

The next several pages contain a triplet—three selections—consisting of a literary text (“Long Walk to Forever”), an expository piece (“The Human Story Machine”), and a visual representation (“www.makeanewfriend.com”).

Questions intended to guide the reader are included in the margins of each selection. As you read, try to answer these questions. You may make your own notes in the margins as you read. As you progress through the reading section of this study guide, you will be asked to refer to these selections several times.

## Literary Selection

# Long Walk to Forever

## by Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.

What details does the author use to create a tranquil mood in paragraph 1?

- 1 They had grown up next door to each other, on the fringe of a city, near fields and woods and orchards, within sight of a lovely bell tower that belonged to a school for the blind.
- 2 Now they were 20, had not seen each other for nearly a year. There had always been playful, comfortable warmth between them, but never any talk of love.
- 3 His name was Newt. Her name was Catharine. In the early afternoon, Newt knocked on Catharine’s front door.
- 4 Catharine came to the door. She was carrying a fat, glossy magazine she had been reading. The magazine was devoted entirely to brides. “Newt!” she said. She was surprised to see him.
- 5 “Could you come for a walk?” he said. He was a shy person, even with Catharine. He covered his shyness by speaking absently, as though what really concerned him were far away—as though he were a secret agent pausing briefly on a mission between beautiful, distant, and sinister points. This manner of speaking had always been Newt’s style, even in matters that concerned him desperately.
- 6 “A walk?” said Catharine.
- 7 “One foot in front of the other,” said Newt, “through leaves, over bridges—”

8 “I had no idea you were in town,” she said.

9 “Just this minute got in,” he said.

10 “Still in the Army, I see,” she said.

What details does the author use to characterize Newt in paragraph 11? What can you infer about Newt from these details?

11 “Seven more months to go,” he said. He was a private first class in the Artillery. His uniform was rumpled. His shoes were dusty. He needed a shave. He held out his hand for the magazine. “Let’s see the pretty book,” he said.

12 She gave it to him. “I’m getting married, Newt,” she said.

13 “I know,” he said. “Let’s go for a walk.”

14 “I’m awfully busy, Newt,” she said. “The wedding is only a week away.”

15 “If we go for a walk,” he said, “it will make you rosy. It will make you a rosy bride.” He turned the pages of the magazine. “A rosy bride like her—like her—like her,” he said, showing her rosy brides.

What does Newt invite Catharine to do?

16 Catharine turned rosy, thinking about rosy brides.

17 “That will be my present to Henry Stewart Chasens,” said Newt. “By taking you for a walk, I’ll be giving him a rosy bride.”

18 “You know his name?” said Catharine.

19 “Mother wrote,” he said. “From Pittsburgh?”

20 “Yes,” she said. “You’d like him.”

21 “Maybe,” he said.

22 “Can—can you come to the wedding, Newt?” she said.

23 “That I doubt,” he said.

24 “Your furlough isn’t for long enough?” she said.

25 “Furlough?” said Newt. He was studying a two-page ad for flat silver. “I’m not on furlough,” he said.

26 “Oh?” she said.

27 “I’m what they call A.W.O.L.”<sup>1</sup> said Newt.

28 “Oh, Newt! You’re not!” she said.

29 “Sure I am,” he said, still looking at the magazine.

What is Catharine’s reaction when she learns that Newt is A.W.O.L.?

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<sup>1</sup>A.W.O.L. is a military term for “absent without leave.”

30 “Why, Newt?” she said.

What is ironic about this statement?

31 “I had to find out what your silver pattern is,” he said. He read names of silver patterns from the magazine. “Albermarle? Heather?” he said. “Legend? Rambler Rose?” He looked up, smiled. “I plan to give you and your husband a spoon,” he said.

What details lead you to believe that Newt does not really want to buy Catharine and Henry a spoon?

32 “Newt, Newt—tell me really,” she said.

33 “I want to go for a walk,” he said.

34 She wrung her hands in sisterly anguish. “Oh, Newt—you’re fooling me about being A.W.O.L.,” she said.

35 Newt imitated a police siren softly, raised his eyebrows.

36 “Where—where from?” she said.

37 “Fort Bragg,” he said.

38 “North Carolina?” she said.

39 “That’s right,” he said. “Near Fayetteville—where Scarlet O’Hara went to school.”

40 “How did you get here, Newt?” she said.

41 He raised his thumb, jerked it in a hitchhike gesture. “Two days,” he said.

Newt says that he did not come to see his mother. What can you infer from this?

42 “Does your mother know?” she said.

43 “I didn’t come to see my mother,” he told her.

44 “Who did you come to see?” she said.

45 “You,” he said.

46 “Why me?” she said.

Why do you think Newt repeats this phrase from paragraph 7?

47 “Because I love you,” he said. “Now can we take a walk?” he said. “One foot in front of the other—through leaves, over bridges—”

Why do you think the author includes an extra space here?

48 They were taking the walk now, were in a woods with a brown-leaf floor.

49 Catharine was angry and rattled, close to tears. “Newt,” she said, “this is absolutely crazy.”

50 “How so?” said Newt.

51 “What a crazy time to tell me you love me,” she said. “You never talked that way before.” She stopped walking.

52 “Let’s keep walking,” he said.

53 “No,” she said. “So far, no farther. I shouldn’t have come out with you at all,” she said.

Catharine says that she agreed to go for a walk with Newt to get him out of the house. Do you think that this is her real reason?

54 “You did,” he said.

55 “To get you out of the house,” she said. “If somebody walked in and heard you talking to me that way, a week before the wedding—”

56 “What would they think?” he said.

57 “They’d think you were crazy,” she said.

58 “Why?” he said.

How would you summarize Catharine’s “speech”? What characteristics does it reveal about her?

59 Catharine took a deep breath, made a speech. “Let me say that I’m deeply honored by this crazy thing you’ve done,” she said. “I can’t believe you’re really A.W.O.L., but maybe you are. I can’t believe you really love me, but maybe you do. But—”

60 “I do,” said Newt.

What conflict does Catharine’s speech reveal?

61 “Well, I’m deeply honored,” said Catharine, “and I’m very fond of you as a friend, Newt, extremely fond—but it’s just too late.” She took a step away from him. “You’ve never even kissed me,” she said, and she protected herself with her hands. “I don’t mean you should do it now. I just mean this is all so unexpected. I haven’t got the remotest idea of how to respond.”

How does the author reveal Catharine’s affection for Newt in paragraph 61?

62 “Just walk some more,” he said. “Have a nice time.”

63 They started walking again.

64 “How did you expect me to react?” she said.

65 “How would I know what to expect?” he said. “I’ve never done anything like this before.”

66 “Did you think I would throw myself into your arms?” she said.

67 “Maybe,” he said.

68 “I’m sorry to disappoint you,” she said.

69 “I’m not disappointed,” he said. “I wasn’t counting on it. This is very nice, just walking.”

70 Catharine stopped again. “You know what happens next?” she said.

71 “Nope,” he said.

72 “We shake hands,” she said. “We shake hands and part friends,” she said. “That’s what happens next.”

How would you describe Newt’s approach to pursuing Catharine? What does this show about him?

73 Newt nodded. “All right,” he said. “Remember me from time to time. Remember how much I loved you.”

74 Involuntarily, Catharine burst into tears. She turned her back to Newt, looked into the infinite colonnade of the woods.

75 “What does that mean?” said Newt.

76 “Rage!” said Catharine. She clenched her hands. “You have no right—”

Catharine feels that her tears are caused by rage. What other emotions might be causing her outburst?

77 “I had to find out,” he said.

78 “If I’d loved you,” she said, “I would have let you know before now.”

79 “You would?” he said.

80 “Yes,” she said. She faced him, looked up at him, her face quite red. “You would have known,” she said.

81 “How?” he said.

82 “You would have seen it,” she said. “Women aren’t very clever at hiding it.”

Notice the context clues for the word consternation.

83 Newt looked closely at Catharine’s face now. To her consternation, she realized that what she had said was true, that a woman couldn’t hide love.

84 Newt was seeing love now.

85 And he did what he had to do. He kissed her.

86 “You’re hell to get along with!” she said when Newt let her go.

87 “I am?” said Newt.

88 “You shouldn’t have done that,” she said.

89 “You didn’t like it?” he said.

90 “What did you expect,” she said—“wild, abandoned passion?”

91 “I keep telling you,” he said, “I never know what’s going to happen next.”

92 “We say good-bye,” she said.

93 He frowned slightly. “All right,” he said.

94 She made another speech. “I’m not sorry we kissed,” she said. “That was sweet. We should have kissed, we’ve been so close. I’ll always remember you, Newt, and good luck.”

95 “You too,” he said.

96 “Thank you, Newt,” she said.

97 “Thirty days,” he said.

98 “What?” she said.

99 “Thirty days in the stockade,” he said—“that’s what one kiss will cost me.”

100 “I—I’m sorry,” she said, “but I didn’t ask you to go A.W.O.L.”

101 “I know,” he said.

102 “You certainly don’t deserve any hero’s reward for doing something as foolish as that,” she said.

103 “Must be nice to be a hero,” said Newt. “Is Henry Stewart Chasens a hero?”

104 “He might be, if he got the chance,” said Catharine. She noted uneasily that they had begun to walk again. The farewell had been forgotten.

105 “You really love him?” he said.

106 “Certainly I love him!” she said hotly. “I wouldn’t marry him if I didn’t love him!”

107 “What’s good about him?” said Newt.

108 “Honestly!” she cried, stopping again. “Do you have an idea how offensive you’re being? Many, many, many things are good about Henry! Yes,” she said, “and many, many, many things are probably bad too. But that isn’t any of your business. I love Henry, and I don’t have to argue his merits with you!”

109 “Sorry,” said Newt.

What important change does the author reveal to the reader?

What can you infer from the fact that Catharine continues to walk?

How would you describe Catharine’s feelings toward Henry?

- 110 “Honestly!” said Catharine.
- 111 Newt kissed her again. He kissed her again because she wanted him to.
- 112 They were now in a large orchard.
- 113 “How did we get so far from home, Newt?” said Catharine.
- 114 “One foot in front of the other—through leaves, over bridges,” said Newt.
- 115 “They add up—the steps,” she said.
- 116 Bells rang in the tower of the school for the blind nearby.
- 117 “School for the blind,” said Newt.
- 118 “School for the blind,” said Catharine. She shook her head in drowsy wonder. “I’ve got to go back now,” she said.
- 119 “Say good-bye,” said Newt.
- 120 “Every time I do,” said Catharine, “I seem to get kissed.”
- 121 Newt sat down on the close-cropped grass under an apple tree. “Sit down,” he said.
- 122 “No,” she said.
- 123 “I won’t touch you,” he said.
- 124 “I don’t believe you,” she said.
- 125 She sat down under another tree, 20 feet away from him. She closed her eyes.
- 126 “Dream of Henry Stewart Chasens,” he said.
- 127 “What?” she said.
- 128 “Dream of your wonderful husband-to-be,” he said.
- 129 “All right, I will,” she said. She closed her eyes tighter, caught glimpses of her husband-to-be.
- 130 Newt yawned.
- 131 The bees were humming in the trees, and Catharine almost fell asleep. When she opened her eyes she saw that Newt really was asleep.
- 132 He began to snore softly.

Why do you think Newt tells Catharine to dream of Henry?

133 Catharine let Newt sleep for an hour, and while he slept she adored him with all her heart.

134 The shadows of the apple tree grew to the east. The bells in the tower of the school for the blind rang again.

135 “Chick-a-dee-dee-dee,” went a chickadee.

136 Somewhere far away an automobile starter nagged and failed, nagged and failed, fell still.

What are paragraphs 132–137 mostly about?

137 Catharine came out from under her tree, knelt by Newt.

138 “Newt?” she said.

139 “H’m?” he said. He opened his eyes.

140 “Late,” she said.

141 “Hello, Catharine,” he said.

142 “Hello, Newt,” she said.

143 “I love you,” he said.

144 “I know,” she said.

145 “Too late,” he said.

146 “Too late,” she said.

147 He stood, stretched groaningly. “A very nice walk,” he said.

148 “I thought so,” she said.

149 “Part company here?” he said.

150 “Where will you go?” she said.

151 “Hitch into town, turn myself in,” he said.

152 “Good luck,” she said.

What characteristic of Newt does paragraph 153 reveal?

153 “You, too,” he said. “Marry me, Catharine?”

154 “No,” she said.

155 He smiled, stared at her hard for a moment, then walked away quickly.

156 Catharine watched him grow smaller in the long perspective of shadows and trees, knew that if he stopped and turned now, if he called to her, she would run to him. She would have no choice.



Why does the author use short sentences in paragraph 157?

157 Newt did stop. He did turn. He did call. “Catharine,” he called.

158 She ran to him, put her arms around him, could not speak.

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**Expository Selection**

**The Human Story Machine**  
**from *The 60-Second Novelist***  
**by Dan Hurley**



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What is paragraph 1 mainly about?

1 When I was 25 years old and working in Chicago as an editor at the American Bar Association, I wanted nothing more than to become a novelist. In the mornings, I'd awaken at six to write. In the evenings, I was known to stand up, mid-conversation with friends, and announce I had an idea and had to go home to write.

I tried out the idea on my writers' group first.

"So, what do you think?" I asked, looking around the room, like a dog waiting to be petted.

"Well, Dan," said one friend, "it's kind of weird."

I didn't mind—that was the whole point.

What does Hurley's costume idea show about him?

2 One October day, a co-worker and I were trying to think up Halloween costumes. "How about if I went as a writer, with a typewriter slung from my shoulders?" I asked. "I could walk around like one of those cigarette girls, saying, 'Short stories? Novels?'"

3 So on Sunday, April 24, 1983, I carried my 28-pound, circa 1953 typewriter and a director's chair through the stiff winds of Chicago and set up shop on Michigan Avenue. Perching the typewriter on my lap, I taped a sign to the back of it—"60-Second Novels Written While You Wait"—and invited anyone who passed by to get an instant novel.

What do you think Hurley means by "performance writing"?

3 Of course, I never did it.  
4 But something about the idea grabbed me: writing in public on demand; not performance art, but performance writing. Behind the absurdity, I sensed the possibility of touching people more directly with my writing than I ever had while sitting alone at my desk. If nothing else, it would be a great story for my grandchildren.

5 The whole thing took on the aspect of a psychological experiment. Some people laughed cynically and said, "What a gimmick!" Others looked sympathetic ("A starving poet!"). One lady asked me if I was selling the typewriter. But I had never felt more alive.

10 Then a couple walked up. “I don’t know what you’re doing,” the woman said, “but whatever it is, I want one.” The man added, with a wry smile, “It certainly is something extremely unusual.”

11 I asked their names (plus a few other nosy questions) and began writing. I titled their story, “Something Extremely Unusual.”

12 As I typed, I noticed shoes crowding toward me on the sidewalk. Whispers and chuckles came from behind my back. When I finally pulled the page out of the typewriter, I looked up to see about 25 people surrounding me.

13 “Read it!” shouted a few of them. I did. And when it was over, they applauded. In that moment, the entire direction of my life veered off-road. I had no idea what I had discovered—or what had discovered me—but I could see that it worked. So I wrote another, and another. Rather than scaring me into silence, the crowd spurred me on. They were the ultimate deadline.

14 My life took on a Clark Kent–Superman split: mild-mannered reporter for the ABA by day; 60-Second Novelist, fighting a battle for literature and tips, by night.

That first summer, I feared I was turning into a Stupid Human Trick: “Dan Hurley, the human story machine. Put in a word, he spits out a story!” I also feared that I’d soon get bored. But 17 years and thousands of novels later, I’m still waiting.

I’ve since devoted my life to writing these novels: on streets and online, at department stores and trade shows, at bars and bar mitzvahs. No venue is too ordinary or bizarre.

The longer I keep at it, the more people seem to open up to me. They give me their trust. I give them stories that are some hitherto unknown confection of fact, fiction, fable and bibliotherapy. But before I type the first word, I give them something else: my ears, my eyes, my total, 200-percent attention.

At this point, there aren’t enough seats in Madison Square Garden to contain all the people I’ve written for (by now the figure is more than 25,000). From the first day, I kept a carbon copy of each story. The pile of tissue-thin duplicates now stands over four feet tall in my study. They’re white, green, pink, blue and yellow—a rainbow of stories, a pillar of life’s little lessons.

There may be no getting around the Stupid Human Trick aspect of it all. But I’d like to think there’s something more, something that speaks to the incredible power of the

Where does Hurley get his idea for the title for his first instant novel?

How would you describe the interaction between Hurley and the crowd? What details does Hurley use to show this?

What are paragraphs 13 and 14 mostly about?

What words in paragraph 16 are clues to the meaning of venue?

15

16

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Do you agree that people's life stories hold a certain power?

How would you summarize "A Walk Along the Ocean"?

life stories we tell about ourselves. After all, everyone's a born author of his or her own life story.

20 Here is my favorite.

21 At a seaside amusement park north of New York City, I wrote this story for a pretty young woman named Alice, in which I dared to predict her future:

22 "A Walk Along the Ocean"

23 Alice went out with a guy for four years and then he broke up with her because he was confused, which made her very unhappy at the time, but now she thinks it was for the best. In the year and a half since then, she has gone out on dates, but either she likes the guy and he doesn't like her, or vice versa.

24 Well, this is all pretty rotten.

25 So she has taken to seeing her grandmother, a very wise woman, encouraging and loving. Alice talks with her and feels much better, and finds warmth and laughter. But how will she ever find true love?

26 One day, after visiting her grandmother, Alice will go for a walk along the ocean, and she shall meet a man. He will ask her a question and the first thing she will think is, "Wow, is this guy *something!*" and they will talk and fall in love.

He might come from a ship. He might be swimming. He might be walking. Maybe he will fall from the sky, or maybe he will come from beneath the waves. But the important thing is he will come from the ocean after she goes to see her Grandma and isn't even thinking about a man. For there are plenty of fish in the sea, and many men, too.

27

28 The fact that Alice and I met not 20 yards from the water's edge didn't occur to me the day I wrote her story. Two months later I walked into a writing class and sat down in the only available seat. "Remember me?" said the person beside me. It was Alice.

29 We've been married for nine years now and have a beautiful five-year-old daughter, Anne. We're living proof that you can rewrite your life story to find a happy ending.

30 And so, not only did my crazy idea to write stories on the street bring me a career, it brought me a wife and a family. I guess you could say my dream of becoming a novelist also came true. Not quite the way I had anticipated—writing novels on the street, one page in length, one person at a time. But then, no good story turns out the way you expect.

Dan Hurley writes 60-second novels at [www.instantnovelist.com](http://www.instantnovelist.com).