KURT VONNEGUT

A Man Without a Country
Marines and teach democracy. I'm kidding.
For instance, join the National Guard or the
now on I will tell you when I'm kidding.
be deciding whether I am kidding or not so from
and I realize some of you may be having this
nothing. All they do is show you've been to college.
versatile hermaphrodites representing absolutely
First rule: Do not use semicolons. They are trans-
Here is a lesson in creative writing.
encouraging to readers.

ends up higher than where it began. This is [shoving line 9] it is not accidental that the line somebody begins into trouble. Gees one of it again.

the story needs to be about a man or a hole. It is not copyrighted. The story is "Man in Hole," but

story over and over again. People love it and it is

here (initial of the C-J axles). You will see this

be who are poor of sick, so start your story up.

and go to the movies don't hear about pervers-

be who can afford to buy books and magazines

Now let me give you a marketing tip. The peo-

The of C-J axle."

understand [having a mental image of the character].

pre very pretty shape that even a computer can

ever story has that very sim-

This is the B-E axis. For beginning, E for

[narrow to hollow and middle of the road].

Your audience state of affairs here in the middle.

Great prosperity, wonderful health up there.

fortune, death and terrible poverty. Sickness down

blackboard]. This is the G-1 axis: Good fortune — [!!

KURT VONNEGUT

We are about to be attacked by Aliens.

A Man without a Country

can follow more easily [shoving a virtual line on the

I'll draw it on the blackboard behind me so you

I want to share with you something I've learned.

*
anyway, I read these stories, one after another, stand primitive people—they're so stupid. But degree in anthropology anyway, because I can't people. It was a big mistake for me to take a sort of stories they'd collected from primitive explorers—those imperialists—to find out what reports about ethnographers, preachers, and some, I started going to the library, in search of some, I started going to the library in search of made a field trip, although we certainly understood that same department, and neither one of us ever measure's degree in that field. Saul Bellow was in and studied anthropology, and eventually, I took a after the war, I went to the University of Chicago bring a chemist as an undergraduate at Cornell, now, I don't mean to intimidate you, but after that's back up again. And then back up again.

day, to the Dominican.
transformation to get to the party. Elves her pantyhose, mascara, and a means of fairy godmother shows up [smug, incantation like a]. They all leave for the party. Her queen is enough. Things can't get any worse than a broken-hearted little girl. The death of her home. Is she even sadder now? No, she's already mother get ready to go but she herself has to stay help her two step sisters and her dreadful step-mother to be a party at the palace. She has to take two mean daughters. You've heard it? almost immediately to a terrible battle-axe with wouldn't she be lower? And her father got married? teen or sixteen whose mother has died, so why person who's despondent? She is a girl of about fl-down here [begun line C below D-axis]. who is this one of the most popular stories ever told stories. Look at the wonderful rice and fall of our stories. Their lusty stories. They really are backward. So all right. Primitive people deserve to lose with collected from primitive people all over the world.
wakes up. It's time to go to work again, and he has
 halls to have a beer with a friend. One morning he
couldn't take his girl dancing or go to the beer
century because of promotion. He doesn't get paid
no chance of promotion. He does get a paid
secretary, but she is not very personable. He has his
in-laws, but they are rather
now there's a Franz Kafka story [beginning of D]
unfriendly neighbors.

becomes off-scale happy. [drams line, upward]

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was your uncle did it, he's how.

father I was mentioned, you gotta assume me. In your application there. And this thing says, "I'm your pudding" and takes to this, you know. Halfway substantial
better talk to it. It's your dad. So Hamlet goes up
this thing up in the parade, I think maybe you'd
come up to him and says, "Hamlet, listen there's
comes up to him and says, "Hamlet, listen there's
same level as Cinderella when this friend Horatio
who's a bastard. So Hamlet is gone alone on the
right away his mother went and married his uncle.
His father has just died. He's despondent. And
are reversed.

the same as Cinderella, except that the sexes
drew a new line, because Hamlet's situation is
go to argue that it isn't. I don't have to
pretty good piece of work, I'd say. Is anybody
cross of this design. How about Hamlet? Is a
real masterpiece cannot be criticized on a
help us in the evaluation of literature? Perhaps
question is, does this system I've devised
then infinity "symbol." It's a pessimistic story.

KURT VONNEGUT
wants. So he goes alone, and finally he gets in a
state. He can't bear the sight of him any more.
Neither good news nor bad news. He doesn't
an economic!

"This above all to thine own self be true." Be
and take?

doesn't go crazy and say, "I-I-you got me, you got
show, and it's not like Perry Mason. His uncle
see what my uncle did. So he pins on this
dered by my uncle, and I'll put on this show and
out the way the ghost said my father was not.
I got a way to check this out. I'll hire actors to act
news. And neither does Hamlet. But he says okay,

Hamlet's father or if it was good news or bad.
So we don't know whether this thing was really
out for revenge.

charged in life in one way or another, and they are
were murdered, were suicides, or were terribly
were murdered, were suicides, or were terribly
body else. And you are a fool to take any appear-
body else. And you are a fool to take any appear-

who knows more about the spirit world than any-

you shouldn't believe them. Madam Blavatsky,
its haunting around. I'd like to tell you anything and
its haunting around. I'd like to tell you anything and
Ouija boards. You know there are millions of
Ouija boards. You know there are millions of
Hebrew's better. If you have messed around with
Hebrew's better. If you have messed around with
Well, was this good news or bad news? To this
Well, was this good news or bad news? To this

A Man without a Country
bad news?"

"Hey, what was the good news and what was the
heaven to ask somebody in charge up there,
and if I die—God forbid—I would like to go to
news is.
know what the good news is and what the bad
is, we know so little about life, we don't really
rise and fall here [atmospheric background]. The truth
truth, and people so rarely tell us the truth in this
masterpiece: It's that Shakespeare told us the
But there's a reason we recognize Hamlet as a
was as poor a storyteller as any

I have just demonstrated to you that Shakespeare
bad news.

And so we don't know whether it's good news or
believed in a heaven or hell any more than I do.
Kafka's cockroach? I don't think Shakespeare
did he go to hell? Quite a difference. Cinderella or
duel, and he's killed. Well, did he go to heaven or

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