



## Speak, Memory (Everyman's Library)

By Vladimir Nabokov, Brian Boyd



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From one of the 20th century's great writers comes one of the finest autobiographies of our time. *Speak, Memory* was first published by Vladimir Nabokov in 1951 as *Conclusive Evidence* and then assiduously revised and republished in 1966. The Everyman's Library edition includes, for the first time, the previously unpublished "Chapter 16"—the most significant unpublished piece of writing by the master, newly released by the Nabokov estate—which provided an extraordinary insight into *Speak, Memory*.

Nabokov's memoir is a moving account of a loving, civilized family, of adolescent awakenings, flight from Bolshevik terror, education in England, and émigré life in Paris and Berlin. The Nabokovs were eccentric, liberal aristocrats, who lived a life immersed in politics and literature on splendid country estates until their world was swept away by the Russian revolution when the author was eighteen years old. *Speak, Memory* vividly evokes a vanished past in the inimitable prose of Nabokov at his best.

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## **Speak, Memory (Everyman's Library) By Vladimir Nabokov, Brian Boyd Bibliography**

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### Editorial Review

#### Amazon.com Review

Even if you already own Nabokov's earthy, otherworldly account of his astounding life, you must buy this 1999 edition. And if you've never read *Speak, Memory*, you must do so at once. This volume is essential because it includes the unpublished last chapter, a pseudo-review comparing *Speak, Memory* with another, nonexistent memoir called *When Lilacs Last*. (That title refers to Whitman's poem on Lincoln's assassination and to the lilacs of Nabokov's childhood home) Chapter 16 is a key to what the imaginary reviewer accurately calls a "unique freak as autobiographies go," revealing its novel-like nature and unifying themes and images (chess, puzzles, spirals, jewels, rainbows, exile, the stained-glass shadow patterns that the future casts on the present). Maybe Nabokov thought he gave too much away, and one sees the formal superiority of ending the book with chapter 15. But the added essay is a gem that dazzles and illuminates.

You have to consult biographies like Brian Boyd's for the full, remarkable facts of Nabokov's life. A millionaire at 17 (his sister danced in Diaghilev gowns with Fabergé gems at the Winter Palace), repeatedly exiled, forced to bust out of one chrysalis after another into new lives, the writer retained only the infinite wealth of his memory and art. This book is a mosaic shaped by a mind so metaphorical that, as a babe, Nabokov perceived letters as colors, the alphabet as a rainbow.

The loss of his father is at *Speak, Memory*'s core. This memoir is worth owning for a single paragraph alone, about the sight of Nabokov senior being tossed aloft by grateful peasants he'd been generous to--a dozen or so with locked arms flinging him up in a hip-hip-hooray ritual.

There, for an instant, the figure of my father in his wind-rippled white summer suit would be displayed, gloriously sprawled in midair.... Thrice, to the mighty heave-ho of his invisible tossers, he would fly up ... and then there he would be, on his last and loftiest flight, reclining, as if for good, against the cobalt blue of the summer noon, like one of those paradisiac personages who comfortably soar, with such a wealth of folds in their garments, on the vaulted ceiling of a church while below, one by one, the wax tapers in mortal hands light up to make a swarm of minute flames in the mist of incense, and the priest chants of eternal repose, and funeral lilies conceal the face of whoever lies there, among the swimming lights, in the open coffin.

Nabokov recaptures the paradise of his youth, and acquits himself of the coldness of which some accuse him. He plays literary games, but he plays for keeps. --*Tim Appelo*

#### From Library Journal

Published as *Conclusive Evidence* in 1951 and later revised in 1966, Nabokov's title has been further updated with an additional, previously unseen chapter. Considering his profile in world literature, this is essential for public and academic libraries.

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#### Review

"[Nabokov] has fleshed the bare bones of historical data with hilarious anecdotes and with a felicity of style that makes *Speak, Memory* a constant pleasure to read. Confirmed Nabokovians will relish the further clues and references to his fictional works that shine like nuggets in the silver stream of his prose." —*Harper's*

"Scintillating...One finds here amazing glimpses into the life of a world that has vanished forever." —*New York Times*

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Jeffrey Drake:**

Reading a guide can be one of a lot of pastime that everyone in the world likes. Do you like reading book and so. There are a lot of reasons why people fantastic. First reading a guide will give you a lot of new info. When you read a e-book you will get new information simply because book is one of many ways to share the information or their idea. Second, studying a book will make a person more imaginative. When you studying a book especially hype book the author will bring you to imagine the story how the characters do it anything. Third, it is possible to share your knowledge to some others. When you read this *Speak, Memory* (Everyman's Library), it is possible to tells your family, friends as well as soon about yours guide. Your knowledge can inspire the others, make them reading a publication.

#### **James Babb:**

Reading can called imagination hangout, why? Because when you find yourself reading a book especially book entitled *Speak, Memory* (Everyman's Library) your head will drift away trough every dimension, wandering in every aspect that maybe unidentified for but surely will end up your mind friends. Imaging each word written in a e-book then become one web form conclusion and explanation that will maybe you never get just before. The *Speak, Memory* (Everyman's Library) giving you one more experience more than blown away the mind but also giving you useful details for your better life in this particular era. So now let us present to you the relaxing pattern here is your body and mind is going to be pleased when you are finished studying it, like winning an activity. Do you want to try this extraordinary wasting spare time activity?

#### **Moses Bean:**

The book untitled *Speak, Memory* (Everyman's Library) contain a lot of information on the item. The writer explains your girlfriend idea with easy way. The language is very straightforward all the people, so do not necessarily worry, you can easy to read it. The book was published by famous author. The author brings you in the new period of literary works. It is possible to read this book because you can read on your smart phone, or gadget, so you can read the book in anywhere and anytime. If you want to buy the e-book, you can start their official web-site in addition to order it. Have a nice study.

#### **Claire Davis:**

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