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Reviews

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Seven Stories Press,U.S., United States, 2016. Hardback. Book Condition: New. Expanded. 210 x 150 mm. Language: English . Brand New Book. Best known as one of Americas most astonishing and enduring contemporary novelists, Kurt Vonnegut was also a celebrated commencement address giver. Vonnegut never graduated from college, so his words to any class of graduating seniors always carried the delight, and gentle irony, of someone savoring an achievement he himself had not had occasion to savor on his own behalf. "But about my Uncle Alex, who is up in Heaven now," Vonnegut, an avowed Humanist, would say sometimes in a graduation speech, "one of the things he found objectionable about human beings was that they so rarely noticed it when they were happy. . . . We could be drinking lemonade in the summertime, and Uncle Alex would interrupt the conversation to say, If this isnt nice, what is?" If This Isnt Nice, What Is? includes eleven speeches and four pieces of journalism on related themes. Six of the fifteen are new to the second editionon topics as wide-ranging as why it is that Kurt Vonneguts dog loves people more than Kurt Vonnegut does, and what it feels like to be the most censored writer in Americaand much, much more. In each of these talks and short essays, Vonnegut takes pains to find the few things worth saying and a conversational voice to say them in thats funny and serious and joyful even if sometimes without seeming so.

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