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10-B
Humanities

Billy Pilgrim

“Some people's lives seem to flow in a narrative; mine had many stops and starts. That's what trauma does. It interrupts the plot. You can't process it because it doesn't fit with what came before or what comes afterwards.” In the book “Slaughterhouse 5” written by Kurt Vonnegut, the main character Billy Pilgrim's time traveled to many different settings but in his mind. Dresden and the trauma Billy saw impacted him a lot by time traveling in his mind and the way that he started acting. Billy was a part of World War one and two in Dresden, he also experienced when Dresden was completely bombed. After all the Billy experienced, people were convinced that Billy was going crazy. During war and after war Billy was not acting like himself anymore.

Billy genuinely thinks that he is traveling to moments and settings in his life, but his mind is only playing games. No one really knew why Billy was acting differently but when everyone even took a look at Billy, they assumed he was insane. In Chapter Five of the book, A Englishman comes up to Billy and says something to him towards the way that Billy presents himself.. “My God-what have they done to you,lad? This isn't a man. It's a broken kite”(Page 97). This occurred in the middle of war, Billy was isolating himself from everyone and he kept everything to himself. This quote really shows how war was changing Billy and peoples perspective toward him. Billy unfortunately witnessed a lot of trauma during the war like many soldiers do.

While Billy was in war, he had seen things that seemed unrealistic. He not only saw men being harmed, but also women. In chapter five, Billy walked into several women strapped to the

wall and their clothes were completely off, everything was bare. "I myself have seen bodies of girls who were boiled alive in a water tower by my own country men..."(Page 116). Seeing that changed Billy because he does not hurt women and that was another horrifying moment in his life along with many others. That traumatized Billy and he is not able to change back because the bad moments in his life overcome to good ones. There was a very tragic moment in Dresden that not only Billy experienced, but as well as many others.

The destruction of Dresden that occurred in 1945 had a very huge impact on Billy's life, especially the way that he saw things. There was a bombing in Dresden and Billy was there with his men as it happened. It made him feel lost, sad, and it made him into the person he became after. In chapter nine, Billy time traveled back to when he was witnessing how everyone and everything got affected by the bombing. His eyes landed on this one horse that was in a very bad condition and Billy reacted in a way unexpected. "They made Billy get out of the wagon and come look at the horses. When Billy saw the condition of his means of transportation, he burst into tears. He hadn't cried about anything else in the war"(Page 197). This quote exposed all of Billy's emotions and it showed his weakness. It also shows how much the bombing affected Dresden, everyone and everything had to be the ones to pay. Billy will be somewhere and his mind automatically time travels to a different setting and Billy would think he's at the setting. A lot of things in Billy's life reminds him of war and that shows that war did have a huge affect on him.

In conclusion, there were many different places in Billy's life that affected him, but the events in Dresden happens to have affected him the most cause of all the trauma. Even as a child, Billy had a tough life, but his mind was not traveling when he was young. They memories

always haunt Billy and it's unfortunate. Instead of thinking about all the good moments in his life, Billy focused on the worst moments and the scars they permanently left on him.