



# An Artist of the Floating World (Penguin Drop Caps)

*Kazuo Ishiguro*

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**I is for Ishiguro.** Masuji Ono saw misery in his homeland and became unwilling to spend his skills solely in the celebration of physical beauty. Instead, he envisioned a strong and powerful nation of the future, and he put his painting to work in the service of the movement that led Japan into World War II. Now, as the mature Masuji Ono struggles through the spiritual wreckage of that war, his memories of the “floating world” of his youth, full of pleasure and promise, serve as an escape from, a punishment for—and a justification of—his entire life. Drifting without honor in Japan’s postwar society, which indicts him for its defeat and reviles him for his aesthetics, he relives the passage through his personal history that makes him both a hero and a coward but, above all, a human being. *An Artist of the Floating World* is a sensual and profoundly convincing portrait of the artist as an aging man. At once a multigenerational tale and a samurai death poem written in English, it is also a saga of the clash of the old and new orders, blending classical and contemporary iconography with compassion and wit.

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