

# [Galapagos a heavenly island in the disguise of hell](https://assignbuster.com/galapagos-a-heavenly-island-in-the-disguise-of-hell/)

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Galapagos — a heavenly island in the disguise of hell (final) In “ Galapagos", Kurt Vonnegut uses Darwin’s evolution theory to base a dark and funny narrative on human beings. Told from the narrative of the spirit of Leon Trout, the novel humourously and painstakingly compels its readers to reflect on humanity and our roles as human beings. From a mix of characters tossed on the fictional island of Santa Rosalia who escaped the ills of a global financial crisis and a World War III where some mysterious viruses wiped out human race by sterility, Vonnegut tells the story of how these escapists survive and repopulate the earth. Refusing to enter the “ blue tunnel" that leads to the afterlife, the immortal spirit of Trout witnesses the slow evolution of the remaining human race to furry, aquatic creatures with streamlined skull and flippers for fishing and snouts and teeth adapted for catching fish a million years from now. Trout’s narration presses readers to ponder on the role of fate in deciding men’s future, the efforts of men that render their lives possible and yet futile as what we value most proves to be disastrous in our lives. By randomly selecting a myriad of people from all walks of life as survivors from the end of the world catastrophe, Vonnegut makes his readers realize the role of fate in making things happen the way they are. Although Vonnegut chooses the title of his novel as an island where Darwin based to develop his theory of evolution, Vonnegut argues that it is not the fittest who survive. According to Vogel, it is merely the work of fate that brings the passengers on board BahÃ­a de Darwin, the “ Nature Cruise of the Century" to settle on the Galapagos Islands, a place where they have successfully survived and repopulated the earth. The isolation and barrenness of the island contributes to a small colony that causes the people to slowly evolve into a lesser form of human but a better form of human race. The settlers on the Galapagos Islands “ have evolved a more stable equilibrium with their environment with small brains, minimal language and a simple life in which the only concern is when to dive into the ocean to catch fish" (Vogel). The evolution and simplicity, nonetheless, ensure the survival and reproduction of human race on earth. Hence, while Vonnegut stresses on the significance of random throughout the novel, he showcases to his readers the ironic result of the work we have put in our lives. Vonnegut suggests that what we work on does not necessarily achieve the desired outcome. Vonnegut philosophizes on the achievement of human race with the destruction and ills men have created. Vonnegut reminds his readers that our big brains are the root of the problems in the world. Basing his argument on Darwin’s Theory of Natural Selection, Vonnegut demonstrates that while better genes are passed on, human society is still far from perfect. Vonnegut comments on the growth of human intelligence and the progress in society that result in wars and destruction: “ From the violence people were doing to themselves and each other, and to all other living things, for that matter, a visitor from another planet might have assumed that the environment had gone haywire, and that the people were in such a frenzy because Nature was about to kill them all" (Vonnegut, 25). According to Mehren, “ Vonnegut’s big-brain theory is at the heart of " Galapagos". Big brains have gotten civilization in so much trouble that its remnants have ended up on one of the barren islands off Ecuador where Darwin concocted his theories of evolution" (Mehren). It is big brains that create global financial collapse and invent nuclear weapons. Hence, Vonnegut is right to say that “ our brains are much too large. We are much too busy. Our brains have proved to be terribly destructive" (Mehren) and the new race of human species in raw form assures survival. Although we often associate survival with success, merit and quality, Vonnegut argues that the fewer emotions and smaller brains as a result of evolution will achieve more satisfying outcome. Vonnegut proves to his readers how what we value most proves to be disastrous in our lives through the setting of the story in the aftermath of a global financial collapse and the invasion of a mysterious virus that makes human race infertile. In the story, Vonnegut’s people are backfired by men’s advanced knowledge on financial management, investment strategies and medical science. Vogel argues that “ Kurt Vonnegut’s 1985 novel GalÃ¡pagos is a Darwinian satire on the mess humankind causes for itself as a result of having evolved big brains" (Vogel). Vonnegut powerfully delivers a warning through Trout’s words: “ In the era of big brains, life stories could end up any which way. Look at mine" (Vonnegut, 98). As such, Vogel stresses on “ the uselessness of the sum of knowledge of Western civilisation" (Vogel) in its inability to stop disasters from happening in our lives as Vonnegut reveals how the simplicity of the new human race offers for survival than the achievements of art and science. Hence, in the examination of the role of fate, the irony and futility of human efforts, Vonnegut tells his readers that without big brains and hands to use for evil, human race will be much happier and the world will end up being a better place. The new race on the GalÃ¡pagos islands powerfully deliver a message that the survival of human race is a wake-up call for us to be mindful of the ills our brains are capable of creating and the need to learn to appreciate simplicity. Works Cited: " Book Review: Galapagos by Kurt Vonnegut." Blogcritics. 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