En Attendant Godot- Samuel Beckett

This deliberately strange play is about the misfortunes of tramps. It is intended to be anti-glamour, anti-charisma, to be the opposite of what theatre usually is seen as.

Two vagabonds, Vladimir and Estragon, are waiting—waiting—for Godot. Godot seems to promise escape from the despair and poverty in which they find themselves. Godot represents the conventional Christian message of hope for those who have little, who are confused and helpless.

Who turns up? Not Godot, but the arrogant Pozzo, carrying a whip with which the slave, Lucky, can be beaten. While Vladimir and Estragon are hungry, Pozzo appears well-fed, with chicken and wine from a basket. Pozzo symbolises the corrupt reality of religion, the way it can turn from utopia to smug, vicious hierarchy. Pozzo looks down on Lucky, Vladimir and Estragon. Pozzo is the unhappy truth of human nature.

Pozzo in the second act arrives again— but now is blind. One is reminded of Saint Paul being struck sightless. This play is about disillusion, above all with the Christian faith. If one leitmotiv is the debate between Vladimir and Estragon over whether they should hang themselves.

Why is this play so bleak, so dark? Beckett, who belonged to the resistance, was in France during the war. He was with the Irish Red Cross in the wreckage of Normandy in 1955. The horrors of which he was a part helped form “Waiting for Godot”. By the early 1950s, a sad Beckett, a weary Beckett, had ceased to believe in God— or man.

By Ibrahimi Zekira (winner)