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Booklover--Beckett

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I was married in March. Every year around our anniversary, my husband and I take a trip. It is a relaxing trip of hiking, fishing, reading, writing, food, wine and possibly some sightseeing. This year was no different. I chose a few books to carry with me. One book comprised the three novels by Samuel Beckett: “Molloy,” “Malone Dies” and “The Unnamable.” It has been in my Nobel Literature collection for a while. I discovered it during one of my random visits to a used bookstore. This is one of my favorite things to do. I chose this book after hearing a story from a musician friend of mine that he had met a woman at a local music venue who was staying in Charleston while editing the Beckett letters. Seems she likes jazz and visits the venue on occasion. Locals believe that Charleston is just as much the birthplace of jazz as New Orleans. I will leave that debate to the locals. I enjoy listening no matter where it was born.

Samuel Beckett was awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature in 1969 for “for his writing, which — in new forms for the novel and drama — in the destitution of modern man acquires its elevation.” He is regarded as one of the most influential 20th-century authors. One description of his work details “a bleak, tragicomic outlook on human culture, often coupled with black comedy and gallows humour.” I had made quite a choice for light vacation reading.

Beckett was born in Ireland in April of 1906, but a falling out with his mother resulted in a permanent residency in Paris at the outbreak of World War II in 1939. He preferred “France at war to Ireland at peace,” a quote from a musician friend of mine that he had met from a hypotetical imperatives. But if I had never succeeded in liquidating this matter of my mother, the fault must not be imputed solely to that voice which deserted me, prematurely.”

Moran: “It is midnight. The rain is beating on the windows. I am calm. All is sleeping. Nevertheless I get up and go to my desk. I can’t sleep. My lamp sheds soft and steady light. I have trimmed it. It will last till morning. I hear the eagle-owl. What a terrible battle cry! Once I listened to it unmoved. My son is sleeping. Let him sleep. The night will come when he too, unable to sleep, will get up and go to his desk. I shall be forgotten. My report will be long. Perhaps I shall not finish it. My name is Moran, Jacques.”