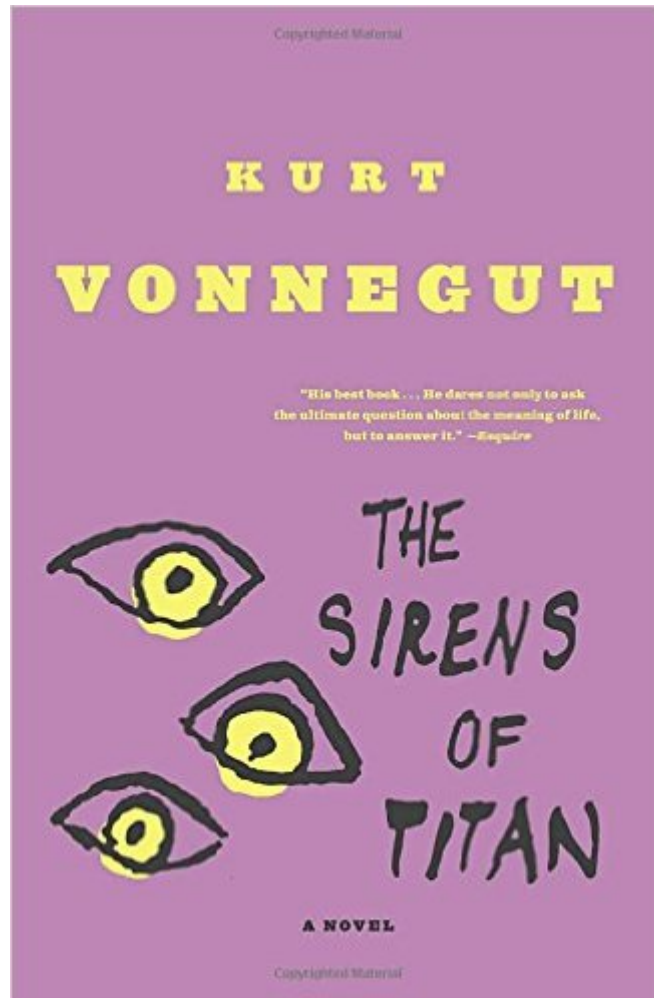




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The Sirens Of Titan: A Novel



Synopsis

The Sirens of Titan is an outrageous romp through space, time, and morality. The richest, most depraved man on Earth, Malachi Constant, is offered a chance to take a space journey to distant worlds with a beautiful woman at his side. Of course there's a catch to the invitation "and a prophetic vision about the purpose of human life that only Vonnegut has the courage to tell.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"Vonnegut is George Orwell, Dr. Caligari and Flash Gordon compounded into one writer . . . a zany but moral mad scientist." "Time" "Reading Vonnegut is addictive!" "Commonweal" "His best book . . . He dares not only ask the ultimate question about the meaning of life, but to answer it." "Esquire

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The description for this book on Amazon and Goodreads is apt: It would be very hard to describe what this book is about. Yes it is well written and the story is very imaginative and creative. But how do you describe what happened and why? Why is the big question. I'm not so sure there is an answer there, but I'll try. Basically, this is the story of a man who is very lucky in life but loses that luck. And is sent on a journey to discover what is really important in life. Malachi Constant is once the richest man in America of some future date. One day, he meets a space, or more truthfully, a traveler of the space-time continuum "One Winston Niles Rumfoord. Rumfoord, because of his own travels,

tells Malachi his future. And soon enough, Malachi become Unk, a Martian in the Martian army. To tell too much would be to ruin the effect of the book, but enough to say, this is a story that once you are hooked, you will want to continue reading, if for nothing else to find out what is the point of the story. I think by the end, you will have your answer.

This was certainly a bizarre story, mind control by means of brain implants, trips to Mars and other planets. The protagonist of the work is put into difficult situations with the loss of free will and ends up doing things that having he been in control of his own faculties the outcome would be different. I thought it was well written, somewhat alarming and creative.

This book is great, but its not the kind of book that grabs you from the beginning and says "this is going to be a great novel". In fact, about halfway through, I wasn't even sure I was actually liking this novel, but I stuck it through and was very glad I did. Anyone that has read Vonnegut will recognize his snarky witty way of telling a story. As far as story goes, this is probably the "sci-fi-est" book I have read by him. The characters in this book travel around the solar system a lot, and they change quite a bit with each journey. In the end, this is a story about lives, they way they begin, they way that live, and they way they die, and all the silly, funny, sad, and horrible things that happen from birth to death that makes up a life. That is probably why it takes you getting to the end before you really fully appreciate the impact of this story. This book is probably not quite as cool as 'Cat's Cradle' and its doesn't have the sheer impact of 'Slaughterhouse 5', but this is easily his 3rd most memorable novel. If you like Vonnegut (and really, who doesn't?) then check this one out, and doubt you will be disappointed, unless you quit halfway through, because if so, you missed the best part.

It is a cliché, but there is always something notable just under the surface of clichés: I could not put this book down. This is true for me of most Vonnegut novels, though. If anything your vocabulary will certainly be tested by reading this novel, as Vonnegut uses wonderfully archaic and/or underused words. Eminently quotable...one of my favorite quotes below:"Anybody who has traveled this far on a fools errand has no choice but to uphold the honor of fools by completing the errand."

Read it when I was younger and its irreverence and mocking of standard norms, together with the interesting teasing of values (what really is a good value) hold up well after all these decades. So amazing that Vonnegut came up with this stuff back in 1959. Surely he was a heavy influence on Douglas Adams?--similar playfulness with what to us humans are serious matters.

War doesn't unite people even if there is a common enemy. The message pushed in this book is strange, especially coming from Vonnegut who constantly blasts war. The Houthi rebellion who recently overthrew the Yemeni government is a prime example of that in recent history. The Houthis hate Al Qaeda, yet the USA and the Houthis would never be friends because the Houthis also hate America. Same went for WWII where the USA and Russia teamed up against the Nazis only to end up aiming nukes at each other. Despite the heavily flawed ideas on human behavior that were portrayed in this story, I still enjoyed it for the other themes. The ending delivers and is quite brilliant.

I'll start by saying that I really enjoyed this book. This is the second book I've read by Vonnegut, the first being *Slaughterhouse Five*. While I found both books enjoyable, I find them both very strange. I suppose good science fiction can be strange, particularly an older science fiction book written based on scientific thoughts and knowledge that is not current. This story is one of fate - you are fated to live a destined life. Seen through the eyes of a series of unrelated characters, we observe the oncoming war between Mars and Earth. Hopelessly outnumbered, yet compelled to fight, the Martians attack Earth, unleashing a destined future. Vonnegut does a good job of weaving the storylines and characters together until a climax where all appear together at the end. I think I'm going to take a break from fiction for a while and go back to either History (I need to finish the Jefferson book I've been reading for months now), or some other kind of non-fiction. I'll decide in the next day or two.

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