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Kurt Vonnegut's 1969 novel For the film adaptation, see Slaughterhouse-Five (film). Slaughterhouse-Five Cover of the first editionAutorKurt VonnegutCountry United StatesLanguageEnglishGenreDark comedySatireScience fictionWar novelMetafiction PostmodernismEditorDelcorlePublication dated March 31, 1969[1][ISBN0-385-31208-3 (first edition, hardback)OCLC29960763LC ClassPS3572.05 S6 1994 Slaughterhouse-Five, or The Children's Crusade: A Duty-Dance with Death is a science fiction-infused antiwar novel by Kurt Vonnegut, first published in 1969. It follows the life and experiences of Billy Pilgrim, from his early years to his time as an American soldier and assistant chaplain during World War II, to the postwar years, with Billy occasionally traveling around the same time. The text focuses on Billy's capture by the German army and his survival from the Allied bombing of Dresden as a prisoner of war, an experience vonnegut himself experienced as an American military officer. The work has been called an example of unparalleled moral clarity[2] and one of the most enduring antiwar novels of all time. [2] Argument The story is told in a nonlinear order, and events become apparent through flashbacks and travel experiences in the time of the unreliable narrator, who begins the novel by writing All This Happened, more or less. [3] The narrator spends the first chapter describing his writing of the book, his experiences as a student of anthropology at the University of Chicago and correspondent for the Chicago City News Bureau, his research on the children's crusade and the history of Dresden, and his visit to Cold War-era Europe with his wartime friend Bernard V. O'Hare. He writes about Billy Pilgrim, an American man from the fictional city of Ilum, New York who believes he was held in an alien zoo on the fictional planet of Tralfamadore and has experienced time travel. As an assistant chaplain in the United States Army during World War II, Billy is a poorly trained, disoriented and fatalistic American soldier who finds that he does not like war and refuses to fight. [4] He was transferred from a base in South Carolina to the front line in Luxembourg during the Battle of the Bulge. He was captured in 1944 by the Germans. Billy died in 1994 from a series of events. Before being captured, he meets Roland Weary, a patriot, warmonger and sadist who denies Billy's cowardice. When the two are captured, the Germans confiscate everything Weary has and force him to wear painful wooden clogs. Tired eventually succumbs to gangrene caused by wounds from stiff clogs. While dying in a railway car full of prisoners, Weary convinces fellow soldier Paul Lazzaro that Billy is to blame for his death. Lazzaro vows to avenge Weary's death Billy, because revenge is the sweetest thing in life. At this point, Billy becomes detached in time and has flashbacks to his former life. Billy and the other prisoners are transported to Germany. In 1945, prisoners arrived at the dresden to work on a labour contract (forced labour). The Germans hold Billy and his fellow prisoners in an empty slaughterhouse called Schlachthof-fünf (slaughterhouse five). During the extensive bombing of Dresden by the Allies, German guards hide with prisoners in the slaughterhouse, which is partially underground and well protected from surface damage. As a result, they are among the few survivors of the firestorm that broke out in the city between 13 and 15 February 1945. After V-E Day in May 1945, Billy was transferred to the United States and received his honorable discharge in July 1945. Soon, Billy is hospitalized with symptoms similar to post-traumatic stress disorder and placed under psychiatric care at a Veterans Affairs hospital in Lake Placid. There he shares a room with Elliot Rosewater, who introduces Billy to the novels of the obscure sci-fi author Kilgore Trout. After his release, Billy married Valencia Merble, whose father owns the Ilum Optometry School to which Billy later attended. Billy becomes a successful and rich optometrist. In 1947, Billy and Valencia conceived their first son Robert on their honeymoon in Cape Ann, Massachusetts, and two years later their daughter Barbara was born. On Barbara's wedding night, Billy is hijacked by a flying saucer and taken to a planet many light years from Earth called Tralfamadore. The tralfamadorens are described as able to see in four dimensions, simultaneously observing all the points in the continuous space-time. They universally adopt a fatalistic worldview; death means nothing to them, and their common response to hearing about death is to go to sleep. In Tralfamadore, Billy is placed in a transparent geodesic dome exhibition in a zoo; the dome represents a house on Earth. The tralfamadorens later kidnap a pornographic film star named Montana Wildhack, who had disappeared on Earth and is believed to have drowned in San Pedro Bay. They intend to have their partner with Billy. She and Billy fall in love and have a son together. Billy is instantly sent to Earth in a time war to relive past or future moments of his life. In 1968, Billy and a co-pilot were the only survivors of a plane crash in Vermont. While driving to visit Billy in hospital, Valencia collides with his car and dies of carbon monoxide poisoning. Billy shares a hospital room with Bertram Rumfoord, a Harvard University history professor who researches an official history of war. They talk about the bombing of Dresden, which the professor initially refuses to believe Billy witnessed; the professor claims that the bombing of Dresden was justified despite the great loss of civilian lives and the complete destruction of the city. Billy's daughter takes him home to Ilum. He escapes and flees to York. In Times Square he visits a pornographic bookstore, where he discovers books written by Kilgore Trout and reads them. Among the books he discovers a book entitled The Broad Broad about a couple kidnapped by aliens and tricked into managing the investments of aliens on Earth. She also finds a series of magazine covers that notice the disappearance of Montana Wildhack, which turns out to be featured in a pornographic film shown in the store. Later, when he talks about his time traveling to Tralfamadore on a radio show, he is evicted from the book. He returns to his hotel room, he gets adored and travels back in time to 1945 in Dresden. Billy and his fellow prisoners will be tasked with locating and burying the dead. After a New Zealand Maori soldier who worked with Billy died of dry crows, the Germans began incinerating the bodies en masse with flamethrowers. Billy's friend, Edgar Derby, is shot for stealing a kettle. Finally, all German soldiers leave to fight on the Eastern Front, leaving Billy and the other prisoners alone with birds tweeting as the war ends. Due to non-chronological storytelling, other parts of Billy's life are offered throughout the book. After being evicted from the radio studio, Barbara treats Billy as a child and often controls him. Robert becomes anti-communist and a Green Beret in the Vietnam War. He makes a speech at a baseball stadium in Chicago in which he predicts his own death and proclaims that if you think death is a terrible thing, then you haven't understood a word I said. Billy is soon shot by a killer with a laser gun, commissioned by the elder Lazzaro. Character narrator: Recurring as a minor character, the narrator seems anonymous, while, Edgar Derby, who also clearly identifies as Kurt Vonnegut, when he says: This was me. That was me. This was the author of this book. [5] As noted above, as an American soldier during World War II, Vonnegut was captured by the Germans at the Battle of the Bulge and transported to Dresden. He and other prisoners of war survived the bombing while being held in a deep cellar of Schlachthof Fünf (Slaughterhouse-Five). [6] The narrator begins the story by describing his connection to the bombing of Dresden and his reasons for writing Slaughterhouse-Five. Billy Pilgrim: A fatalistic optimist enshrined in a boring and safe marriage in Ilum, New York. During World War II, he was held as a prisoner of war in Dresden and survived the bombings, experiences that had a lasting effect on his postwar life. His journey through time occurs in desperate moments of his life; he relives past and future events and becomes fatalistic (though not a defeatist) because he claims to have seen when, how and why he will die. Roland Weary: A weak man dreaming of greatness and obsessed with gore and revenge, who saves Billy several times (despite Billy's protestations) in the hope of achieving military glory. He faced the unpopularity in his hometown of Pittsburgh befriending and then hitting people less than he, and is obsessed with his father's collection of torture equipment. Tired is also a bully who hits Billy and gets them both caught, leading to the loss of his winter uniforms and boots. Weary dies of gangrene on the train en route to the prisoner-of-war camp, and blames Billy for his dying words. Paul Lazzaro as Another pow. A sick and ill-tempered car thief from Cicero, Illinois, who takes Weary's dying words as a revenge commission to kill Billy. He keeps a mental list of his enemies, claiming he may have someone killed for a thousand dollars more travel expenses. Lazzaro finally fulfills his promise to Weary and Billy by sending a laser gun in 1976. Kilgore Trout: A failed science fiction writer whose hometown is also Ilum, New York, and who earns money managing newspaper delivery guys. He has only received one fan letter (from Eliot Rosewater; see below). After Billy meets him in a back alley in Ilum, he invites Trout to celebrate his wedding anniversary. There, Kilgore follows Billy, thinking the latter has seen through a window of time. Kilgore Trout is also a main character in Vonnegut's 1973 novel Breakfast of Champions. Edgar Derby: A middle-aged high school teacher who felt he had to engage in war instead of sending his students to fight. Although relatively unimportant, he seems to be the only American before the bombing of Dresden to understand what war can do to people. During Campbell's presentation he stands up and punishes him, defending American democracy and the alliance with the Soviet Union. German forces executed him for looting him after catching him taking a kettle from the wreckage of the street after the attack. Vonnegut said this death is the climax of the book as a whole. Howard W. Campbell, Jr.: A Nazi American officer who killed Weary's wife, Valencia. He was a prominent German-language playwright recruited by the Nazi Propaganda Ministry. In one essay, he connects the misery of American poverty with the unbridled appearance and behavior of American poets. Edgar Derby confronts him as Campbell tries to recruit American prisoners to the American Free Corps to fight the Communist Soviet Union on behalf of the Nazis. He appears in a cowboy hat and boots adorned with svastikas and a red, white and blue Nazi vest. Campbell stars in Vonnegut's 1962 novel Mother Night. Valencia Merble: Billy's wife and the mother of their children, Robert and Barbara. Billy is emotionally away from her. He dies from carbon monoxide poisoning after a car crash en route to hospital to see Billy after his plane crash. Robert Pilgrim: Son of Billy and Valencia. A troubled, classly boy And a disappointing son who becomes an alcoholic at 16, drops out of high school, and is arrested for vandalising a Catholic cemetery. He later absorbs the anti-optimist worldview that metamorphoses from rebellious suburban teenager to Green Green Beret He won a Bronze Star and a Bronze Star in the Vietnam War. She is a flibbertigibbet bitch having had to assume the leadership of the family at the age of twenty. He has legs like an Edwardian grand piano, marisats an optometrist, and treats his widowed father like an invalid child. Tralfamadoreans: The breed of alien beings that appear (in humans) as vertical swimsuits with one hand on top, in which a single green eye is established. They kidnap Billy and teach him about the relationship of time with the world (as a fourth dimension), the fate and the nature of death. The tralfamadorens appear in several vonnegut novels. In Slaughterhouse Five, they reveal that the universe will be accidentally destroyed by one of their test pilots, and there is nothing they can do about it. Montana Wildhack: A beautiful young model who is kidnapped and placed next to Billy at tralfamadore zoo. She and Billy develop an intimate relationship and have a son. He apparently remains in Tralfamadore with the child after Billy is sent back to Earth. Billy sees her in a film shown in a pornographic bookstore when she stops to watch Kilgore Trout's novels sitting in the window. His unexplained disappearance appears on the covers of magazines sold in the store. Wild Bob: A supernumerary Army officer Billy meets in the war. He tells his fellow prisoners to call him Bob Wild, as he believes they are the 451st Infantry Regiment and under his command. Explains if you're ever in Cody, Wyoming, ask for Wild Bob, that's a phrase Billy repeats himself throughout the novel. He died of pneumonia. Billy befriended him in the veterans' hospital. He introduces Billy to Kilgore Trout's science fiction novels. Rosewater wrote the only fan letter Trout ever received. Rosewater had also suffered a terrible event during the war. Billy and Rosewater find trout novels useful for dealing with the trauma of war. Rosewater appears in other Vonnegut novels, such as God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater (1965). Bertram Copeland Rumfoord: Harvard history professor, retired US Air Force general and millionaire. He shares a hospital room with Billy and is interested in the Dresden bombing. He is in hospital after breaking his leg on his honeymoon with his fifth wife Lily, a barely literate girl from high school and go-go. It is described as similar in appearance and mannerisms to Theodore Roosevelt. Bertram is probably a relative of Winston Niles Rumfoord, a character in Vonnegut's 1959 novel The Merchants of Titan. The Scouts: Two American infantry explorers trapped behind German lines found by Roland Weary and Billy. Roland refers to himself and explorers as the Three Musketeers. Explorers leave Roland and Billy because they are slowing them down. It is revealed that they were shot and killed by Germans in ambush. Bernard V. O'Hare: the narrator's old war it was also held in Dresden and accompanied there after the war. She is the husband of Many O'Hare, and is distict attorney for Pennsylvania. Mary O'Hare as The Wife of Bernard V. O'Hare, whom Vonnegut promised to call the book The Crusade of Children. She is briefly discussed at the beginning of the book. When the narrator and Bernard try to collect their war experiences Mary complains that they were only babies during the war and that the narrator will portray them as valuable men. The narrator beruffs Mary promising that she will portray them as she said and that in her book there will not be a role for Frank Sinatra or John Wayne. Werner Luck: The 16-year-old German accused of protecting Billy and Edgar Derby when they were first placed at Slaughterhouse Five in Dresden. He does not know his help and accidentally takes Billy and Edgar to a communal shower where some German refugee girls from Wrocław bathe. He is described as similar to Billy. Style The novel is simple in syntax and phrase structure, part of Vonnegut's signature style. Likewise, irony, sentimentality, black humour and didactics are predominant throughout the work. [7] Like much of his work, Slaughterhouse-Five is broken into small pieces, and in this case, brief experiences at a point in time. Vonnegut has stated that his books are essentially mosaics formed by a lot of small chips... and every chip is a joke. Vonnegut also includes hand-drawn illustrations, a technique he repeated in his forthcoming novel, Breakfast of Champions (1973). Characteristically, Vonnegut makes intense use of repetition, frequently using the phrase So Goes: as an abstenion when events of death, death and mortality occur or are described, as a narrative transition to another subject, such as a memento mori, as comic relief, and to explain the inexplicable. It appears 106 times. [8] [unreliable source?] The book has been classified as a postmodern and metafictional novel. The first chapter of Slaughterhouse-Five is written in the style of an author's preface to how he came to write the novel. The Narrator introduces the genesis of the novel by explaining its connection to the Dresden bombing, and why it is recording it. He gives a description of himself and the book, saying it is a desperate attempt at academic work. The first chapter ends by discussing the beginning and end of the novel. He then delves into the story of Billy Pilgrim: Listen: Billy Pilgrim has become detached over time, so the transition from the writer's perspective to that of the third-person, omniscient narrator. (The use of Listen as an opening interjection mimics the epic poem Beowulf). The fictional story seems to begin in chapter two, although there is no reason to presume that the first chapter is not fiction. This technique is common in the Postmodern. [9] The story is intended to be a disoriented narrative, from Billy Pilgrim's point of view, to be over time. Vonnegut's writing alone contains this disorder. He apologizes for the novel being so short and shot and ended, but says there is nothing smart to say about a massacre. The Narrator reports that Billy Pilgrim experiences his life in a discontinuous way, so he lives (and relives) his birth, old age and death, rather than in the usual linear order. There are two main periods (interrupted by episodes from other times and places of his life), which is mostly linear, and their discontinuous prewar and postwar lives. Billy's existential perspective was compromised by his testimony of the destruction of Dresden, although he had arrived unhooked in time before arriving in the city. [10] The slaughterhouse-five is said shortly, declarative phrases, suggesting the sense of reading a report of the facts. [11] The first sentence reads: All this happened, more or less. (In 2010 this was number 38 on the American Book Review's list of 100 best first lines of novels. [12] It has been said that the novel's initial sentences contain the declaration of aesthetic method of the entire novel. [13] The author later appears as a sick prisoner in Billy Pilgrim's Second World War. The Narrator points out this saying: This was me. This was the author of this book. The story repeatedly refers to real and fictional novels and other works of fiction; Billy reads Valley of the Dolls (1966), skims a tralfamadorean book, and participates in a radio show, which is part of a literary-expert panel that talks about The Death of the Novel. Kilgore Trout, whom Billy Pilgrim knows while operating a newspaper delivery business, can be seen as Vonnegut's alter ego, although the two differ in some respects. Trout's career as a sci-fi novelist is marked by thieves, and the fictional author is not aware of his readers. Religion and philosophy Christian philosophy An important philosophy presented in Vonnegut's novel is Christianity. [14] The novel analyses themes within Christianity, especially in terms of fate and freeness about it. Billy Pilgrim experiences and applies these principles. The role of religion in Billy Pilgrim's life is a key point in the slaughterhouse-Five. Towards the beginning of the novel, the narrator claims that Pilgrim began World War II as an assistant to the priest and had a meek faith in an affectionate Jesus that most soldiers found pitrid. [15] This cruel Christianity presents a direct contrast to Billy Jesus' love. Bringing some of Trout's novel to heart, the narrator and Billy Pilgrim are looking to create a new one christiandy and a more human Jesus. The idea of the human being-Jesus is a centerpiece in the analysis of the eventual struggle of the Pilgrim with destiny and free to the free air. The establishment of a Christian figure who is not initially divine in nature sees a completely different tone to the general understanding of the placement of humanity with God. In David Vanderwerken's The Slaughterhouse by Kurt Vonnegut-Five at Forty. Billy Pilgrim - Even More a Man of Our Time, Vanderwerken claims that the narrator may be asking for a human-centered Christianity in which Jesus is a no one (94), a bum (95), a man. [17] What Vonnegut suggests here is that christ's deity lies in the path of charity. If the bum is Everyman, then we are all adopted children of God; we are all Christs and we must treat each other accordingly. [...] If Jesus is human, then he is imperfect and must necessarily be involved in direct or indirect evil. This Jesus participates fully in the human condition. [17] There is some question of christ's divinity and how this plays a role in Christian principles and it is suggested that the voice of the novel desires a form of collectivism where humanity looks at each other as equal parts and equal heirs of God. This human-Jesus argument within the novel stands as an effort to make humanity, to whom Trout can consider bums and no one else, more important. The call of the narrative for a more human-Jesus and Christianity is seen in the last part of the discussion about Trout's novel where God speaks from heaven saying: From this moment, He [God] will horribly punish anyone who torments a bum who has no connections" [18] Trout's novel attempts to make everyone, as well as emphasize the supposed cruelty of medieval Christian thought, and how it should be changed. The desire of a human Jesus is not the only biblical theme discussed in the novel. Another reference involves the story of Lot's wife disobeying and looking back on the destruction of Sodom and Gomorra. The narrator of this chapter, possibly seen as Vonnegut himself, claims that he loves Lot's wife doing it because he was so human. [19] Amanda's incorporation of Lot's wife and the narrative voice she says: Vonnegut naturally aligns with Lot's wife, as they both occupy the role of witnessing. [20] The narrator's alignment with Lot's wife also creates a good pretext for understanding Billy Pilgrim's psyche throughout the destruction of Dresden. In addition to asking moral questions, Slaughterhouse Five is also a novel that focusses on the philosophies of destiny and free breath. In the novel, Billy Pilgrim tries to determine what his role in life is and what is the purpose of everything that happens around him as well. When they are kidnapped by the tralfamadorens, Pilgrim asks them why it is among others. It questions the fate of the situation and why led to this point. Billy Pilgrim Considers His and actions to be part of a larger network of actions, their future manipulated by one thing about another based on the decision. All the things that happen would happen for a reason. In fact, Pilgrim's initial mindset would suggest that he believed in free breath, fate, motives, decisions and things that happen for reasons. However, many of these thoughts are quickly challenged by the ideology of the tralfamadorens. Tralfamadorean philosophy As Billy Pilgrim becomes detached in time, he faces a new kind of philosophy. When the pilgrim becomes familiar with the tralfamadorens, he learns a different point of view about fate and free about it. While Christianity may say that fate and free breath are matters of God's divine choice and human interaction, tralfamadoreanism would disagree. According to the tralfamadorean philosophy, things are and always will be, and there is nothing that can change them. When Billy asks why they chose him, the tralfamadorens answer: Why you? Why us for the case? Why something? Because this moment simply is. [21] The mentality of the tralfamadorens is not one in which there is free breath. Things happen because they were always meant to be happening. The narrator of the story explains that the tralfamadorens see time at once. This concept of time is best explained by the tralfamadorens themselves, as they talk to Billy Pilgrim about the matter saying: I'm a tralfamadorean, seeing all the time how you could see a stretch of the Rocky Mountains. All the time it's all the time. It doesn't change. It does not lend itself to warnings or explanations. It just is. [22] After this particular conversation when seeing the weather, Billy makes the statement that this philosophy does not seem to evoke any sense of freeness in his fate. To this end, the tralfamadorean's response that free breath is a concept that, of the thirty-one inhabited planets visited in the universe and studied reports on a hundred more,[22] exists only on Earth. Using the tralfamatory passivity of fate, Billy Pilgrim learns to overlook the death and shock that entails death. Pilgrim claims that the tralfamatory philosophy about death is his most important lesson. The most important thing I learned at Tralfamadore was that when a person dies it only seems to die. He's still very much alive in the past, so it's very silly for people to cry at his funeral. All moments, past, present and future, have always existed, will always exist... When a tralfamadorean sees a corpse, all he thinks is that the dead person is in poor condition at this particular time, but that the same person is alive at many other times. Now, when I myself feel that someone is dead, just shrink and say what the tralfamadorens say about dead people, that's how it goes. [23] Billy Pilgrim continues throughout the novel to use the term so it goes as far as the Thea ideas behind death, fate, time and free speech are drastically different compared to those of Christianity. Tralfamadorean (Tralfamadorean) ex nihilo did not appear, but it is based on many threads of thought. The idea of all time existed at once (as the tralfamadorens experience it) can be found in sources that go from the prisoners' Greek philosophy (e.g. parmeneides monstrosity)[24] to neoclassical Christian theology (e.g. Sir Thomas Browne's Religio Medici) to 20th-century popular science (e.g. repeated statements by Albert Einstein). [25] Similarly, the idea of determinism was prevalent in 20th-century philosophy[26] and tralfamadorean passivity dates back to the Stoics. [27] Allusions and references allusions to other works As in other Vonnegut novels, certain characters are believed to be from other stories, making cameo appearances and connecting discrete novels with a larger opus. The fictional novelist Kilgore Trout, often an important character in vonnegut's other novels, is a social commentator and friend of Billy Pilgrim in Slaughterhouse-Five. In one case, he is the only non-optimetrist of a party. So, he's the odd man out. It ridicules everything the ideal American family has true, such as heaven, hell and sin. In Trout's opinion, people don't know if the things they do are good or bad, and if they go out to be bad, they go to hell, where the cream never stops hurting. Other cross-dressing characters include Eliot Rosewater, of God Bless You, Mr. Rosewater, is Howard W. Campbell, Jr., of Mother Night, and Bertram Copeland Rumfoord, relative of Winston Niles Rumfoord, of Titan's Sirens. While Vonnegut re-uses characters, the characters are often rebooted and do not necessarily maintain the same biographical details from appearance to appearance. Kilgore Trout in particular is palpably a different person (albeit with different and consistent character traits) in each of his appearances in Vonnegut's work. [28] Mr. Rosewater says that Fidor Dostoevsky's novel The Karamazov Brothers contains everything you need to know about life. Vonnegut refers to The Marriage of Heaven and Hell when talking about William Blake, the favorite poet of Billy's hospital companion. In the volume of Twayne's US author series about Kurt Vonnegut, about the protagonist's name, Stanley Schatt says: Calling the unsightly hero Billy Pilgrim, Vonnegut contrasts John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress with Billy's story. As Wilfrid Sheed has pointed out, Billy's solution to the problems of the modern world is to invent a sky, from 20th-century materials, where good technology triumphs over bad technology. His writing is Science Fiction, the last, good fantasy of man. [30] Slaughterhouse-Five's cultural and historical allusions make numerous cultural, historical, geographical and philosophical allusions. He talks about the bombing of Dresden during World War II, and refers to the Battle of the Bulge, the War of the and civil rights protests in American cities during the 1960s. Billy's wife, Valencia, has a Reagan for President sticker in his Cadillac, Cadillac, in Ronald Reagan's failed 1968 Republican presidential nominating campaign. Another bumper sticker is mentioned that says impeach Earl Warren, referring to a real-life campaign by the far-right John Birch Society. [31] The slaughterhouse and the other right protesters are preserved is also a royal building in Dresden. Vonnegut was beaten and imprisoned in this building as a prisoner of war, and it is because of the flesh locker in the basement of the building that he (and Billy) survived the bombings; the site is largely intact and protected. Prayer serenity appears twice. [34] Critic Tony Tanner suggested that it is used to illustrate the contrast between Billy Pilgrim's views and the tralfamadorens of fatalism. [35] Slaughterhouse-Five's criticisms have been largely positive since the March 31, 1969 review in The New York Times newspaper that said: Either you'll love it, or you'll push it backwards into the sci-fi corner. [36] It was Vonnegut's first novel to become a bestseller, remaining on the New York Times bestseller list for sixteen weeks and reaching #4. [37] In 1970, Slaughterhouse-Five was nominated for the best novel and Hugo Awards. Since then it has won and been widely regarded as a classic antiwar novel, and has appeared on Time magazine's list of the top 100 English-language novels written since 1923. [38] The Slaughterhouse-Five censorship controversy has been the subject of many attempts at censorship due to its irreverent tone, supposedly obscene content and depictions of sex, the use of profanity by American soldiers and perceived heretology. It was one of the earliest literary acknowledgments that gay men, referred to in the novel as fades, were some of the victims of the Holocaust. [39] In the United States he has sometimes been banned from literature classes, removed from school libraries, and beaten from library curriculums. [40] In 1972, following the sentencing of Todd V. Rochester Community Schools, he was banned from Rochester community schools in Oakland County, Michigan. [41] The circuit judge described the book as depraved, immoral, psychotic, vulgar and anti-Christian. [39] The United States Supreme Court considered the implications of the First Amendment of the removal of the book, among others, from public school libraries in the case of the Island Trees School District v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853 (1982) and concluded that local school boards cannot remove books from school library shelves simply because they don't like the ideas contained in these books and seek for their removal to prescribe what will be orthodox in politics, religion, or other matters of opinion. Slaughterhouse-Five is the sixty-seventh entry on the American Library Association's list of the most challenging books of 1990-1999 and number forty-six in the ALA's Most Challenging Books from 2000-2009. [40] The slaughterhouse-five remains controversial. In August 2011, the He was banned from Republican High School in Missouri. The Kurt Vonnegut Memorial Library countered by offering 150 free copies of the novel to republican high school students for the first time. [42] Critics have accused the Slaughterhouse-Five of being a quiet work, because Billy Pilgrim believes that the nod to free allusion is a quaint illusion. [43] The problem, according to Robert Merrill and Péter A. Scholl, is that Vonnegut's critics seem to think he is saying the same thing [as the tralfamadorens]. For Anthony Burgess, The Slaughterhouse is a kind of escape—in a way. Like O. M. Barnes's Peter Pan—in which we are told to bring the horror of the Dresden bombing, and everything involved, to a level of fantasy ... For Charles Harris, the novel is a good pretext for understanding Billy Pilgrim's psyche throughout the destruction of Dresden. In addition to asking moral questions, Slaughterhouse Five is also a novel that focusses on the philosophies of destiny and free breath. In the novel, Billy Pilgrim tries to determine what his role in life is and what is the purpose of everything that happens around him as well. When they are kidnapped by the tralfamadorens, Pilgrim asks them why it is among others. It questions the fate of the situation and why led to this point. 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