

**GO**

**21st Century  
Existentialism  
in an  
Absurdist Theme**

**Doug Bentley**

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# Cast Of Characters

*In order of appearance.*

GOGO, a tramp  
BLIND, a tramp  
AZOO, a warrior  
AEON, a starman  
LUMEN, a wizard  
WILL, a clown  
CHILD, Go

Voices

MOON, AZOO's  
SUN, WILL's  
SPIDER, CHILD's

[**NOTE**: 5 Performers are required: 3 Adult Male, 1 Adult Female, 1 Youth either gender]

## **\*\* ACT 1 \*\***

*"We're waiting for Godot."*

*Waiting for Godot*  
Samuel Beckett

[SCENE: 3 wooden crates, arranged in a row. 2 tramps, GOGO & BLIND, on top.]

BLIND is stretched out, asleep, covered with newspapers. GOGO sits, staring at the audience.

Beside a crate is a lamp on a long pole, shade missing. It is the sole source of illumination. An aluminium moon is suspended in the background.]

[From the left AZOO enters. Barefoot, she wears only a bathrobe and a towel over her hair. She drops a large, green garbage bag next to the lamp, then exits.]

GOGO stares at the bag for a moment, then slides off his crate and walks to it. After examining it he pulls out a long, fluffy toy 'snake'.

GOGO plays with it, then wraps it around the lamp pole. He pulls a newspaper out of the bag. Crawling back onto his crate, he starts reading the newspaper.

After a moment, he jumps off his crate and, holding a page up to the light, reads it through the light. He

turns the page upside down and examines it several times.

Becoming more and more agitated, GOGO rushes to BLIND.]

GOGO [tapping a finger in BLIND's ear]  
Wake up! Wake up! Wake up! You sleep.

BLIND [Opens his eyes. He stares at the audience.]  
I rest in peace.

GOGO [tapping his finger, again]  
Wake up! Go's come! Go's come!

[BLIND brushes away GOGO's finger.]

In... through the exit. Everybody was watching the entrance. Go's come in the exit.

BLIND  
Don't trust long beards. You can't see the ends of their smile.

GOGO  
Go made a circuit. We're no further forward than fifty thousand years back.

BLIND  
Little toe tells me there's more to know.

GOGO  
A century ago the west went back to the life of the mind. Now we're wound round the back of the brain.

BLIND [wrapping newspapers around himself]  
Tight cocoon.

GOGO [tapping his finger, as before]  
Wake up!

[BLIND, irritated, brushes GOGO's finger away again.]

We bartered away everything.

BLIND

The very nerve of Being to abandon you. You, once its prized son.

[laughing]

Ha! I can count the ribs on your bare-boned chest. You've no muscles for philosophy.

[GOGO kicks the garbage bag. A flat beach ball 'globe' falls out.]

Kicking vainly at your predicament again?

[GOGO starts inflating the 'globe'.]

Blowing up planet?

GOGO

Ego's depressed. Needs inflating.

BLIND

Detonating.

GOGO

I'm an economist with ego.

BLIND

Are you a communist with that globe?

GOGO

Haves have to have have nots. There's nothing so threatening to ego as the notion of equality.

[When the globe is fully inflated, BLIND sits up on his crate, and holds up his hands.]

BLIND

If you've got such a firm grip on human rights, prove it.

[GOGO reluctantly tosses the globe to BLIND.]

GOGO

Behold, our world.

[In the following exchange, BLIND and GOGO toss the globe back and forth, after each statement.]

BLIND

Coated many colors.

GOGO

Each at war with the others.

BLIND

North south, east west.

GOGO

Sticky web spider's spun.

BLIND

A cobweb of compound dilemmas.

[Pause.]

GOGO

Cancer in global family reaches radiation levels.

BLIND

It's the rage of the information age.

GOGO

The world's overdosed on anxiety.

BLIND

Breaking down in a climax frenzy.

[Pause.]

GOGO

Reality's a classified secret.

BLIND

Every government's in agreement with that.

GOGO

History ends in a concentration camp.

BLIND [He holds the globe.]

The future has a military face. I can feel its grin.

GOGO

Do we wait, or search for Go?

BLIND [He walks to the garbage bag and pulls out a toy 'crown'. He tosses both it and the globe to GOGO.]

Your crown.

GOGO [He holds the crown and the globe in his arms.]

You're a civilized man.

BLIND

For a civil king, armed with the globe.

GOGO [places the crown on his head]

Were I king I'd be a civilized monarchy. Put military arm under order of a civil tongue. Establish a regent chain of command. Make this jewelled crown the peak of that civilized tower.

BOUND [laughing]

If civilization is a crown jewel, the royal rock now rings the brain of a fool.

GOGO

Keep civil before a civilized king.

War begins within one brain. But that tiny storm turns to anxiety in the communal body when the psychodrama's a king's.

BLIND

If you're a true king then put that diamond to the test. Drop it.

GOGO

Don't tempt me. When a king smudges insight, all outlook is blurred. Then shadows cast on the public stage soon make pawns of you all. So kow-tow, now!

BLIND

How Man clings to his vain notions, his precious civilization, for dear life. Unloosen your sweaty grip, king. Let that diamond drop.

[GOGO removes the 'diamond' from the crown, then drops it and the globe on the floor. The globe bounces. The diamond shatters.]

Behold your dazzling diamond. It's common silicon, not refined carbon at all.

Your precious civilization is but a mandala of shifting sand. It shatters as soon as a whisp of wind wipes it clean. Hypnotic grip broken, it's better to let it shatter than to cling clenched-fisted to it.

Focus your eyes on that glass, king. You'll see why I'm a pacifist in the war to defend your civilization. What do you see?

GOGO [peers into the pile of glass shards]  
I see the face of humanity.



BLIND

Humanity. Unblock your perceptions. Wipe your eyes.

GOGO [wipes his eyes]

I see fragments of glass.

BLIND

Every particle is splintered, split by fear. Isolated. Each one to its own solitary confinement condemned. Crown jewel? Your civilization is a glass prison.

I'd rather be a dreamer, renounce all allegiance to that social lie, waste lifetimes idly, than lift one little finger to feed the oppression you call civilization.

GOGO

People who glass in lived houses shouldn't throw stones.

BLIND [enquiringly]

So, do we wait or search for Go?

GOGO

We search for Go.

BLIND

Where?

GOGO

Else.

BLIND

Elsewhere?

GOGO

Go came in the exit. Our search starts there.

BLIND

That space has been deserted for centuries. It was abandoned. How do we get there from here?

GOGO

To get Elsewhere we just start somewhere.

BLIND

There are ghosts beyond gray matter. Don't we need a guide?

GOGO

Guides don't lighten gray matter.

BLIND

We have no map. Won't we need a map?

GOGO

We're map makers, not readers. Fly blind. Navigate by echoes.

BLIND

We're not bats. How do we approach the dimension scientifically?

GOGO

I'm philosophically moded. I prefer principle to theoretical.

BLIND

Then you're just an isolated figure, standing in abstract space.

GOGO

That's Plato.

BLIND

You'd dig up Plato? Examine his entrails. You'll find Darwin's dagger stuck in them. We've evolved-

GOGO

Back to the beginning. We're going nowhere.

BLIND

Isn't nowhere nearer Elsewhere than somewhere?  
We can begin anywhere now, can't we?

GOGO

The universe of western science is only a special case. Local. We're beyond its borders.

[He begins a slow, rhythmic movement.]

I float!

BLIND

In what? Numb nirvana? Sensationless samsara?  
Projected paradise?

GOGO

In space itself. Step into it.

BLIND [Rummaging in the garbage bag, he pulls out a surgeon's lens and switches it on. He tosses it to GOGO.]

Here. Buckle on this photon belt. We've to cast a clear light on these dark matters.

GOGO [fastening on the lens]

You're a magician!

BLIND

With a bag of tricks.

[BLIND switches off the bulb on the pole. GOGO's lens pans the stage and audience. Both stumble about. Finally, BLIND sits on a crate and stares at the audience. GOGO's lens illuminates his face.]

Where are we?

GOGO  
Nowhere.

BLIND  
How do we get to Elsewhere?

GOGO  
Intuition.

BLIND  
Space perception? My intellect balks.

GOGO  
Intellect is just a cultured contraction. It's claustrophobic. God knows, it's no heaven.

BLIND  
Instinct gasps.

GOGO  
Instinct is a wind driven storm. It soon clouds over intuition's clear sky. Instinct is an airless womb which crushes. Distance yourself from its demons.

BLIND [holding up his hand, against the lens]  
I'm blinded by your intuition. It's irrational.

GOGO  
Pre-literate post-literate. Focus on the sky. The sky's never eclipsed. Nor does its cool blue ever blind the eye pupil black. Seek only to sink into the empty infinity of clear space.

BLIND [He removes his hand.]  
I see the trinity clearly now.

GOGO  
We were waiting for a supernova to burst. Mourning comes Go, black hole in the dead of night, to dismember all our theories.

Go strips the flesh off physics. Pulls the sinews right out of chemistry. Drains the blood out of biology. Go surgically slices off all psychology's organs. Plucks out sociology's eyes and ears. Go vaporizes the very brain of the arts.

BLIND

Cut to quick, can the skeleton rise?

GOGO

You speak from inside science's coffin. Put spinal column in your thought. Pop open the lid. Go takes a hammer to our box. Pulls out all the nails. All six sides are falling away. Let's go!

BLIND

How?

GOGO

However.

BLIND

However?

GOGO

However your boffin eye lands.

[A bell sound from the moon. A yellow light blinks on and off, illuminating the stage. BLIND and GOGO turn and stare at the moon. The yellow light stays on. AEON, wearing a silvery spacesuit, enters. Bell sound.]

BLIND is apprehensive: GOGO amused.]

AEON

You rang?

BLIND

Who are you?

AEON

Why a Centaur, of course. Why did you dial my number?

BLIND

What number?

AEON

B-a-f, f-i-n-i-s, l-a-n-d-s.

BLIND

Baf, finis, lands?

AEON

More resonance!

[Pause.]

GOGO

Baffin Islands?

AEON

Bingo!

GOGO

I said boffin eye lands, not Baffin Islands.

AEON

Ohmy! My meridians must have gotten crossed.  
What are you two doing here?

GOGO

We're searching for Go. Have you seen him?

AEON

Your little island of knowledge is being compassed  
with an ocean of mysteries, heading tsunamis your  
way.

BLIND

What are you babbling about?

AEON

It's classified. A joke. Just a touch of levity. But our pact with you expired a generation ago. Why are you searching here for Go?

[Moon bell sound. BLIND and GOGO turn, and stare at the moon.

NOTE: Each time that the bell sounds, BLIND and GOGO turn and stare at the moon.]

BLIND

What pact?

AEON

The pact that put civilian physics on the slow side of light and military fast tracking, of course. You haven't heard? You are dense, aren't you?

BLIND

That has nothing to do with us. We're searching for Go. This is nonsense. You're just wasting our time.

AEON

You're in a time out of time. And the root of your matter is light.

BLIND

No. We're out of time. We've got to go. Goodbye.

AEON

Time's just an invention to safeguard social order. You can stop it any time.

GOGO

How?

AEON

Simply stare into the sky.

BLIND

You play Pegasus with us, Centaur, but pipe Pan. Are you here to gather intelligence or to scatter secrets?

GOGO

You seem to have a scientist's charity. Rich with knowledge, you still seek to steal from we lay beggars.

AEON

You're beggars? Noble calling! Many of your finest souls have practised that profession.

BLIND

We beggar no calling nor profess any practice. Now explain yourself.

[Bell sound. Pause.]

AEON

Do you see my trident?

BLIND and GOGO

No.

AEON

A trident can turn toxic in the hands of a fool.

[Bell sound. Pause.]

Its ancient flame can flare up madness. Even a saint practises prudence. It takes a sage to wield it wisely. Now, judge me.

[Pause.]

BLIND

We'll suspend our judgment 'til we've got more knowledge.



AEON

Then I'll guide you toward Go.

BLIND

Keep your distance, Centaur, so I can observe you.

AEON

You must participate in this, with passion. You can not only observe my action. Infinity is not empty. The void is no vacuum. I've come to clean up that perception.

GOGO

Are you a vacuum cleaner?

AEON

It's technical, but, yes. To revive unicorns.

BLIND [scoffing]

You're a technology? An appliance?

AEON

Sweeping the globe. Sucking up dust.

GOGO

Let lamas guard sheep! Leave goats to rome! We've roped a Centaur who'll give us a lift home!

AEON

You are Buddhists.

BLIND

And you are mad.

AEON

Just a subtle diversion. But, go on- chew your lotus leaves. Ruminant over your scriptures. Dream of greener pastures than your ancestors dreamed. You'll find my trail of petals is borne by birds who still nest in the banyan.

I scatter seeds on the ground to attract them back.

GOGO

*"What worlds mysterious roll within the vast,  
The all-encircling ocean of the Mind!"* <sup>1</sup>

AEON

Kings who quote poetry are as locusts who gorge on corn.

[GOGO stops smiling.]

GOGO

Bull penned with ram, let lion loose on goat.

AEON

And what, at best, is your Christianity? Tonglen action from dzogchen position? Crudely taught by cut-off bodhisattva.

GOGO [angrily]

Iconoclast.

AEON

I've been around eons.

BLIND

Stop burning around the bush, Centaur. Why are you here?

AEON

I'm disarming the space between Venus and Mars for you. Your heart and belly are at war. There's much friction at the diaphragm.

GOGO

Are you of subtle water, fire or air borne?

AEON

A or B or A and B. My martian mind prefers icy

climes. Venusian heart, tropic part. But the intelligence orb shines everywhere.

GOGO

Then you face being flung into the lion's jaw. Once opened, a lion's jaw bone will bash you to bits, Centaur. One toss of his mane will spin you off forever. One whisp of that vortex will waft you off the edge of space in no time. His downdraft will spiral you to subterranean deeps.

He's proud of his power. Enter his space at your peril, Centaur.

[Bell sound.]

AEON [picks up the globe]

What more evidence do you need before your knocking knees are joint-hammered home?

BLIND

If our knees knock, it's our anger, not fear, that unhinges them. You're an insurrection. Loosed from heaven, you defy Jupiter's order.

AEON [peering at the globe]

In epochs past, when this clouded planet was still cloaked in crystal firmament. Every star orders of magnitude brighter. Night lighter. Day dazzling. The climate more temperate. Saturn reigned. His halo regal, celestial, from the royal ring, fifth from the sun, shone brighter by far than now. The diadem of your solar system.

Brute Jupiter, from reaches further flung than Pluto now plies, was tossed by the dark star out. Even now, retracing its shadowy path, returning. Then

there was war, for, Jupiter loosed, set a course to conquer your planets' pride, Saturn.

Neptune and Uranus, titans, first wall of defence, threw up their shields. Their moons. Hurling them in a massed charge against the invading intruder.

Then Pluto was torn from Neptune's arm, stripped free to wander. Neptune was flipped over on his back. Uranus put up a stoic fight but, battle momentum to mighty Jupiter, even he bowed before that conquering invader. Now sweeping forth, unobstructed, to claim your solar system's crown.

Saturn, sensing the end of his reign, to avert the ruin of weaker children, abdicated. Fled to a further orbit. The spectacle lit up all the firmament. A dragon devoured the sky. Mars, panicked, froze. Earth reeled. Your moon spun in its socket. Every planet was pierced.

Then, jealous Jupiter, settling on the throne, lit up the asteroid belt like the fourth of July. Now, in spite of the comet shield. And a string of moons strung like chain of bells one tap can set all tolling, uneasy sits Jupiter's crown. A watcher, he waits for the return of his father. Your conquering king is just an old Oedipus.

So don't invoke his order, nor any planet's grace. By brute force the throne was taken. And that might is no power with me. Nor can any planet claim my allegiance. The gift of grace comes from a higher order.

[AEON tosses the globe to GOGO.]

GOGO

Very well, you're a Centaur.

BLIND

We've got to go.

AEON

May I tag along with you two?

BLIND

Suit yourself.

[END OF ACT 1}

## References

1.] R. A. Nicholson, *Rūmī, Poet and Mystic* [London: Allen and Unwin, 1950]

## Contact Me



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