

How do samuel  
beckett (“waiting for  
godot”) and gabriel  
garcia marquez  
 (“chronicl...

[Literature](#), [Novel](#)



In "Waiting for Godot" by Samuel Beckett and "Chronicles of a Death Foretold" by Gabriel Garcia Marquez, the reader is presented with an unorthodox beginning of story in both novels. While Beckett's play starts with the antithesis of a usual opening line "Nothing to be done", Marquez's novel does the same "On the day they were going to kill him, Santiago Nasar" thus condemning the novel to a foretold destiny. These approaches withdraw any initial suspense that the novel or play could offer; this then poses a question: what is the reader's interest in the remainder of the story? How does the author manage to maintain a grip on the reader throughout the rest of the story, with the end already foretold? There are not many similarities in between the two authors and therefore the methods used by the authors might be different in how they are used to achieve the goal, but in terms of the objective they are quite similar. Once read, both stories seem to have a circular pattern to them. "Waiting for Godot" ends up where it began, while "Chronicles of a Death Foretold" ends with the already expected death. So, how do Samuel Beckett and Gabriel Garcia Marquez change their story, with an apparently circular theme? In "Chronicles of a Death Foretold", such unorthodox starts shatter any illusion that the reader might have of a police thriller is blown away by the opening sentence of the novel "On the day they were going to kill him, Santiago Nasar got up at five-thirty in the morning to wait for the boat the bishop was coming on.". Instead, as the title suggests, the novel is a re-telling of a death which was already announced. The narrative that the story uses, a first person re-telling with occasional first hand witnesses, withdraws any cliché build up to any event. Instead, the

reader is being told what has happened bluntly, with no hesitant fear and paying no great deal of attention to the death itself. The death then becomes a setting to the story instead of the main focus. The reader therefore focuses on why and how the death occurred. The actual death is paid little importance by the author, with more detailed descriptions being given to the events leading up to the event. The constant interruptions by the witnesses of the people present, interrupts any fluent story line that the story might have and turns it into an analytical piece of writing, There is no waste of words to lead up to a shocking ending which leaves the reader superficially happy. There is, instead, a great amount of detail to describe the human nature through Gabriel Garcia Marquez's thorough knowledge of these particular cultures. However, not only are we kept waiting by Marquez's enthralling narrative, the characters within the story are kept waiting as well. The reader may tend to alienate him or herself from the characters, seeing as they were all condemned to participating in the crime by the novel; but in fact, the characters are very similar to us. Just like the reader, all of the secondary characters are waiting for a reason why the murder is going to happen. Just like the reader, the characters know the murder is going to happen, but they seem to be looking for a justification for the murder. What seemed like alienation now can be looked at as an incorporation of the reader into the story. The reader is again brought into the process of waiting in "Waiting for Godot". "Waiting for Godot" is an absurdist play with the odd theme of waiting. Vladimir and Estragon are two wandering characters who are stuck in the middle of nowhere waiting for someone who might not even

exist. The reader is not expecting anything for the author has not provided any features which might allow the story to move forward and to obtain any interesting plot. The story basically begins and ends in the same way " Estragon: [Giving up again] Nothing to be done" (pg. 11)" " Estragon: Yes, let's go. [They do not move]" (pg. 88) in the way that they both express a sense of stillness and hopefulness, thus leaving the story at a standstill. However, Samuel Beckett shatters this standstill through the use of language that not only entertains the audience, but it seems to also be the only source of entertainment for the two characters. Indeed, the story alters its focus from the wait that these characters are subjected to, to the way in which these characters survive the wait. Through the use of language, Samuel Beckett manages to give the play a deeper meaning which is not obtained in normal plays. Through this un-orthodox method of playwright, Beckett manages to focus the audiences attention on the situation the characters find themselves in, instead of preparing the audience for the end with the usual techniques of suspense which make the audience forget about the actual meaning of the story and care more for the outcome. Therefore, and once again, the reader is brought into the process of waiting and the play places the reader into the character's shoes. While reading the beginning of the story, the reader may also share the belief with Vladimir and Estragon that Godot will in fact arrive. However, as the story moves on, the reader gets weary and comes to grips with the fact that Godot will, in fact, never arrive. While the reader can afford to relieve him or herself from this burden, both characters in the play are condemned to wait for an eternity for they

have no choice but to wait for someone who might not even exist. Such is the experiment that Samuel Beckett is exposing to the reader; an experiment which contemplates human nature. "Chronicles of a Death Foretold" is not a story being told, but instead a reflection of Marquez's thoughts and beliefs. Due to Marquez's undeniable writing talent, he manages to grip his reader and leaving the reader with an understanding of the situation he is discussing; which in my opinion is an example of human nature. As for "Waiting for Godot" Beckett manages to use his knowledge of language to turn an apparently dull and endless story, into an sublime example of human relationship that uses the absurdist idea of having two people stuck in the middle of nowhere, to attract and generate a feeling of curiosity in the reader to then make the reader obtain a level of understanding through the effect of language.