

Jean Anouilh
**Le voyageur sans
bagage**
avec Le bal des véloïtes



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Devenu amnésique au cours d'une guerre, Gaston vit depuis 15 ans dans un hôpital psychiatrique. Sans identité, il n'a pas pu toucher sa pension de mutilé qui le met à la tête d'une véritable petite fortune. L'appât du gain va pousser plusieurs familles à prétendre qu'il s'agit d'un des leurs, disparu au combat... Peut-on choisir sa famille ? Son passé ? Est-ce que l'on peut faire table rase des événements gênants de sa vie antérieure et repartir sur de nouvelles bases si, à la suite de on ne sait trop quoi, sa personnalité a changé ? C'est en quelque sorte une nouvelle version de 'Docteur Jekyll et Mister Hyde', sauf que là, c'est le côté satanique d'un individu que l'on veut supprimer. Gaston veut s'offrir une nouvelle jeunesse. Parmi les six familles possibles, il choisira la liberté en devenant le neveu d'un petit garçon anglais dont tous les proches ont disparu lors d'un naufrage...

Le voyageur sans bagage Details

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Ahmed El Wakeel says

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[illegible][illegible]

<http://archive.org/details/P2-Dra-Tra...>

Sophie says

*The translation I read was from this edition: Jean Anouilh: Seven Plays

AlphaJuliett says

Livre préféré pendant un long moment...

Whitaker says

Scene: Man wakes up in a hospital bed. His head is swathed in bandages. He's fairly old. The nurse sitting in the corner looks up.

Nurse: Oh, you're finally awake. How are you feeling?

Man: Like I was hit by Airbus. Where the hell am I?

He pauses.

Man: Actually, **who** the hell am I?

Nurse: Well, sir, you received quite a knock on the head. It's quite natural that you'll be feeling some pain. We can put a drip on you or give you pain killers, which ever you prefer. As for who you are, we'd like to know as well.

Man: Oh man. This is sooooo weird. What do you know about me? How did I get here?

Nurse: Well, you were found in a marsh. You had been hit on the head by a duck. That was what caused your concussion, and I guess your amnesia.

Man: Gee, do you know why I was hit by duck? I love little animals. They're so cute. Maybe I was trying to save it from some evil hunters. Maybe I'm an environmental activist.

Nurse: We're not so sure about that, sir. You had a gun next to you.

Man: *(Shudders)* Ugh, surely that can't be right. I hate guns. Awful things. They should ban them or something. I'm sure it can't have been my gun. Did it have any marks on it or something? Can I have a look at it? Maybe it might trigger a memory.

Nurse: *(Goes to cupboard and pulls out a Kalashnikov)* Here you are, sir.

Man: Good heavens. I'm sure no one goes hunting with one of these things.

He stares at it with evident distaste. Then he gingerly reaches out to touch it. He shudders again.

Man: Horrible. I can't for the life of me imagine what it was doing next to me. I must have been fighting to take it away from someone. Was there anything else?

Nurse: Well, all we had was a badge with an animal on it. An elephant.

Man: I knew it! I must some kind of animal activist. I'm probably with PETA or WWF or something. Why don't you call them and see.

Nurse: Let me check with the doctor on that.

Man: Could you turn on the radio while you go? I'd like to listen to something while I wait.

Nurse: Sure thing.

She turns on the radio. Rush Limbaugh comes on. He's railing against homosexuals and Mexicans.

Man: Owwww! That's just making my headache worse. Can't you find something nicer? Like NPR maybe. You know they really should get that organisation more funding.

The nurse turns the radio knob. As she turns the knob, we hear briefly the news from the radio.

Radio: In other news, Vice President Dick Cheney has been missing for two days now. Search teams are out sweeping the area where he was last seen....

Man: Oh that sounds interesting. Do you know more?

Nurse: I'm afraid not sir. We don't get much news out here. Our TV broke down years ago, and we don't get newspapers. That radio is all we get. We're funded by the government and we're not very well funded.

Man: That's a real pity. It's something that shouldn't be the case. Poor people need proper medical care too. Someone should look into it.

Nurse: Well, sometimes my cousin gets out to the city and when he comes back he'll get some news for us. When I see him tonight, maybe I'll ask him if he had anything.

Scene II: The next morning. The man is asleep in his bed. The nurse comes running in.

Nurse: OMG! OMG! It's you! It's you!

She is waving a newspaper.

Man: (half asleep) What do you mean by making all that noise? I was dreaming a right wonderful dream where I was puffing some excellent weed.

Nurse: It's you!

She waves the paper at him.

Nurse: You're Dick Cheney! Here! Look! You look exactly like his picture.

Man: NOOOOOOOOOOOOOO!

How do you think this should end?

(1) The man decides that it can't be him, falls in love with the nurse, and ends his days helping out as a volunteer in the hospital.

(2) The man is appalled at his past. He never recovers his memory, but decides to resume his role and try to work to change the things he did.

(3) The man never recovers his memory, but once back with his family and friends, he can't help but resume his former role even though he now despises everything about it.

Oh, the other play? It's a piece of fluff really, romantic comedy of mistaken identity. Pleasant and amusing enough but not terribly interesting.

Manny says

I love books in which the basic theme is that the hero discovers who he is, and that he's not, in fact, a very

nice person. It's surprising how many different ways there are to present the idea. In *A Wizard of Earthsea*, Ged discovers that the deadly Shadow is himself. In *Lolita*, Humbert finds, despite all his attempts to tell the story differently, that he's a rapist and a child-molester. And in *L'Âge de Raison*, Mathieu, who'd prefer to think of himself as a nice guy who just wants to keep his freedom, learns that he's actually the kind of person who'll steal money from a friend in order to pay for his mistress's abortion. Writing this down, I do wonder for a moment if it's possible that I'm not as good a person as I imagine? No, no, none of this has anything to do with me. I don't know where that thought came from. Let's continue.

In *Le Voyageur sans Bagage*, we see yet another presentation of the theme. The action is set in the early 20s. The hero is a French guy, who's fought in World War I, been wounded, and lost his memory. (I don't know why this happened so often in WW I. For example, look at the father in *A Little Princess*. Do gas attacks cause amnesia or something?) The kind people who look after him have made valiant attempts to locate his real family. Now they finally think they have a good lead. He turns up to meet the new candidates. Everyone's feeling very optimistic.

He has all these fantasies about what a happy life he's had, and he's so sure they'll help him remember it. He must have had some great friend, who's been missing him all these years? A loving mother and father? A brother who'll welcome him back with a firm, manly handshake? Unfortunately, as he talks to the people who are, perhaps, his family, he finds out that it's not quite the way he'd pictured it. This person, if indeed it was him, was a complete bastard. He and his friend had both been carrying on with the same servant girl, and got into a fight which ended with him pushing the friend down the stairs, crippling him for life. He's had appalling quarrels with his parents over money. And, while his brother was serving in the trenches, he was screwing his wife.

Needless to say, he discovers that he really is this monster. But... there's a twist. Against all expectation, the play turns out to be a comedy, and there's an upbeat ending. Read it and find out how that's possible!

Suzanna Gibbs says

I read this for my introduction to French literature class when I was a junior in college. Wasn't my favorite....maybe because I had to look up so many words lol

Hend says

Traveller Without Luggage, a play about a French World War I soldier who suffered amnesia after war, many families claim him as being their son. He escapes his previous identity as a cruel and dishonest man, who tortured animals, injured his best friend in a fight causing him a physical disability, and making a relation with his brother's wife. ...
he tries to deny that he was this monster....

[illegible]

À travers cette pièce en 5 tableaux, Jean Anouilh interroge l'utilisation individuelle du passé. Le devoir de mémoire doit-il se transformer en tyrannie ? Et quand le passé empêche de devenir celui que l'on est, et que l'on veut devenir, a-t-on le droit de l'oublier ?

Une pièce qui ne laisse pas indifférent.

le passé !! la fuite !! la vérité !! Mais, est-ce que l'homme pourrais faire face à son passé ,surtout, s'il etait plein de taches noires?!! Je ne crois pas !!

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Alexandria Sharpe says

This wa

Lauren says

This is a fabulous analysis of how nurture can sour one's innate nature - and, on the other hand, how one's true character can overcome.

Sigrun says

To be quite honest, I can't really remember much about this book. I do recall that I had a hard time getting through it. Why I had problems getting through it is hard to answer. It may be that I was going through a difficult time while I was reading for whatever reason.

Oops. Time to go. Hope to get back to this soon. Have to interrupt now.

Jessica says

Amnesia! Mistaken identity! French!

A good one. We read it for class and acted out various scenes. It's almost like I was once proficient in French or something.

Gabriel Conroy says

Quite possibly the worst play I've ever read.

Ali says

Traveller without Luggage

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Jamey says

The only book I ever managed to read in French. All I remember is somebody throwing the protagonist down a flight of stairs and yelling, "Petit salaut!" (= little bastard).

Erin says

Funny, but one of the most distressing books I've ever read. Such a sad, sad portrait of man. But still well worth the read.

Karen says

This was a good one. It's about amnesia and, not surprisingly, identity. I read it in college, and I still have it. I want to read it again to refresh my memory.
