theatre?

Do you see yourself sitting
in this theatre, wearing the light,

Living in the world, occupying
the universe, thinking about sleep?

Scene Seven:

Children live in art and poetry, song
and dance, wonder and discovery.

We put away childish things,
but not art and poetry,

Neither song nor dance,
and not discovery.

The childish things we put away
are dependence and control.

We move into the workings
of wonder.

I am Godot, I have no control,
I seek no dependence.

I live in the workings of wonder,
there are no shoes on my feet.

I sing among the clouds,
I dance in the ocean,

I wade through the air,
I run in waves.

I can't become a poet,
there is no end to poetry.

I can't become a painter,
there is no end to beauty.

I can't become a singer,
there is no end to music.

I can't become a dancer,
there's no end to flight.

What is this am I think I am?
How can a timeless heart be broken?

How can a heart beyond time
not know a broken heart?

We cherish the brokenness
and forget the heart,

We cherish the noise
and forget the quiet.

I am Godot.
I am the broken noise.

I am Godot.
I am the quiet heart.

Scene Eight:

I am the one who is never here,
and here is one place I never leave.

If you can't see me, I'm out of sight,
sight isn't what's seen, it's what does the seeing.

You open your eyes and see me,
your sight may still not see who I am.

This is not a problem
of my being here.

"Here" is the least explored reality,
here is destination, here is proclamation.

I went there, and you were not there,
but here you are.

"Here" is presumed, here is assumed,
the greater share of there is here to be known.

Now that I've told you
who I am and how that

Undefines any description
of who I am, what's next?

What can I do to I show you any more about
the complex reality of being and non-being?

Perhaps I could demonstrate
the many ways I am capable

Of becoming, in the way
of this speaking.

Scene Nine:

A man shouts desire
from a car, *Ooh, Yeah!*

A blind cow walks into a tree,
the bird, on the cow's back, sings.

The azure blizzard of wanting to know
every goddam thing there is to know,

Drowns out the innocence,
but innocence returns,

Remembering nothing
of the storm.

What is real? What is not real?
Sometimes I know, sometimes I don't know.

This room could be anywhere, this room could be
a good place to play a musical instrument.

I'm astounded by the forces
at play in my life and imagination,

Murder and compassion,
all great loves, all wars,

An embrace that ends in strangulation,
that changes to tenderness,

Like a breath of air
on the fine hair of a leaf,

I'm not surprised that all this happens,
I know, by now, that all this happens,

What surprises me is an accident of joy,
What if it's more than me, which it is,

And like a great pouring
into a small vessel,

The vessel is broken into spirit
and made clear and not, like clay,

Into broken pieces
of earthenware.

We speak of the joy that's avoided by those
who accept imitations that keep them distracted

From the gist, the gut, the gullet,
the quick, the depth and the height.

On the verge of the thing we desire most,
we anticipate the leap into joy itself,

And we hesitate to make that leap a reality,
we hesitate to dirty our feet with freedom.

We look back at where we're from,
and we tie our wings to the trees.

Every story I tell is a song
to the end of stories.

A man I know by exchange of empathy,
a temptation to nothingness,

Stopped by to tell me he can no longer
imagine any desire for anything.

He disclaims suicide, even his
curiosity is shaken down,

When I came back
with the coffee, he was gone.

After years in occasions of conversation,
I don't know his name, Tom or John, I think,

He said he's too frightened to be a poet.
But I saw no fear in the man,

Only courage without eyelids,
only strength without dreams.

Nothing so surprises me,
after having gotten used to

The aloneness of the body,
as the aloneness of the soul.

The soul needs another
to protect it from aloneness.

Oneness is a truth,
even if it is a deception.

Oneness careens around
in the mind like good drugs,

As true as last night's
drunkenness.

Only sobriety destroys
the kindness of the illusion.

Sobriety is a toxin,
as sinful and adjudicated,

As the church runs the hiding
from being alone.

There is nothing more terrible
than being alone.

It is the truth,
how beautiful it is to be alone.

I'm attached to this world, such a poor one.
I swim through it, disconsolate.

Resigned to myself,
I touch the wet edges of everything.

Nighttime is a place for the eyes to hide.
Daytime is a floor of lights to walk on.

The afternoon is in-between-green. Night-time is fresh. Daytime makes brilliant sense.

Nothing brightens me like the nakedness of getting night and day together.

There is a tiny alcove of joy and madness in everything.

I awaken to this moment, where nothing occurs but the entirety of being,

Where even this awareness is caught in the vice of occurring twice.

Twice I breathe, in every breath, once for meaning, and once for life.

Are we intimates of the spirit or intimates of the flesh?

Why are we not intimates in all our the ways of our being?

We are together, not as one, or one of two, but something of a third.

We create from our history and the unknown of who we are,

There's no true poem but what comes unseen to life itself.

I might wish love weren't so equally indiscriminate as the elements,

But it comes up in me from somewhere I don't know,

It comes down on me from somewhere I don't know

It makes me part of everywhere it's ever been.

We love each other
in the glare of our astonishment,

With no relief from the brilliant
focus of how we are together.

There's respite
in who we might be,

If we allow ourselves to sit in
the brilliance of our fulfillment.

Instead, we use time apart to buffer
the blows of unrelenting wonder,

We're afraid love will be exhausted
by its constant presence.

We fear that too much beauty,
too much happiness, will ruin us.

I am Godot. I live as a physical man,
not as a thing be seen from the outside,

Living as spirit in a man's body,
as something occurring on the inside.

My heart's in league with the flesh,
and my heart is bound to the spirit.

There's no way out of this faith,
no way out of this loss of faith,

This illusion, this disillusion
we experience in so many ways.

I fall back in simple stillness,
where there is no commotion

Between tangible
and intangible love.

This is the challenge with life's miracles,
to drill to the core of a human being,

To live inside the brilliance
of a set of cells.

To witness intimacy is to speak from the center
one's civilized self circles at a distance.

There are no ruling classes,
no beliefs, no rituals, in the spirit,

In those who step over the bounds
of thought into the reaches of eternity.

What remains
has the nature of what's within,

What remains is closer to nature
than anything that might be named.

My unseen self has no physical being,
but this forensics of the unseen

May reveal what lies beneath description,
until it is lifted into recognition.

I look back and forth across the gap,
I look into the stillness between breaths,

Until I fall into the center
of my own unregulated being.

Nothing within what I am,
or think I am, is strange,

I make a home in my conflicted air
for everything I say I'm not.

It's a bracing wind
that blows in the brilliant sun,

That takes nothing away from
the mind or the body.

Nostrils flare in the vigorous air,
and the sky is taken anew,

For the home of beauty,
unclouded by its residue.

The joy of seeing and being seen,
begins in the terror of being seen,

No matter how
thin the veil.

Nothing occurs in love,
except there is something

Of nothing to call itself
by the name of love.

A poet is called to go
into the earth of life

And return with the beauty
and the truth of it,

Poetry is one way we dance
free of our demons,

The clutching of ideas,
and the nonsense of our ways.

Being born is the
sleight of hand of existence,

And an open heart is its
passionate player.

I tell myself to write this moment's
unwritable poem, backwards,

From the image to the source,
wrapped in the heat of life itself.

I wipe my eyes with words. I cannot
claim the moment by describing it.

It's good to forget everything but simple grace,
without a graceful thought to take its place.

Scene Ten

I am Godot. There is no Godot.
That's who I am, I am that.

My character is being created for this moment.
This moment is my true nature, inside this character.

This moment has no character.
I am the character of this moment.

Any human being can take
my place on this stage of life.

Even though we are the same,
we are different. I am Godot.

The End