



Welcome to the Monkey House

Kurt Vonnegut

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This short-story collection *Welcome to the Monkey House* (1968) incorporates almost completely Vonnegut's 1961 "Canary in a Cathouse," which appeared within a few months of *Slaughterhouse-Five* and capitalized upon that breakthrough novel and the enormous attention it suddenly brought.

Drawn from both specialized science fiction magazines and the big-circulation general magazines (*Saturday Evening Post*, *Colliers*, etc.) which Vonnegut had been one of the few science writers to sell, the collection includes some of his most accomplished work. The title story may be his most famous--a diabolical government asserts control through compulsory technology removing orgasm from sex--but Vonnegut's bitterness and wit, not in his earlier work as poisonous or unshielded as it later became, is well demonstrated.

Two early stories from *Galaxy* science fiction magazine and one from *Fantasy & Science Fiction* (the famous "Harrison Bergeron") show Vonnegut's careful command of a genre about which he was always ambivalent, stories like "More Stately Mansions" or "The Foster Portfolio" the confines and formula of a popular fiction of which he was always suspicious. Vonnegut's affection for humanity and bewilderment as its corruption are manifest in these early works.

Several of these stories (those which appeared in *Collier's*) were commissioned by Vonnegut's Cornell classmate and great supporter Knox Burger, also born in 1922.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kurt Vonnegut (1922-2007) is one of the most beloved American writers of the twentieth century. Vonnegut's audience increased steadily since his first five pieces in the 1950s and grew from there. His 1968 novel *Slaughterhouse-Five* has become a canonic war novel with Joseph Heller's *Catch-22* to form the truest and darkest of what came from World War II.


Vonnegut began his career as a science fiction writer, and his early novels--*Player Piano* and *The Sirens of Titan*--were categorized as such even as they appealed to an audience far beyond the reach of the category. In the 1960s, Vonnegut became closely associated with the Baby Boomer generation, a writer on that side, so to speak.

Now that Vonnegut's work has been studied as a large body of work, it has been more deeply understood and unified. There is a consistency to his satirical insight, humor and anger which makes his work so synergistic. It seems clear that the more of Vonnegut's work you read, the more it resonates and the more you wish to read. Scholars believe that Vonnegut's reputation (like Mark Twain's) will grow steadily through the decades as his work continues to increase in relevance and new connections are formed, new insights made.

ABOUT THE SERIES

Author Kurt Vonnegut is considered by most to be one of the most important writers of the twentieth century. His books *Slaughterhouse-Five* (named after Vonnegut's World War II POW experience) and *Cat's Cradle* are considered among his top works. RosettaBooks offers here a complete range of Vonnegut's work, including his first novel (*Player Piano*, 1952) for readers familiar with Vonnegut's work as well as

newcomers.

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