

# AS NO OTHER DARE FAIL

For Samuel Beckett on his 80th Birthday  
by his friends and admirers



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From *Eoin O'Brien*

You ask me to write some words on Sam for your *Festschrift*. I cannot. Yet, I have just written some 50,000 words about Sam, but not the sort you want for this, nor he either. The occasion is too great, my ability to express too feeble, other than to gasp in gratitude, to acknowledge the greatness of his sum, to admit that I for one will never be as before. Whether for worse or other I know not. But changed as no other ever could. Possessing now an understanding of and feeling for fellow-man as no other ever could inculcate in a long apprenticeship designed to do just that. The problem now is feeling too much. Not being able to go on but having to, as only Sam knows how. Man unadorned: ugly, decrepit, depraved, laughing, despairing, majestic in his nothingness, not always without hope. A life spent with humanity in the doldrums but only seen from afar. Now terrifyingly close. Can't endure the pain once not felt, necessarily so. What now? Still gratitude for the profundity of realisation. Might not have come from any other. Might never have come. What then?