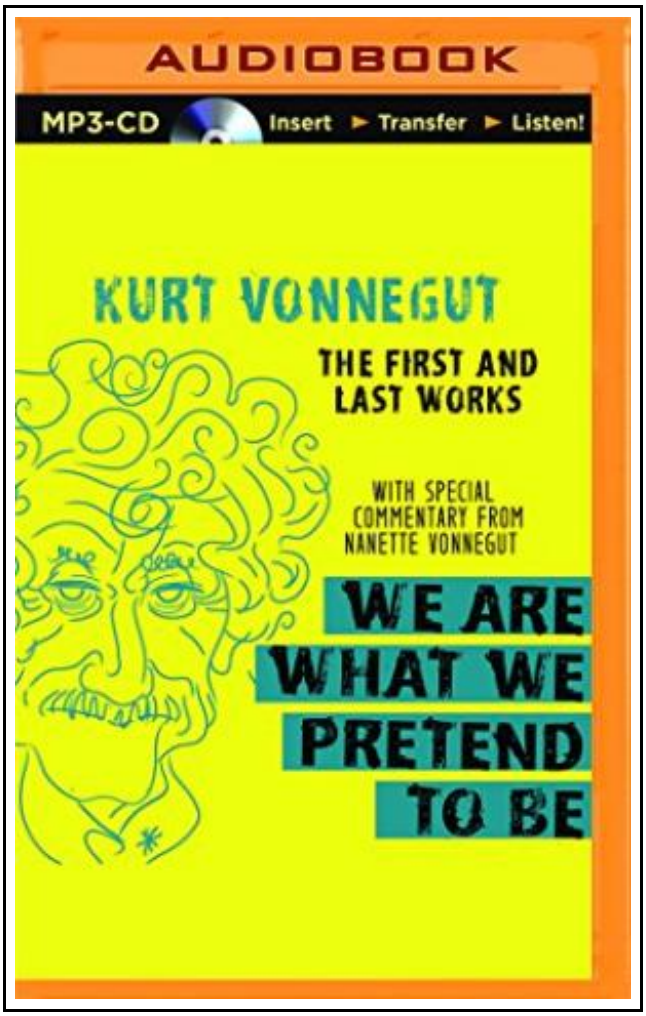
We Are What We Pretend to Be: The First and Last Works



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Audible Studios on Brilliance, United States, 2015. CD-Audio. Book Condition: New. Unabridged. 170 x 132 mm. Language: English . Brand New. Called our finest black-humorist by The Atlantic Monthly, Kurt Vonnegut was one of the most influential writers of the 20th century. Now his first and last works come together for the first time in print, in a collection aptly titled after his famous phrase, We Are What We Pretend To Be. Written to be sold under the pseudonym of Mark Harvey, Basic Training was never published in Vonnegut s lifetime. It appears to have been written in the late 1940s and is therefore Vonnegut s first ever novella. It is a bitter, profoundly disenchanted story that satirizes the military, authoritarianism, gender relationships, parenthood, and most of the assumed mid-century myths of the family. Haley Brandon, the adolescent protagonist, comes to the farm of his relative, the old crazy who insists upon being called The General, to learn to be a straight-shooting American. Haley s only means of survival will lead him to unflagging defiance of the General s deranged (but oh so American, oh so military) values. This story and its 30ish author were no friends of the milieu to which the slick magazines advertisers were pitching their products. When Vonnegut passed away in 2007, he left his last novel unfinished. Entitled If God Were Alive Today, this last work is a brutal satire on societal ignorance and carefree denial of the world s major problems. Protagonist Gil Berman is a middle-aged college lecturer and self-declared stand-up comedian who enjoys cracking jokes in front of a college audience while societal dependence on fossil fuels has led to the apocalypse. Described by Vonnegut as, the stand-up comedian on Doomsday, Gil is a character formed from Vonnegut s own rich experiences...

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