

SAMUEL BECKETT

FIZZLES (FOIRADES)

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Afar a bird

Ruinstrewn land, he has trodden it all night long, I gave up, hugging the hedges, between road and ditch, on the scant grass, little slow steps, no sound, stopping ever and again, every ten steps say, little wary steps, to catch his breath, then listen, ruinstrewn land, I gave up before birth, it is not possible otherwise, but birth there had to be, it was he, I was inside, now he stops again, for the hundredth time that night say, that gives the distance gone, it's the last, hunched over his stick, I'm inside, it was he who wailed, he who saw the light, I didn't wail, I didn't see the light, one on

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top of the other the hands weigh on the stick,
the head weighs on the hands, he has caught
his breath, he can listen now, the trunk
horizontal, the legs asprawl, sagging at the
knees, same old coat, the stiffened tails stick
up behind, day dawns, he has only to raise his
eyes, open his eyes, raise his eyes, he merges
in the hedge, afar a bird, a moment past he
grasps and is fled, it was he had a life, I didn't
have a life, a life not worth having, because of
me, it's impossible I should have a mind and I
have one, someone divines me, divines us,
that's what he's come to, come to in the end, I
see him in my mind, there divining us, hands
and head a little heap, the hours pass, he is
still, he seeks a voice for me, it's impossible I
should have a voice and I have none, he'll find
one for me, ill beseeming me, it will meet the
need, his need, but no more of him, that
image, the little heap of hands and head, the
trunk horizontal, the jutting elbows, the eyes
closed and the face rigid listening, the eyes
hidden and the whole face hidden, that image
and no more, never changing, ruinstrewn land,
night recedes, he is fled, I'm inside, he'll do
himself to death, because of me, I'll live it with
him, I'll live his death, the end of his life and
then his death, step by step, in the present,

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how he'll go about it, it's impossible I should
know, I'll know, step by step, it's he will die, I
won't die, there will be nothing of him left but
bones, I'll be inside, nothing but a little grit, I'll
be inside, it is not possible otherwise,
ruinstrewn land, he is fled through the hedge,
no more stopping now, he will never say I,
because of me, he won't speak to anyone, no
one will speak to him, he won't speak to
himself, there is nothing left in his head, I'll
feed it all it needs, all it needs to end, to say I
no more, to open its mouth no more, confu-
sion of memory and lament, of loved ones and
impossible youth, clutching the stick in the
middle he stumbles bowed over the fields, a
life of my own I tried, in vain, never any but
his, worth nothing, because of me, he said it
wasn't one, it was, still is, the same, I'm still
inside, the same, I'll put faces in his head,
names, places, churn them all up together, all
he needs to end, phantoms to flee, last phan-
toms to flee and to pursue, he'll confuse his
mother with whores, his father with a road-
man named Balfe, I'll feed him an old curdog,
a mangy old curdog, that he may love again,
lose again, ruinstrewn land, little panic steps

(Translated by the author.)

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I gave up before birth, it is not possible otherwise, but birth there had to be, it was he, I was inside, that's how I see it, it was he who wailed, he who saw the light, I didn't wail, I didn't see the light, it's impossible I should have a voice, impossible I should have thoughts, and I speak and think, I do the impossible, it is not possible otherwise, it was he who had a life, I didn't have a life, a life not worth having, because of me, he'll do himself to death, because of me, I'll tell the tale, the tale of his death, the end of his life and his death, his death alone would not be enough,

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not enough for me, if he rattles it's he who will rattle, I won't rattle, he who will die, perhaps they will bury him, if they find him, I'll be inside, he'll rot, I won't rot, there will be nothing of him left but bones, I'll be inside, nothing left but dust, I'll be inside, it is not possible otherwise, that's how I see it, the end of his life and his death, how he will go about it, go about coming to an end, it's impossible I should know, I'll know, step by step, impossible I should tell, I'll tell, in the present, there will be no more talk of me, only of him, of the end of his life and his death, of his burial if they find him, that will be the end, I won't go on about worms, about bones and dust, no one cares about them, unless I'm bored in his dust, that would surprise me, as stiff as I was in his flesh, here long silence, perhaps he'll drown, he always wanted to drown, he didn't want them to find him, he can't want now any more, but he used to want to drown, he usen't to want them to find him, deep water and a millstone, urge spent like all the others, but why one day to the left, to the left and not elsewhere, here long silence, there will be no more I, he'll never say I any more, he'll never say anything any more, he won't talk to

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anyone, no one will talk to him, he won't talk to himself, he won't think any more, he'll go on, I'll be inside, he'll come to a place and drop, why there and not elsewhere, drop and sleep, badly because of me, he'll get up and go on, badly because of me, he can't stay still any more, because of me, he can't go on any more, because of me, there's nothing left in his head, I'll feed it all it needs.

(Translated by the author.)

fizzle 5

Closed place. All needed to be known for say is known. There is nothing but what is said. Beyond what is said there is nothing. What goes on in the arena is not said. Did it need to be known it would be. No interest. Not for imagining. Place consisting of an arena and a ditch. Between the two skirting the latter a track. Closed place. Beyond the ditch there is nothing. This is known because it needs to be said. Arena black vast. Room for millions. Wandering and still. Never seeing never hearing one another. Never touching. No more is known. Depth of ditch. See from the edge all

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the bodies on its bed. The millions still there. They appear six times smaller than life. Bed divided into lots. Dark and bright. They take up all its width. The lots still bright are square. Appear square. Just room for the average sized body. Stretched out diagonally. Bigger it has to curl up. Thus the width of the ditch is known. It would have been in any case. Sum the bright lots. The dark. Outnumbered the former by far. The place is already old. The ditch is old. In the beginning it was all bright. All bright lots. Almost touching. Faintly edged with shadow. The ditch seems straight. Then reappears a body seen before. A closed curve therefore. Brilliance of the bright lots. It does not encroach on the dark. Adamantine blackness of these. As dense at the edge as at the centre. But vertically it diffuses unimpeded. High above the level of the arena. As high above as the ditch is deep. In the black air towers of pale light. So many bright lots so many towers. So many bodies visible on the bed. The track follows the ditch all the way along. All the way round. It is on a higher level than the arena. A step higher. It is made of dead leaves. A reminder of beldam nature.

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They are dry. The heat and the dry air. Dead but not rotting. Crumbling into dust rather. Just wide enough for one. On it no two ever meet.

(Translated by the author.)