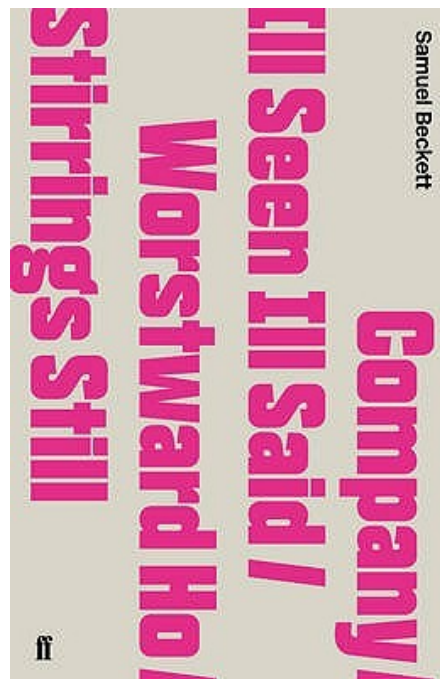




Company / Ill Seen Ill Said / Worstward Ho / Stirrings Still

Samuel Beckett

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Company / Ill Seen Ill Said / Worstward Ho / Stirrings Still Samuel Beckett

These four last prose fictions by Samuel Beckett were originally published individually, and their composition spanned the final decade of his life. In *Company* a solitary hearer lying in blackness calls up images from the far-off past. *Ill Seen Ill Said* meditates upon an old woman living out her last days alone in an isolated snow-bound cottage, watched over by twelve mysterious sentinels. In *Worstward Ho*, a breathless speaker unravels the sense of things, acting out the unending injunction to 'Try again. Fail again. Fail better.' And *Stirrings Still*, published in the *Guardian* a few months before Beckett's death in 1989, is the last prose work and testament of 'this great soothsayer of the age, and of the aged' (Christopher Ricks).

The present edition includes several short prose texts (*Heard in the Dark I & II*, *One Evening*, *The Way*, *Ceiling*) which represent work in progress or works ancillary to the composition of these late masterpieces.

Edited by Dirk Van Hulle.

Company / Ill Seen Ill Said / Worstward Ho / Stirrings Still Details

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Author : Samuel Beckett

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Oryx says

Company - 4.0
Ill Seen Ill Said - 3.80
Worstward Ho - 4.21
Stirrings Still - 4.81
One Evening - 3.70
The Way - 3.75
Ceiling - 3.70
What is the Word - 3.84
Heard in the Dark - 3.91

Peter Curran says

What a pile of self indulgent shite!

Gail says

'Where then but there see now another. Bit by bit an old man and child. In the dim void bit by bit an old man and child. Any other would do as ill.

Hand in hand with equal plod they go. In the free hands - no. Free empty hands. Backs turned both bowed with equal plod they go. The child hand raised to reach the holding hand. Hold the old holding hand. Hold and be held. Plod on and never recede. Slowly with never a pause plod on and never recede. Backs turned. Both bowed. Joined by held holding hands. Plod on as one. One shade. Another shade.'

(84)

Danny Daley says

Beckett is among the most inaccessible writers of the 20th century, and this, a collection of his last works written during the final decade of his life, are among the most inaccessible things he ever wrote. The collection is obsessed with the words, but not just the meanings of words; but rather the ability to even find words. Even the wrong words, any words, the words simply are not there. The final words of the book are the final words Beckett ever published; "What is the word." It seems this inability to find words made up a late obsession for Beckett, and it finds profound expression in these writings.

The stories are also heavy on solipsism - the idea that a person cannot know anything other than that they exist. "Company" features more than 40 pages of a voice speaking to a man lying on his back in a dark space. "Ill Seen Ill Said" features a woman in a cabin thinking randomly to herself as she nears death.

"Worstword Ho" is the ramblings of a man nearing a "dim void," where things can only get worse. "Stirring Still" features a man, alone, searching for a word, but he cannot hear it because it is too faint. "One Evening" features a man, lying still on the ground, unable to move, before he is stumbled upon by an old woman looking for flowers for her husbands grave.

You get the idea. These people are immobile, aware of themselves and little else, reaching towards the dark. John Banville wrote that these stories express the world's anguish, and if people are willing to do the hard work to read these stories well, I think that's what they'll see, but these stories are not easy to read. The payoff is incredible.

Pumpkin Spice Latte says

4.5

Maurizio Manco says

"Tentare di nuovo. Fallire di nuovo. Fallire meglio." (Peggio tutta, p. 66)

"Desiderando che tutto vada. [...] Il desiderare vada. Vada il vano desiderare che il vano desiderare vada." (ivi, p. 81)

James says

of all the authors i have read, i find Beckett to be the most challenging by far... in much the same way as reading textbooks and scholarly works (meaning books meant to teach first and foremost and not to entertain or take one's mind off the day or transport you to another world/time/perspective), reading Beckett forces you to pay full attention to every single word... you can't skim Beckett, or if you do, then you are not reading Beckett at all, for by skipping or eliding or jumping ahead you miss the point... the words, the cadences, the repetitions, the minimalism, the circularity, the now-ness... Beckett demands your attention and immersion, or maybe he just expects it... why else read? why words? why? i won't get into reviewing each specific text in any Beckett book as i find that defeatist, or maybe beyond my ken... often its merely words on the page given meaning by how the reader interprets/intuits/internalizes them... i say Beckett is unequaled, unmatched, unsurpassed, but that is but one opinion... still, i say read him, often, and again...

Carlo Bugni says

Con Beckett non regge (e non voglio avere) alcuna obiettività.
