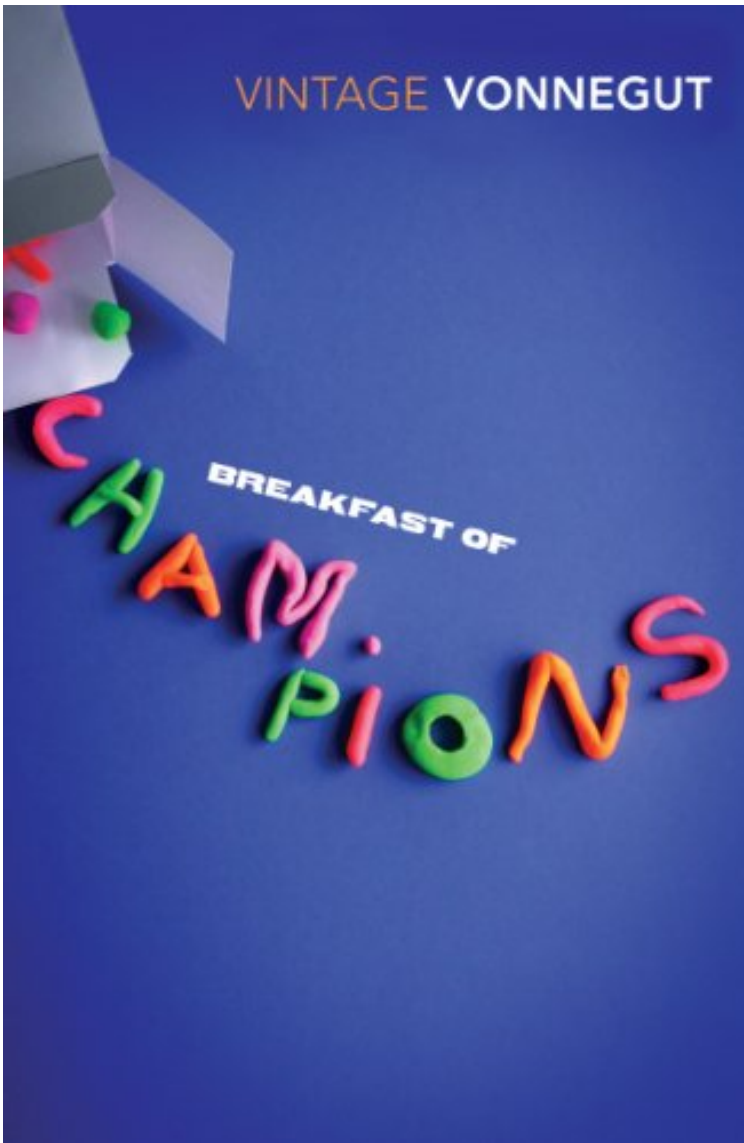


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# Breakfast Of Champions



*Par Kurt Vonnegut*  
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**Par Kurt Vonnegut : Breakfast Of Champions** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Breakfast Of Champions:

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**Description :** Description du produitBreakfast Of Champions is vintage Vonnegut. One of his favorite characters, aging writer Kilgore Trout, finds to his horror that a Midwest car dealer is taking his fiction as truth. The result is murderously funny satire as Vonnegut looks at war, sex, racism, success, politics, and pollution in America and reminds us how to see the truth.

Prsentation de l'diteurIn a frolic of cartoon and comic outbursts against rule and reason, a miraculous weaving of science fiction, memoir, parable, fairy tale and farce, Kurt Vonnegut attacks the whole spectrum of American society, releasing some of his best-loved literary creations on the scene..com"We are healthy only to the extent that our ideas are humane." So reads the tombstone of downtrodden writer Kilgore Trout, but we have no doubt who's really talking: his alter ego Kurt Vonnegut. Health versus sickness, humanity

versus inhumanity--both sets of ideas bounce through this challenging and funny book. As with the rest of Vonnegut's pure fantasy, it lacks the shimmering, fact-fueled rage that illuminates *Slaughterhouse-Five*. At the same time, that makes this book perhaps more enjoyable to read. *Breakfast of Champions* is a slippery, lucid, bleakly humorous jaunt through (sick? inhumane?) America circa 1973, with Vonnegut acting as our Virgil-like companion. The book follows its main character, auto-dealing solid-citizen Dwayne Hoover, down into madness, a condition brought on by the work of the aforementioned Kilgore Trout. As Dwayne cracks, then crumbles, *Breakfast of Champions* coolly shows the effects his dementia has on the web of characters surrounding him. It's not much of a plot, but it's enough for Vonnegut to air unique opinions on America, sex, war, love, and all of his other pet topics--you know, the only ones that really count.

Extrait Dwayne was a widower. He lived alone at night in a dream house in Fairchild Heights, which was the most desirable residential area in the city. Every house there cost at least one hundred thousand dollars to build. Every house was on at least four acres of land. Dwayne's only companion at night was a Labrador retriever named Sparky. Sparky could not wag his tail--because of an automobile accident many years ago, so he had no way of telling other dogs how friendly he was. He had to fight all the time. His ears were in tatters. He was lumpy with scars. Dwayne had a black servant named Lottie Davis. She cleaned his house every day. Then she cooked his supper for him and served it. Then she went home. She was descended from slaves. Lottie Davis and Dwayne didn't talk much, even though they liked each other a lot. Dwayne reserved most of his conversation for the dog. He would get down on the floor and roll around with Sparky, and he would say things like, "You and me, Spark," and "How's my old buddy?" and so on. And that routine went on unrevised, even after Dwayne started to go crazy, so Lottie had nothing unusual to notice. Kilgore Trout owned a parakeet named Bill. Like Dwayne Hoover, Trout was all alone at night, except for his pet. Trout, too, talked to his pet. But while Dwayne babbled to his Labrador retriever about love, Trout sneered and muttered to his parakeet about the end of the world. "Any time now," he would say. "And high time, too." It was Trout's theory that the atmosphere would become unbreathable soon. Trout supposed that when the atmosphere became poisonous, Bill would keel over a few minutes before Trout did. He would kid Bill about that. "How's the old respiration, Bill?" he'd say, or, "Seems like you've got a touch of the old emphysema, Bill," or, "We never discussed what kind of a funeral you want, Bill. You never even told me what your religion is." And so on. He told Bill that humanity deserved to die horribly, since it had behaved so cruelly and wastefully on a planet so sweet. "We're all Heliogabalus, Bill," he would say. This was the name of a Roman emperor who had a sculptor make a hollow, life-size iron bull with a door on it. The door could be locked from the outside. The bull's mouth was open. That was the only other opening to the outside. Heliogabalus would have a human being put into the bull through the door, and the door would be locked. Any sounds the human being made in there would come out of the mouth of the bull. Heliogabalus would have guests in for a nice party, with plenty of food and wine and beautiful women and pretty boys--and Heliogabalus would have a servant light kindling. The kindling was under dry firewood--which was under the bull. Trout did another thing which some people might have considered eccentric: he called mirrors leaks. It amused him to pretend that mirrors were holes between two universes. If he saw a child near a mirror, he might wag his finger at a child warningly, and say with great solemnity, "Don't get too near that leak. You wouldn't want to wind up in the other universe, would you?" Sometimes somebody would say in his presence, "Excuse me, I have to take a leak." This was a way of saying that the speaker intended to drain liquid wastes from his body through a valve in his lower abdomen. And Trout would reply waggishly, "Where I come from, that means you're about to steal a mirror." And so on. By the time of Trout's death, of course, everybody called mirrors leaks. That was how respectable even his jokes had become. In 1972, Trout lived in a basement apartment in Cohoes, New York. He made his living as an installer of aluminum combination storm windows and screens. He had nothing to do with the sales end of the business--because he had no charm. Charm was a scheme for making strangers like and trust a person immediately, no matter what the charmer had in mind. Dwayne Hoover had oodles of charm. I can have oodles of charm when I want to. A lot of people have oodles of charm. Trout's employer and co-workers had no idea that he was a writer. No reputable publisher had ever heard of him, for that matter, even though he had written one hundred and seventeen novels and two thousand short stories by the time he met Dwayne. He made carbon copies of nothing he wrote. He mailed off manuscripts without enclosing stamped, self-addressed envelopes for their safe return. Sometimes he didn't even include a return address. He got names and addresses of publishers from magazines devoted to the writing business, which he read avidly in the periodical rooms of public libraries. He thus got in touch with a firm called World Classics Library, which published hard-core

pornography in Los Angeles, California. They used his stories, which usually didn't even have women in them, to give bulk to books and magazines of salacious pictures. They never told him where or when he might expect to find himself in print. Here is what they paid him: doodleysquat. They didn't even send him complimentary copies of the books and magazines in which he appeared, so he had to search them out in pornography stores. And the titles he gave to his stories were often changed. "Pan Galactic Straw-boss," for instance, became "Mouth Crazy." Most distracting to Trout, however, were the illustrations his publishers selected, which had nothing to do with his tales. He wrote a novel, for instance, about an Earthling named Delmore Skag, a bachelor in a neighborhood where everybody else had enormous families. And Skag was a scientist, and he found a way to reproduce himself in chicken soup. He would shave living cells from the palm of his right hand, mix them with the soup, and expose the soup to cosmic rays. The cells turned into babies which looked exactly like Delmore Skag. Pretty soon, Delmore was having several babies a day, and inviting his neighbors to share his pride and happiness. He had mass baptisms of as many as a hundred babies at a time. He became famous as a family man. And so on.