Herby He

When Pozzo and Lucky returns, they tumble and fall. Pozzo is now blind, so all he can do is to seek help from Gogo and Didi. However, Didi and Gogo didn’t immediately help Pozzo, instead, Gogo and Didi hesitate for a while until finally willing to step in.

When Didi initially realize Pozzo and Lucky has fell, he didn’t even think of helping them, the only thing he has in mind that they’re finally not alone. Didi view Pozzo and Lucky as hope, he think “We are no longer alone, waiting for the night, waiting for Godot, waiting for...waiting. All evening we have struggled, unassisted. Now it's over. It's already tomorrow.” Boredom has torture Didi for so long that every single small thing excites Didi. So when Pozzo and Lucky fall, Didi is too caught up in his emotion to help them. Moreover, Didi worries that if he helps them, they might leave and they will be alone again. Loneliness and boredom intimidate Didi, and that’s why Didi don’t want to help Pozzo and Lucky. Though Lucky and Pozzo are in pain, Didi view his own mental satisfaction to be more important than their suffering. In contrast to Didi’s ideological reasonings, Gogo’s reason not to help Pozzo and Lucky is more practical. Recognizing Pozzo as the person who gave him bone, Gogo think that “We should ask him for the bone first. Then if he refuses we'll leave him there.” Gogo view Pozzo and Lucky’s suffering as something to take advantage of. Both Gogo and Didi compares the pros and cons of helping Lucky and Pozzo, the only difference is that Didi’s thinking is more abstract while Gogo’s is more realistic. For Didi, the benefits of not being overwhelmingly humdrum significantly out-competes the benefit of helping Pozzo and Lucky; for Gogo, the benefit of food out-weights Pozzo and Lucky’s suffering. Almost no moral thinking is involved in the decision making of Gogo and Didi, the decision is made solely based on what’s good for themselves.

I think when people are making ethical decisions, they think more about pros and cons than let moral and impulsive take over. In Waiting for Godot, author made an allusion to Bible by calling Pozzo and Lucky Cain and Abel, brothers who killed each other, and implies that Pozzo and Lucky should treat each other like brothers. Yet, Pozzo is exploiting Lucky and doesn’t care about Lucky’s feelings at all. With all the advantages he has with Lucky as a slave, Pozzo don’t care about Lucky’s suffering anymore. Even for what we think are unconscious moral behaviour, such as a man risking his live to save a woman from being wrecked by train, it’s still mostly about pros and cons than morals. For example, the cons of not saving a woman from rail track are leaving a life time trauma of seeing a person dies in front of you and receiving condemns from people; the pros of helping that woman is receiving compliments. For that man, the disadvantages of not helping and the advantages of helping woman altogether are enough for him to step in. Some people would rather risk their

life than suffering from life-long pain, and all the thinking happens unconsciously within extremely short amount of time. More over, the act of helping others signals the brain to release endorphin, which makes us happy. So the acts of helping people is more of a result of reinforcement. Young kids don’t naturally helps other kids, they do so because of the reinforcement form their parents, a reward, for instance. As people has encounter more and more of the same circumstances, they subconsciously build up a response system that is triggered when they face something recognizable. So the moral, or instinct, might just be a responsive system that is developed by nurture. Morals don’t just naturally takes over when people see other suffering, it’s more about the process of weighting the pros and cons that we don’t even realize we have.