The David Markson Guide to Illustrious Persons

- **A**
  - Aesop
    - Aesop was a slave. Terence was a slave. Epictetus was a slave. (183) pg 24 RB
  - Anna Akhmatova
    - Anna Akhmatova had an affair with Amedeo Modigliani in Paris in 1910 and 1911. Late in life, not having left Russia again in a third of a century, she would be astonished to learn how famous he had become. (11) pg 10 RB
  - Nelson Algren
    - Nelson Algren, not Sartre, gave Simone de Beauvoir her first orgasm. (268) pg 30 RB
  - Alexander the Great
    - Wherever conquest led him, Alexander the Great made it a point to have botanical specimens sent back to Aristotle, who had been his tutor. A copy of the *Iliad* that he carried in a jeweled chest contained emendations in Aristotle's handwriting. (44) pg 12 RB
  - Lawrence Alma-Tandema
    - Alma-Tadema. (311) pg 33 RB
  - Ānanda
    - I am weary, Ananda, and wish to lie down. (205) pg 15 RB
    - Ananda. Having been Buddha's cousin, as well as his favorite pupil. (243) pg 28 RB
  - Anaximander
    - Anaximander was sixty-four years old in the second year of the fifty-eighth Olympiad.
      Being how Diogenes Laërtius once situates him. (167) pg 22 RB
  - Saint Augustine of Hippo
    - Saint Augustine said his first teacher was also the first person he ever saw who could read without moving his lips. (30) pg 11 RB
    - *Tolle lege, tolle lege.* (43) pg 12 RB
  - Saint Thomas Aquinas
    - Saint Thomas Aquinas was an anti-Semite. (21) pg 10 RB

        - Aquinas knew almost nothing about history. (223) pg 26 RB
    - Louis Aragon
        - What has happened? It is life that has happened; and I am old. (37) Said Louis Aragon. (38) pg 12 RB
    - Aristotle
        - Wherever conquest led him, Alexander the Great made it a point to have botanical specimens sent back to Aristotle, who had been his tutor. A copy of the *Iliad* that he carried in a jeweled chest contained emendations in Aristotle's handwriting. (44) pg 12 RB
        - Aristotle's may have been the first purely private library. (190) pg 24 RB
    - W.H. Auden
        - When W. H. Auden died, his future royalties were left to Chester Kallman. When Kallman died only sixteen months later, they went to the latter's father, a dentist.
          Then the dentist died and everything went to his second wife. (296) pg 31 RB

- **B**
    - Johann Sebastian Bach
        - At twenty, Bach made a pilgrimage of more than two hundred miles, on foot, to hear Buxtehude play the organ. (153) pg 21 RB
    - Honoré de Balzac
        - Only Bianchon can save me, said Balzac, near death.
          Bianchon being a doctor in *Le Père Goriot.* (22) pg 11 RB
    - Roland Barthes
        - Roland Barthes died after being hit by a laundry truck. (180) pg 23 RB
    - Simone de Beauvoir
        - Nelson Algren, not Sartre, gave Simone de Beauvoir her first orgasm. (268) pg 30 RB
    - Samuel Beckett
        - Samuel Beckett was once forced to hide for ten days under a false floor in Nathalie Sarraute's Paris attic while working for the Resistance in World War II. (210) pg 25 RB
    - Armande Béjart
        - Armande Béjart. (212) pg 26 RB
    - Giovanni Bellini
        - Giorgione and Titian were pupils of Giovanni Bellini's in Venice together. Giorgione was dead in his early thirties, in 1510. Titian was still painting sixty-six years later. (36) pg 12 RB

- Walter Benjamin
  - Walter Benjamin committed suicide at the border between France and Spain in 1940.
    Fleeing the Nazis, he had been turned back by Spanish authorities. (271) pg 30 RB
- Alban Berg
  - Rupert Brooke died from an insect bite. Alban Berg did also. (329) pg 34 RB
- Joseph Beuys
  - Joseph Beuys was a Stuka pilot in World War II. (50) pg 13 RB
- Georges Bizet
  - Once, not knowing which of several houses was Bizet's, Saint-Saëns simply stood in the road singing an aria from *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*. (111) pg 18 RB
- Catherine Blake
  - A neighbor once came upon William Blake and his wife Catherine reading *Paradise Lost* aloud in their garden. Sitting naked. (118) pg 18 RB
- William Blake
  - A neighbor once came upon William Blake and his wife Catherine reading *Paradise Lost* aloud in their garden. Sitting naked. (118) pg 18 RB
- Boethius
  - Boethius was executed by having a thong inexorably tightened about his temples. (88) pg 16 RB
- Anne Bradstreet
  - Anne Bradstreet's first home in Massachusetts, a decade after the *Mayflower,* was at what later would become Harvard Square. (182) pg 23 RB
- Johannes Brahms
  - Once, at dinner, with great delicacy Brahms told Tchaikovsky that he did not approve of his work. With equal delicacy Tchaikovsky told Brahms that he did not approve of his. (67) pg 14 RB
- Rupert Brooke
  - Rupert Brooke died from an insect bite. Alban Berg did also. (329) pg 34 RB
- Giordano Bruno
  - Savonarola was burned at the stake in the Piazza della Signoria in Florence in 1498. Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake in the Campo de Fiori in Rome in 1600.
    Savonarola was granted the kindness of being hanged beforehand. Bruno was alive and conscious. (298) pg 32 RB

- Buddha
  - Ananda. Having been Buddha's cousin, as well as his favorite pupil. (243) pg 28 RB
- Filippo Brunelleschi
  - Brunelleschi was the first Renaissance artist about whom a full-length biography was written. (204) pg 25 RB
- Robert Burton
  - Helen was not the first petticoat that caused a war. Says Burton in the *Anatomy*. (232) pg 27 RB
- Dieterich Buxtehude
  - At twenty, Bach made a pilgrimage of more than two hundred miles, on foot, to hear Buxtehude play the organ. (153) pg 21 RB
- Lord Byron
  - After Byron and Leigh Hunt and Trelawny burned Shelly's body on the beach at Viareggio, they got drunk. Boisterously, shouting and laughing and even singing.
    Then again, they had been dealing with remains already five weeks bloated and decomposed. Bryon had at least once turned sick. (68) pg 14 RB
  - Byron was nine when he was introduced to sex by his nurse, one May Gray. (217) pg 26 RB

- **C**
  - Albert Camus
    - Albert Camus' father was killed in the Battle of the Marne when Camus was only months old. His mother was an illiterate charwoman. (66) pg 14 RB
  - Pablo Casals
    - Pablo Casals began each day for more than seventy years by playing Bach. (6) pg 9 RB
  - Paul Celan
    - Both of Paul Celan's parents went to their deaths in German concentration camps. (133) pg 20 RB
  - Blaise Cendrars
    - Blaise Cendrars lost an arm in World War I. As did one of Ludwig Wittgenstein's brothers, a concert pianist. (195) pg 34 RB
  - Miguel de Cervantes
    - Cervantes was a tax collector during the outfitting of the Armada.
      And was imprisoned when his accounts did not balance. (130) pg 19 RB
  - Paul Cézanne
    - Manet was so vituperatively condemned by critics that for a time he was

too embarrassed to ask anyone to pose for him.
Before Cézanne had gained any recognition he once burst into tears when someone sincerely admired his work. (120) pg 19 RB

- Raymond Chandler
  - Raymond Chandler lived with his mother until her death when he was thirty-five. And then almost immediately married a woman seventeen years older than he was. (79) pg 15 RB
- Frédéric Chopin
  - Frédéric Chopin was an anti-Semite. (186) pg 24 RB
- Cicero
  - Only a lunatic would dance when sober, said Cicero. (169) pg 22 RB
  - Petrarch sometimes wrote letters to long-dead authors. He was also a dedicated hunter of classic manuscripts. Once, after discovering some previously unknown works of Cicero, he
    wrote Cicero the news. (242)
- Camille Claudel
  - Camille Claudel spent the last thirty years of her life in an insane asylum. (188) pg 24 RB
- Samuel Taylor Coleridge
  - Coleridge was frequently bullied as a schoolboy. As was Shelley. Shelley once went after one of those baiting him with a pitchfork. (315) pg 33 RB
- Joseph Conrad
  - At twenty, Joseph Conrad tried to commit suicide over gambling losses.
  - In later life managing to let people believe the bullet wound had come from a duel. (113) pg 18 RB
- James Fenimore Cooper
  - Anthony Trollope said he had read Fenimore Cooper's *The Prairie* at least three dozen times. (24) pg 11 RB
- Nicolaus Copernicus
  - Leonardo's notebooks indicate that he knew the sun did not move before Copernicus did. (46) pg 12 RB
- Camille Corot
  - When Daumier was sixty, destitute and almost blind, Corot bought the house Daumier was renting and gave it to him. (62) pg 13 RB
- Sir Edward S. Creasy
  - Alfred Thayer Mahan. Sir Edward S. Creasy. (272) pg 30 RB

D

- Salvador Dali
  - Salvador Dali's perception of Jackson Pollock. Fish soup. (98) pg 17 RB
- Dante Alighieri

        - On a shelf beside Reader's desk: a human skull, a reproduction of Giotto's portrait of Dante, two small rough orange stones. (99) pg 17 RB
        - A Methodist parson in Bedlam, Horace Walpole called Dante. (276) pg 30 RB
    - Honoré Daumier
        - When Daumier was sixty, destitute and almost blind, Corot bought the house Daumier was renting and gave it to him. (62) pg 13 RB
    - Charles Dickens
        - During the four years that Dostoievsky spent at hard labor in Siberia for political conspiracy, the only book he was allowed was the New Testament. Though once in a prison hospital he found *Pickwick Papers* and *David Copperfield*. (77) pg 15 RB
        - Dickens, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Maxim Gorky never finished grade school. Sean O'Casey and Alberto Moravia did not either.
          O'Casey, at forty-three, was working with a pick and shovel when his first play was produced. (85) pg 15 RB
    - René Descartes
        - René Descartes was born in a hayfield. (52) pg 13 RB
    - Daniel Defoe
        - Not far into the story, Robinson Crusoe swims out to the wreck of his ship with no clothes on.
          In the selfsame paragraph Defoe has him filling his pockets with biscuits. (105) pg 17 RB
    - Diogenes Laërtius
        - Anaximander was sixty-four years old in the second year of the fifty-eighth Olympiad.
          Being how Diogenes Laërtius once situates him. (167) pg 22 RB
    - John Donne
        - John Donne posed for a painting in his own shroud. And kept it beside his bed during a long final illness. (91) pg 16 RB
    - Fyodor Dostoievsky
        - During the four years that Dostoievsky spent at hard labor in Siberia for political conspiracy, the only book he was allowed was the New Testament. Though once in a prison hospital he found *Pickwick Papers* and *David Copperfield*. (77) pg 15 RB
    - Martin Droeshout
        - Martin Droeshout. (289) pg 31 RB
- **E**
    - T.S. Eliot
        - In his mid-thirties, T. S. Eliot was known to wear pale green face powder.

One of the Sitwells said it was to make him look as if he were suffering. (124) pg 19 RB

- Empedocles
  - All legends to the contrary, Empedocles did not leap into Mount Etna. Or even die in Sicily. (216) pg 26 RB
- Epictetus
  - Aesop was a slave. Terence was a slave. Epictetus was a slave. (183) pg 24 RB
- John Scotus Erigena
  - According to medieval legend, his pupils stabbed John Scotus Erigena to death with their pens. (96) pg 17 RB
- Erinna of Telos
  - Erinna of Telos, who died at nineteen. Twenty-three hundred years ago. (201) pg 25 RB

- **F**
  - Gustave Flaubert
    - Flaubert's lamp burned with such regularity late at night in his workroom at Croisset that pilots on the Seine were able to take their bearings from it. (150) pg 21 RB
  - Anne Finch
    - Anne Finch, Countess of Winchilsea. (84) pg 15 RB
  - Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau
    - Dietrich Fischer-Dieskau was an American prisoner of war in Italy at the end of World War II. (125) pg 19 RB
  - Helen Frankenthaler
    - Helen Frankenthaler Motherwell, her name legally once was. (185) pg 24 RB
  - Sigmund Freud
    - Despite decades of self-analysis, Freud was forever so anxiety-ridden about missing trains that he would arrive at a station as much as an hour ahead of time.
      Freud. (49) pg 12 RB

- **G**
  - Alberto Giacometti
    - If forced to choose, Giacometti once said, he would rescue a cat from a burning building before a Rembrandt. (16) pg 10 RB
  - André Gide
    - Working as a publisher's reader, George Meredith rejected *The Way of All*

Flesh.
Working as a publisher's reader, André Gide rejected *Swann's Way*. (140) pg 20 RB

- Françoise Gilot
  - Fernande Olivier. Dora Maar.
    Marie-Thérèse Walter.
    Olga Koklova.
    Françoise Gilot.
    Jacqueline Roque. (257) pg 29 RB
- Giorgione
  - Giorgione and Titian were pupils of Giovanni Bellini's in Venice together. Giorgione was dead in his early thirties, in 1510. Titian was still painting sixty-six years later. (36), pg 12 RB
- Giotto
  - On a shelf beside Reader's desk: a human skull, a reproduction of Giotto's portrait of Dante, two small rough orange stones. (99) pg 17 RB
  - Le Douanier Rousseau: Who is Giotto? (277) pg 30 RB
- George Gissing
  - George Gissing's first wife became a prostitute. His second wife went mad. (229) pg 27 RB
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
  - Goethe did not go to bed with a woman until he was forty. (207) pg 25 RB
- Nikolai Gogol
  - After fasting to a point of starvation, Gogol died in a religious delirium.

    And after having burned the only manuscript of part two of *Dead Souls*. (273) pg 30 RB
- Maxim Gorky
  - Dickens, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Maxim Gorky never finished grade school. Sean O'Casey and Alberto Moravia did not either.
    O'Casey, at forty-three, was working with a pick and shovel when his first play was produced. (85) pg 15 RB
- Francisco Goya
  - At forty-six, after an illness, Goya suddenly turned stone deaf. (191) pg 24 RB
- Saxo Grammaticus
  - Saxo Grammaticus (31), pg 11 RB
- Robert Graves
  - Sick, muddle-headed, sex-mad D. H. Lawrence, Robert Graves called him. (302) pg 32 RB
- May Gray

        - Byron was nine when he was introduced to sex by his nurse, one May Gray. (217) pg 26 RB
    - Thomas Gray
        - Gray's *Elegy* is 128 lines long. Gray spent seven years writing it. (15) pg 10 RB
    - Madeleine Grey
        - Madeleine Grey. The *Chants d'Auvergne*. (220) pg 26 RB
    - Robert Moses "Lefty" Grove
        - Robert Moses Grove. (119) pg 18 RB

- **H**
    - Katherine Hamlet
        - In 1579, when Shakespeare was fifteen, the population of Stratford would have been little more than fifteen hundred. Is it a safe assumption that he knew the woman named Katherine Hamlet who fell into the Avon that summer and drowned? (12) pg 10 RB
    - Knut Hamsum
        - Knut Hamsum was once a horse-car conductor in Chicago. (73) pg 14 RB
    - Thomas Hardy
        - Not one of Thomas Hardy's first three novels sold more than twenty copies. (306) pg 33 RB
    - Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel
        - Hegel had an illegitimate son. At his wedding, the boy's mother showed up with a letter promising matrimony. And had to be bought off on the spot. (237) pg 27 RB
        - Hegel, Schelling, and Hölderlin were roommates while studying theology. (330) pg 34 RB
    - Ernest Hemingway
        - Ernest Hemingway was an anti-Semite. (255) pg 29 RB
    - Heraclitus
        - Heraclitus did not say that one cannot step into the same river twice. One of his followers did. (172) pg 23 RB
        - Heraclitus did say that praying to statues of the gods was like talking to a house instead of to its owner, however. (173) pg 23
        - And that souls smell in Hades. (174) pg 23
    - Saint Hildergard of Bingen
        - Saint Hildegard of Bingen. (141) pg 20 RB
    - Friedrich Hölderlin
        - Hegel, Schelling, and Hölderlin were roommates while studying theology. (330) pg 34 RB
    - Homer

        - Why is it never part of Reader's active memory that Helen of Troy was the daughter of a god and was hatched from an egg? (221) pg 26 RB
        - Though Homer insists she was mortal. (222) pg 26 RB
    - Horace
        - As a boy, Tennyson could recite all 103 of Horace's odes from memory. Montaigne claimed he knew those and the rest of Horace as well. (89) pg 16 RB
    - A.E. Housman
        - A. E. Housman never in his life lived in Shropshire. (175) pg 23 RB
    - Henry Howard, The Earl of Surrey
        - Sir Thomas More was beheaded at the Tower of London. The Earl of Surrey was beheaded at the Tower of London. Sir Walter Raleigh was beheaded at the Tower of London. (312) pg 33 RB
    - Hrotsvitha
        - Hrotsvitha van Gandersheim. (100) pg 17 RB
    - Leigh Hunt
        - After Byron and Leigh Hunt and Trelawny burned Shelly's body on the beach at Viareggio, they got drunk. Boisterously, shouting and laughing and even singing.
          Then again, they had been dealing with remains already five weeks bloated and decomposed. Bryon had at least once turned sick. (68) pg 14 RB

- **I**
- **J**
    - Henry James
        - An enthusiasm for Poe is the mark of a decidedly primitive stage of reflection.
          Said Henry James. (80) pg 15 RB

- **K**
    - Franz Kafka
        - But who are you? You are not from the castle, you are not from the village, you aren't anything. (318) pg 34 RB
        - Why didn't Kafka, once, call him a Jew and be done with it? (326) pg 34 RB
        - How different would one's perceptions be of the entire body of work if he had? (327) pg 34 RB

- Chester Kallaman
  - When W. H. Auden died, his future royalties were left to Chester Kallman. When Kallman died only sixteen months later, they went to the latter's father, a dentist.
    Then the dentist died and everything went to his second wife. (306) pg 31 RB
- Immanuel Kant
  - In Königsberg, where he spent his entire life, Immanuel Kant had several sisters and a brother and did not see any of them for a quarter of a century. At one point he had a letter from the brother and did not answer it for two and a half years. (70) pg 14 RB
  - Kant was an anti-Semite. (165) pg 22 RB
- John Keats
  - Severn, lift me up, I am dying. (27)
    Don't breathe on me, it comes like ice. (28), pg 11 RB
  - 26 Piazza di Spagna (40), pg 12 RB
- Søren Kierkegaard
  - The name Kierkegaard translates from the Danish as *church-yard.* (83), pg 15 RB
- Joyce Kilmer
  - Sgt. Joyce Kilmer. Alan Seeger. Lt. Col. John McCrae. (319) pg 34 RB
- Rudyard Kipling
  - Rudyard Kipling once lived in Vermont. (134) pg 20 RB
- Olga Koklova
  - Fernande Olivier. Dora Maar.
    Marie-Thérèse Walter.
    Olga Koklova.
    Françoise Gilot.
    Jacqueline Roque. (257) pg 29 RB
- Käthe Kollwitz
  - Käthe Kollwitz lost a son in World War I and a grandson in World War II. (94), pg 16 RB
- Willem de Kooning
  - Willem de Kooning lived as an illegal immigrant for his first thirty years in the United States. (249) pg 28 RB

L

- Gottfried Leibniz
  - Leibniz: Why is there anything at all rather than nothing? (61) pg 13 RB
- Leonardo da Vinci

        - Leonardo’s notebooks indicate that he knew the sun did not move before Copernicus did. (46) pg 12 RB
    - Jack London
        - Jack London committed suicide. (160) pg 22 RB
    - D.H. Lawrence
        - Sick, muddle-headed, sex-mad D. H. Lawrence, Robert Graves called him. (302) pg 32 RB
    - Richard Lovelace
        - Richard Lovelace spent his last years in unimaginable poverty, sometimes scavenging for garbage to subsist. And dying of consumption in a cellar. (290) pg 31 RB
        - Amarantha sweet and fair,
          Ah, braid no more that shining hair! (299) pg 32 RB
    - Martin Luther
        - Martin Luther was an anti-Semite. (275) pg 30 RB

- **M**
    - Alfred Thayer Mahan
        - Alfred Thayer Mahan. Sir Edward S. Creasy. (272) pg 30 RB
    - Stéphane Mallarmé
        - Mallarmé learned English specifically to read Poe (75) pg 14 RB
    - Édouard Manet
        - Manet was so vituperatively condemned by critics that for a time he was too embarrassed to ask anyone to pose for him.
          Before Cézanne had gained any recognition he once burst into tears when someone sincerely admired his work. (120) pg 19 RB
    - Dora Maar
        - Fernande Olivier. Dora Maar.
          Marie-Thérèse Walter.
          Olga Koklova.
          Françoise Gilot.
          Jacqueline Roque. (257) pg 29 RB
    - Christopher Marlowe
        - Christopher Marlowe's father was a shoemaker. (295) pg 31 RB
        - May 30, 1593. Eleanor Bull's Tavern, Deptford Strand. (303) pg 33 RB
        - Skeres. Poley. Ingram Frizer. (307) pg 33 RB
    - Massacio
        - Masaccio died at twenty-seven. So suddenly that poison was not unsuspected, Vasari says. (245) pg 28 RB
    - Henri Matisse
        - Matisse, questioned about green flesh:

I am not painting a woman. I am painting a picture. (328) pg 34 RB

- Vladimir Mayakovsky
  - Vladimir Mayakovsky shot himself in the head. He may have been playing Russian roulette rather than definitely intending suicide.
    But in either event had put on a clean shirt first. (227) pg 27 RB
- John McCrae
  - Sgt. Joyce Kilmer. Alan Seeger. Lt. Col. John McCrae. (319) pg 34 RB
- Herman Melville
  - In his late sixties, Herman Melville took a four-year-old grandaughter to a park and then forgot her there. (101) pg 17 RB
  - *Chronometricals and Horologicals.* (310) pg 33 RB
- George Meredith
  - Working as a publisher's reader, George Meredith rejected *The Way of All Flesh*.
    Working as a publisher's reader, André Gide rejected *Swann's Way*. (140) pg 20 RB
- John Milton
  - None of John Milton's daughters was given an education, though two of the three were taught to read to him in his blindness.
  - In languages of which they did not understand one word. (87) pg 16
- Amedeo Modigliani
  - Anna Akhmatova had an affair with Amedeo Modigliani in Paris in 1910 and 1911. Late in life, not having left Russia again in a third of a century, she would be astonished to learn how famous he had become. (11) pg 10 RB
- Molière
  - It is not impossible that the young actress Moliere married when he was forty, and with whose family he had been closely connected in the theater for years, was his own illegitimate daughter. (32) pg 11 RB
- Monet
  - Monet, visiting London:
    This brown thing? This is your Turner? (51) pg 13 RB
- Montaigne
  - As a boy, Tennyson could recite all 103 of Horace's odes from memory. Montaigne claimed he knew those and the rest of Horace as well. (89) pg 16 RB
- Sir Thomas More
  - Sir Thomas More was beheaded at the Tower of London. The Earl of Surrey was beheaded at the Tower of London. Sir Walter Raleigh was beheaded at the Tower of London. (312) pg 33 RB

- Alberto Moravia
  - Dickens, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Maxim Gorky never finished grade school. Sean O'Casey and Alberto Moravia did not either. O'Casey, at forty-three, was working with a pick and shovel when his first play was produced. (85) pg 15 RB
- Benito Mussolini
  - The eulogy at Puccini's funeral was delivered by Benito Mussolini. (246) pg 28 RB
- Modest Mussorgsky
  - Mussorgsky died raving mad from drink. (163) pg 22 RB

N

- Friedrich Nietzsche
  - By Wagner's lights, Nietzsche's many physical ailments were the result of excessive masturbation. Cold water being recommended. (285) pg 31 RB
- Gérard de Nerval
  - Impoverished and freezing, Gérard de Nerval hanged himself near a cheap Paris doss-house after no one responded to his late-night-knock. (234) pg 27 RB
- Issac Newton
  - Ingenious nonsense, Isaac Newton dismissed poetry as. (256) pg 29 RB

O

- Sean O'Casey
  - Dickens, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Maxim Gorky never finished grade school. Sean O'Casey and Alberto Moravia did not either. O'Casey, at forty-three, was working with a pick and shovel when his first play was produced. (85) pg 15 RB
- William of Ockham
  - There is no mention of Ockham's Razor in anything Ockham ever wrote. (262) pg 29 RB
  - Entities are not to be multiplied without necessity. (300) pg 32 RB
- Fernande Olivier
  - Fernande Olivier. Dora Maar.
    Marie-Thérèse Walter.
    Olga Koklova.
    Françoise Gilot.
    Jacqueline Roque. (257) pg 29 RB
- Ovid
  - When Ovid was banished from Rome, it was to Tomi, on the Black Sea. Would Reader have otherwise ever heard of a city in Romania now called

Constanta? (181) pg 23 RB

- Wilfred Owen
  - Church bells were already ringing, to announce the Armistice in November 1918, when word reached Wilfred Owen's family that he had been killed in battle one week before. (4) pg 9 RB

- **P**
  - Boris Pasternak
    - Boris Pasternak so admired Rilke that he carried two letters from him in his wallet for decades. (138) pg 20 RB
  - Cesare Pavese
    - After Cesare Pavese committed suicide, several young women none of his friends had ever seen before appeared at his funeral weeping, in the hope of being taken for former mistresses. (135) pg 20 RB
  - Giovanni Battista Pergolesi
    - Pergolesi wrote his *Stabat Mater* at twenty-six. And was dead in the same year. (320) pg 34 RB
  - Vincenzo Perruggia
    - In 1911, an Italian house painter named Vincenzo Perruggia who had been working at the Louvre managed to remove the *Mona Lisa* from its frame and walk out with it under his overalls. And to go unsuspected until he tried to sell it two years later. (59) pg 13 RB
  - Petrarch
    - Petrarch sometimes wrote letters to long-dead authors. He was also a dedicated hunter of classic manuscripts. Once, after discovering some previously unknown works of Cicero, he
      wrote Cicero the news. (242) pg 28 RB
  - Peter the Hermit
    - Walter the Penniless. Peter the Hermit. (76) pg 15 RB
  - Pablo Picasso
    - Picasso made Gertrude Stein sit more than eighty times for her portrait. And then painted out the head and redid it three months later without having seen her again. (5) pg 9 RB
  - Sylvia Plath
    - Before Sylvia Plath turned on her oven to commit suicide, she left bread and butter and milk in the bedroom where her two children were sleeping. (60) pg 13 RB
  - Edgar Allen Poe
    - Mallarmé learned English specifically to read Poe (75) pg 14 RB
    - An enthusiasm for Poe is the mark of a decidedly primitive stage of reflection.

Said Henry James. (80) pg 15 RB

- Poe was expelled from West Point for refusing to obey military orders. Later, James McNeill Whistler would fail there academically. (251) pg 28 RB

- Jackson Pollock
  - Salvador Dali's perception of Jackson Pollock. Fish soup. (98) pg 17 RB
- Ezra Pound
  - In Rapallo, for years, Ezra Pound spent two nights a week with his wife Dorothy and five nights with Olga Rudge.
    And had children by both. (322) pg 34 RB
- Giacomo Puccini
  - The eulogy at Puccini's funeral was delivered by Benito Mussolini. (246) pg 28 RB
- Alexander Pushkin
  - Alexander Pushkin was an anti-Semite. (235) pg 27 RB

- **Q**
- **R**
  - François Rabelais
    - Rabelais: As for you, little envious Prigs, snarling, bastard, puny Critics, you'll soon have railed your last: Go hang yourselves. (258) pg 29 RB
  - Sir Walter Raleigh
    - Sir Thomas More was beheaded at the Tower of London. The Earl of Surrey was beheaded at the Tower of London. Sir Walter Raleigh was beheaded at the Tower of London. (312) pg 33 RB
  - Rembrandt
    - If forced to choose, Giacometti once said, he would rescue a cat from a burning building before a Rembrandt. (16) pg 10 RB
  - Jean Rhys
    - Jean Rhys would appear to have lived a life very like those of her several heroines, of cheap hotels and threadbare clothing in drearier neighborhoods of Paris and London. Reader has been drawn to an affecting photograph of her when young, the for- lornness already intimated. (281) pg 31 RB
  - Rainer Maria Rilke
    - Boris Pasternak so admired Rilke that he carried two letters from him in his wallet for decades. (138) pg 20 RB
    - Rilke died of leukemia. (287) pg 31 RB

- Earl of Rochester, John Wilmont
  - Rochester died in 1680. A full collection of his verse was not published until 1926.
    And even then was not allowed into the United States. (149) pg 21 RB
- Jacqueline Roque
  - Fernande Olivier. Dora Maar.
    Marie-Thérèse Walter.
    Olga Koklova.
    Françoise Gilot.
    Jacqueline Roque. (257) pg 29 RB
- Gioachino Rossini
  - Rossini wore a wig. In chilly weather he sometimes wore two. (128) pg 19 RB
- Mark Rothko
  - Mark Rothko committed suicide by slashing the inside of his arms at the elbows with a double-edged razor blade. (316) pg 33 RB
  - First folding Kleenex over one edge of the blade to keep from cutting his fingers. (317) pg 34 RB
- Henri Rousseau
  - Le Douanier Rousseau: Who is Giotto? (277) pg 30 RB
- Olga Rudge
  - In Rapallo, for years, Ezra Pound spent two nights a week with his wife Dorothy and five nights with Olga Rudge.
    And had children by both. (322) pg 34 RB

S

- Camille Saint-Saëns
  - Once, not knowing which of several houses was Bizet's, Saint-Saëns simply stood in the road singing an aria from *Les Pêcheurs de Perles*. (111) pg 18 RB
- Nathalie Sarraute
  - Samuel Beckett was once forced to hide for ten days under a false floor in Nathalie Sarraute's Paris attic while working for the Resistance in World War II. (210) pg 25 RB
- Jean-Paul Satre
  - Nelson Algren, not Sartre, gave Simone de Beauvoir her first orgasm. (268) pg 30 RB
- Girolamo Savonarola
  - Savonarola was burned at the stake in the Piazza della Signoria in

Florence in 1498. Giordano Bruno was burned at the stake in the Campo de Fiori in Rome in 1600.
Savonarola was granted the kindness of being hanged beforehand. Bruno was alive and conscious. (298) pg 32 RB

- Friedrich Wilhelm Joseph Schelling
  - Hegel, Schelling, and Hölderlin were roommates while studying theology. (330) pg 34 RB
- Arthur Schopenhauer
  - The world is my idea. (29) pg 11 RB *The opening to The World as Will and Idea.*
- Bruno Schulz
  - Bruno Schulz was carrying home a loaf of bread when he was shot down in the street by the Gestapo. (161) pg 22 RB
- Alan Seeger
  - Sgt. Joyce Kilmer. Alan Seeger. Lt. Col. John McCrae. (319) pg 34 RB
- Alexander Selkirk
  - Alexander Selkirk. (110) pg 18 RB
  - Haller's books? Selkirk's? (122) pg 19 RB
- Joseph Severn
  - Severn, lift me up, I am dying. (27)
  - Don't breathe on me, it comes like ice. (28), pg 11 RB
- Anne Sexton
  - After Anne Sexton turned on her car's engine in a closed garage to commit suicide, she sat drinking vodka while waiting. (200) pg 25 RB
- Dorothy Shakespear
  - In Rapallo, for years, Ezra Pound spent two nights a week with his wife Dorothy and five nights with Olga Rudge.
    And had children by both. (322) pg 34 RB
- William Shakespeare
  - In 1579, when Shakespeare was fifteen, the population of Stratford would have been little more than fifteen hundred. Is it a safe assumption that he knew the woman named Katherine Hamlet who fell into the Avon that summer and drowned? (12) pg 10 RB
  - Bohemia. A desert country near the sea. (58) pg 13 RB
  - The vocabulary in Shakespeare's plays includes 29,066 different words. There are 29,899 different words in Ulysses. (291) pg 32 RB
  - The first lectures on Shakespeare at a British university were given at Oxford, by one William Hawkins, in 1751.
    In Latin. (301) pg 32 RB
- George Bernard Shaw

        - George Bernard Shaw was an anti-Semite. (81) pg 15 RB
    - Percy Bysshe Shelley
        - After Byron and Leigh Hunt and Trelawny burned Shelley's body on the beach at Viareggio, they got drunk. Boisterously, shouting and laughing and even singing.
          Then again, they had been dealing with remains already five weeks bloated and decomposed. Bryon had at least once turned sick. (68) pg 14 RB
        - Ah, did you once see Shelley plain? (69) pg 14 RB
        - Coleridge was frequently bullied as a schoolboy. As was Shelley. Shelley once went after one of those baiting him with a pitchfork. (315) pg 33 RB
    - Oswald Spengler
        - *Der Untergang des Abendlandes.* (63) pg 13 RB
    - Gertrude Stein
        - Picasso made Gertrude Stein sit more than eighty times for her portrait. And then painted out the head and redid it three months later without having seen her again. (5) pg 9 RB
    - Laurence Sterne
        - Laurence Sterne's corpse was sold to a medical school by grave robbers. It had been almost completely dissected before someone chanced to recognize it. (41), pg 12 RB
    - Wallace Stevens
        - I can't even pronounce the filthy thing. Said Wallace Stevens of the word womb in a poem. (215) pg 26 RB

- **T**
    - Taliesin
        - Taliesin. (248) pg 28 RB
    - Tchaikovsky
        - Once, at dinner, with great delicacy Brahms told Tchaikovsky that he did not approve of his work. With equal delicacy Tchaikovsky told Brahms that he did not approve of his. (67) pg 14 RB
    - Lord Alfred Tennyson
        - As a boy, Tennyson could recite all 103 of Horace's odes from memory. Montaigne claimed he knew those and the rest of Horace as well. (89) pg 16 RB
        - Lice in the locks of literature, Tennyson called critics. (196) pg 24 RB
    - Terence
        - Aesop was a slave. Terence was a slave. Epictetus was a slave. (183) pg 24 RB
    - Titian

        - Giorgione and Titian were pupils of Giovanni Bellini's in Venice together. Giorgione was dead in his early thirties, in 1510. Titian was still painting sixty-six years later. (36) pg 12 RB
    - Leo Tolstoy
        - Tolstoy's wife copied out the entire manuscript of *War and Peace* in longhand seven times. (213) pg 26 RB
    - Anthony Trollope
        - Anthony Trollope said he had read Fenimore Cooper's *The Prairie* at least three dozen times. (24) pg 11 RB
        - Tony Trollope, he was naturally called. (219) pg 26 RB
    - Edward John Trelawny
        - After Byron and Leigh Hunt and Trelawny burned Shelly's body on the beach at Viareggio, they got drunk. Boisterously, shouting and laughing and even singing.
          Then again, they had been dealing with remains already five weeks bloated and decomposed. Bryon had at least once turned sick. (68) pg 14 RB
    - Turner
        - Monet, visiting London:
          This brown thing? This is your Turner? (51) pg 13 RB
    - Mark Twain
        - Dickens, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Maxim Gorky never finished grade school. Sean O'Casey and Alberto Moravia did not either.
          O'Casey, at forty-three, was working with a pick and shovel when his first play was produced. (85) pg 15 RB

- **U**
- **V**
    - Giorgio Vasari
        - Masaccio died at twenty-seven. So suddenly that poison was not unsuspected, Vasari says. (245) pg 28 RB
    - Paul Verlaine
        - Fighting with his wife, drunk, Paul Verlaine once threw their three-month-old son against a wall. (19) pg 10 RB
    - Giambattista Vico
        - At the age of seven, Giambattista Vico fell from a ladder and fractured his skull so severely that his parents were told to anticipate feeblemindedness. (34) pg 11 RB
    - Voltaire

        - Voltaire was an anti-Semite. (323) pg 34 RB

- **W**
    - Richard Wagner
        - By Wagner's lights, Nietzsche's many physical ailments were the result of excessive masturbation. Cold water being recommended. (285) pg 31 RB
    - Horace Walpole
        - A Methodist parson in Bedlam, Horace Walpole called Dante. (276) pg 30 RB
    - Marie-Thérèse Walter
        - Fernande Olivier. Dora Maar.
          Marie-Thérèse Walter.
          Olga Koklova.
          Françoise Gilot.
          Jacqueline Roque. (257) pg 29 RB
    - Walter the Penniless
        - Walter the Penniless. Peter the Hermit. (76) pg 15 RB
    - John Webster
        - Cover her face; mine eyes dazzle; she died young. (45) pg 12 RB
    - Edith Wharton
        - On the actual night before her wedding, Edith Wharton had no idea of the facts of life. (260) pg 29 RB
    - James McNeill Whistler
        - Poe was expelled from West Point for refusing to obey military orders. Later, James McNeill Whistler would fail there academically. (251) pg 28 RB
    - Walt Whitman
        - Dickens, Walt Whitman, Mark Twain, and Maxim Gorky never finished grade school. Sean O'Casey and Alberto Moravia did not either.
          O'Casey, at forty-three, was working with a pick and shovel when his first play was produced. (85) pg 15 RB
    - Ludwig Wittgenstein
        - Blaise Cendrars lost an arm in World War I. As did one of Ludwig Wittgenstein's brothers, a concert pianist. (195) pg 34 RB
        - Wittgenstein was cited for bravery three times during World War I. Fighting against the Allies. (264) pg 30 RB
    - Virginia Woolf
        - An illiterate, underbred book. Said Virginia Woolf of *Ulysses*. (214) pg 26 RB
        - Three weeks passed before Virginia Woolf's body was found after she committed suicide by walking into the River Ouse. (304) pg 33 RB

- **X**
  - Xenophanes
    - If an ox could paint a picture, his god would look like an ox. Said Xenophanes. (39) pg 12 RB

- **Y**
  - William Butler Yeats
    - William Butler Yeats was an anti-Semite. (117) pg 18 RB
    - Life is a long preparation for something that never happens, Yeats said. (313) pg 33 RB
- **Z**
  - Zeno of Citium
    - Zeno hanged himself after breaking a toe. At ninety. (109) pg 18 RB