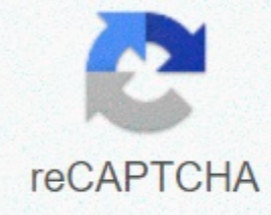




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Slaughterhouse five sparknotes chapter 1

Vonnegut's answer here that he saw worse reflects what Vabos later says on the train car to the captive: that things could be even less comfortable, even more terrible. This kind of resignation, like the novel refrain So it goes when someone dies an untimely death, recognizes the power of fate. If war is an essential part of our world, then violence is also necessary, and one must get used to its horrors and realize that these horrors can always be worse. Chapters 1-2 3-4 5 6-8 Slaughterhouse Five begin with a chapter written from the perspective of author Kurt Vonnegut, which describes the long process of writing a book about the bombing of Dresden in Germany during World War II, which he experienced firsthand as an American prisoner of war. Vonnegut describes visiting Bernard V. O'Hara, a friend from the war, to help him remember Dresden. When they meet, neither person can remember anything but random, seemingly unimportant anecdotes. Bernard's wife Mary is initially angry with Vonnegut because he feels that books and films tend to glorify war; Soldiers are hardly more than children, but they're played by men like Frank Sinatra and John Wayne. Vonnegut assures her that his book will have no roles for Sinatra or Wayne, and promises to call it the Children's Crusade. Vonnegut then tells of a historical children's crusade from 1213, in which armies of children were raised in Germany and France and sold as slaves in North Africa. It also commemorates the publication of a book on Dresden published in 1908 and describes the devastation of the city during the Siege of the Prussians in 1760. Vonnegut also briefly describes his return to Dresden with O'Hara, where they befriended Gerhard Müller, a taxi driver and prisoner of the American during World War II, who takes them to a slaughterhouse where they were imprisoned as prisoners at night. Müller's mother was killed in the Dresden bombings. This chapter also mentions some aspects of Vonnegut's life after the war, including studying anthropology at the University of Chicago, working as a police reporter, and in public relations work for General Electric. During this time, Vonnegut wrote to the Air Force asking for details of the raid on Dresden, but was told that the information was still considered top secret. The second chapter begins with the main action of the novel, centered around the protagonist Billy Pilgrim, who says that over time he peeled off and accidentally experienced events from different parts of his life. We have a brief overview of Billy's life. Born in 1922, Billy is the only child who thrived at school, and began attending optometry school before being drafted in World War II, where Billy fought in Europe, and was eventually captured by the Germans. During his time on the Billy's father died in a hunting accident. After his discharge from the army, Billy returned to optometric school, became engaged to the daughter of the school's founder during his senior year, and subsequently had a nervous breakdown. Billy is treated in a veteran's hospital, then marries his fiancée, and get rich from his optometry business. Billy and his wife have two children, Barbara, who continues to marry another optometrist, and Robert, who becomes a green beret who fights in Vietnam. In 1968, Billy is the only survivor of a plane crash, and during his recovery from this ordeal, his wife dies of accidental carbon monoxide poisoning. After this crash, Billy goes on a late night talk radio program and discusses his experience of being kidnapped by aliens and taken to Tralfamadore, where he is pictured at the zoo. Billy also writes letters to his local newspaper describing foreigners from Tralfamadore who are green, with hand-shaped heads and can see in four dimensions, which means he sees moments in time as they exist simultaneously. Billy writes one such letter to the newspaper in his basement when his daughter Barbara arrives and expresses concern for his mental health, believing that his recent confessions about Tralfamadore are the result of head injuries suffered in a plane crash. Billy says he first peeled off in time in 1944, before his encounter with tralfamadoreans. As chaplain's assistant in the army, Billy was called overseas to replace the assistant chaplain who was killed in action. After arriving halfway through the Battle of The Promontion, Billy is one of the few survivors, and marks along with three other wandering soldiers who are without food or maps. Billy, who never got a helmet, coat, gun or combat boots, is woefully unprepared. One of the men Billy travels with is Roland Weary, an 18-year-old from Pittsburgh who is obsessed with torture devices. Roland vilifies Billy for being in college and for being useless at avoiding enemy fire. While traveling with Roland and two Scouts, Billy has his first experience of transitioning through time, going through his death, then his birth, before settling down for a while from childhood, where his father tries to teach him to swim by throwing him into the deep end of the pool. Billy then flashes through various moments in time: visiting his mother in a nursing home in 1965, attending a banquet for his son's Little League team in 1958, and a drunken New Year's Eve meeting in 1961, where he seduces in the back of his car. Upon waking up, Billy finds himself back in World War II being shaken awake by Roland Weary, who brings him back to two experienced Scouts who have been traveling with. While Billy hallucinates from cold and exhaustion, scouts tell Roland and Billy to find and leave them in the stream bed. Blaming Billy for being left behind, Roland starts attacking Billy, and just before Roland can deliver a kick to Billy's back, they are discovered by a group of German soldiers. chapters 1-2 3-4 5 6-8 Buying at BN.com I really went back to Dresden with guggenheim money (God loves it) in 1967. It looked a lot like Dayton, Ohio, more open spaces than Dayton has. There must be tons of human bone meal in the ground. You'll pretend you were men instead of children, and you'll star in frank sinatra and john wayne movies or some of those other charming, war-loving, dirty old men. And the war is going to look great, so we're going to have a lot more. People shouldn't look back. I'm definitely not going to do that anymore. I've finished my book. The next one I write is going to be fun. This is a failure, and it had to be because it was written with a column of salt. It's so short and messy and it's... because there's nothing intelligent about a massacre. See Important Quotes Explained Vonnegut writes in his own voice, introducing his experience of bombing Dresden, in East Germany, during World War II, while he was a prisoner of war and his attempt for many years to complete a book on the subject. It begins by claiming that most of what follows is true, especially the parts about war. With funding from the Guggenheim Foundation, Vonnegut and his wartime friend Bernhard V. O'Hare returned to Dresden in 1967. In a taxi on their way to the Dresden slaughterhouse that served as their prison, Vonnegut and O'Hare had a conversation with a taxi driver about life under communism. It is this man, Gerhard Müller, as well as O'Hara's wife Mary, that Vonnegut dedicates slaughterhouse-5. Müller will later send O'Hara a Christmas card for world peace. Vonnegut tells of his failed attempts to write about Dresden twenty-three years after he was there during the war. He is very proud of the outline of the story, which draws crayons on the back of the roll wallpaper. The outline of the wallpaper represents each character in a different color crayon, with a line for each advancing through the chronology of the story. Eventually, the lines break into the orange hatch zone that constitutes bombing, and those who survive the attack appear and eventually stop when the captives return. However, the outline does not help Vonnegut writing. At first he expected to make a masterpiece about this grave and the huge subject, but while the terrible destruction he witnessed over the years occupies his mind, it contradicts his attempts to capture it in writing. Vonnegut's anti-war stance only increases the difficulty because, as the filmmaker introduces him, he writes a book against the war Prevent war as effectively as writing a book against glaciers would prevent their movement. Vonnegut recounts the events of his postwar life, including stints as an anthropology student at the University of Chicago, a police reporter, and a public relations man for General Electric in Schenectady, New York. In the years following the war, Vonnegut encounters ignorance about the magnitude of Dresden's destruction, and when he teams up with the U.S. Air Force for information, he discovers that the event is still classified as top secret. Around 1964, Vonnegut takes his young daughter and her boyfriend with him to visit Bernhard V. O'Hare in Pennsylvania. He meets Mary O'Hare, who is disgusted by the likelihood that Vonnegut portrays himself and his comrades as the manly heroes rather than the children they were. With his right hand raised, Vonnegut promises not to glorify the war and promises to call his book The Children's Crusade. Later that night he read about the Children's Crusade and the earlier bombing of Dresden in 1760. While teaching at the Iowa Writers' Workshop, Vonnegut lands a contract to write three books, of which Slaughterhouse-Five is to be the first. It's so short and messy, he explains, because there's nothing intelligent about carnage. Massacre.

